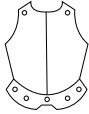


DEVOTIONAL: 40 DAYS OF PUTTING ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

GEAR UP



DEVOTIONAL: 40 DAYS OF PUTTING ON THE ARMOR OF GOD

GEAR UP

INTRODUCTION: PUT ON THE FULL ARMOR OF GOD

In *Precious Remedies for Satan's Devices*, Thomas Brooks writes:

Beloved, Satan being fallen from light to darkness, from felicity to misery, from heaven to hell, from an angel to a devil, is so full of malice and envy that he will leave no means unattempted, whereby he may make all others eternally miserable with himself; he being shut out of heaven, and shut up “under the chains of darkness until the judgment of the great day” (Jude 6), makes use of all his power and skill to bring all the sons of men into the same condition and condemnation with himself (Jude 15).

Satan wants nothing less than to see you destroyed.

He seeks your demise. He longs for your destruction. When left up to your own strength and weapons, you will fail to defeat this enemy. So, what can you do?

As a believer, you have been given a special kind of spiritual armor to help you stand firm in the face of opposition: The Belt of Truth, The Breastplate of Righteousness, The Shoes of Peace, The Shield of Faith, The Helmet of Salvation and The Sword of the Spirit, using Prayer to buckle it all together.

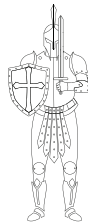
This armor isn't reserved for the “super soldier” Christian but is freely given to all believers! In *Pilgrim's Progress*, John Bunyan writes of a character named Christian who sets out on a spiritual journey toward the Celestial City. After he believes in Jesus, Christian knows that he will need some kind of protection against the enemy in order to complete his journey. The book reads:

The next day they took [Christian] and had him into the armory, where they showed him all manner of furniture, which their Lord had provided for pilgrims, as sword, shield, helmet, breastplate, all-prayer and shoes that would not wear out. And there was here enough of this to harness out as many men for the service of their Lord as there be stars in the heaven for multitude.

Over the next 40 days, you have the opportunity to explore each of these pieces of armor in detail so that you can learn how to use God's gifts and stand firm in the Lord. Each day consists of four devotional elements:

1. A few verses centered on one of the pieces of armor
2. A devotional thought based on the verses for the day
3. A reflection question
4. A short prayer

Our hope is that as you read each of these passages, you would better understand the armor that the Lord has given you and aim to put it on daily. **Though the enemy is strong, our God is stronger**, and He has given you everything you need for a victorious life in Him!



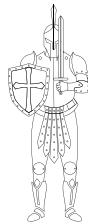
DAY ONE: EPHESIANS 6:10-11

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.
11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.*

SATAN IS A CHEAT AND A LIAR. He is set on killing and destroying everything in his path (John 10:10), all the while masquerading as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:14). He is stronger than you, and he will do everything in his power to make you miserable alongside of him. In your own strength, you will fail against his schemes. But with the Lord, you will find strength and all the tools necessary to be victorious and have life in Jesus.

Where do you find your strength against the enemy?

PRAY: Lord, I can't fight the schemes of the enemy on my own. Give me the strength to put on the armor You have provided.



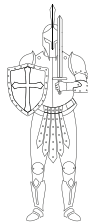
DAY TWO: JAMES 4:7-10

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.⁸ Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.⁹ Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.

YOU WERE CREATED to have a relationship with God. The devil wants to keep you as far away from Him as possible. Every sin, every misstep and every wrongdoing is a victory for the enemy. You must realize that the only way to defeat Satan is to humbly submit to God's ways. Acknowledge the sin in your life that breaks down your relationship with God, ask for forgiveness and live in the grace of God. Only then will you be restored.

Do you actively resist the devil by drawing near to God?

PRAY: Lord, I know You have already defeated the enemy. Forgive me for living in my own strength and teach me to draw near to You.



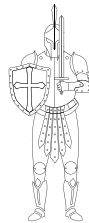
DAY THREE: EPHESIANS 6:12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

THERE IS A CONSTANT SPIRITUAL BATTLE for your heart, mind and soul. But it's not just a little squabble, it's an intense struggle (literally "struggle" in this verse means "a wrestling match!"). This explanation of your life as an intense form of combat is a humble reminder that you can't win these fights on your own. You need the armor of the Victorious King Jesus.

Is your life marked by a need for Jesus?

PRAY: Lord, the battles for my heart, mind and soul are too great and there is too much at stake for me to keep trying on my own. I need You.



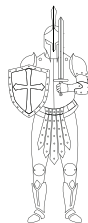
DAY FOUR: COLOSSIANS 2:13-15

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,¹⁴ having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

THOUGH YOU WERE DEAD by the hands of the enemy, God made you alive with Christ! Jesus nailed every one of your sins to the cross and He has already humiliated the enemy in His triumphal resurrection. As a follower of Jesus, not only are all your past sins forgiven, but He promises to continue to give you victory over sin and brokenness. You can either keep fighting a battle that's already been won or you can claim the victory you have in Jesus and live under His rule by following His ways.

Do you live as though the battle over your sin has been won?

PRAY: Lord, remind me that I only have victory over sin in You.



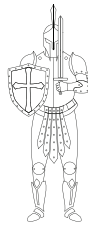
DAY FIVE: 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5

For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

IN CHRIST, YOU CAN BE BOLD and wage war against the enemy. As a follower of Jesus, He has equipped you with all the right weapons: His Spirit, His Word and His people are all standing by at the ready. Though the world may set up their strongholds against the Lord and His ways, you always have the opportunity to demolish the lies with the truth of Jesus.

How often do you fight boldly for the Lord?

PRAY: Lord, help me carry the weapons You have made available through Jesus. Help me to live boldly in Your truth.



DAY SIX: EPHESIANS 6:14a

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist...

IN ORDER TO STAND FIRM against the attacks of the enemy, you must put on the armor of God. The first piece of armor is what is informally referred to as “the belt of truth” (see Isaiah 11:5). When soldiers went to battle, they would wear a belt to hold everything together. By doing this, they were prepared to move freely, quickly and with the assurance they had what they needed for the fight. This is exactly what truth does - each day you can be ready for whatever comes your way by being reminded of Jesus’s love for you, His constant covering of grace and His high calling on your life to represent Him in a world full of lies.

Does the truth of Jesus help you prepare for the day?

PRAY: Lord, thank You for being the Truth in a world of lies. Remind me of this truth: that only Your ways lead to life.



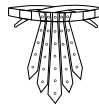
DAY SEVEN: JOHN 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

JESUS DESCRIBES SATAN as "a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). In contrast, He is the Truth. Jesus says a few chapters later, "the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me" (John 18:37). If you want life, then you must reject the lies and pitfalls of the enemy and embrace the way of Jesus.

Do you live as though Jesus's way is the only true way?

PRAY: Lord, remind me of this truth: that only Your ways lead to life.



DAY EIGHT: 1 JOHN 1:5-7

This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE, the term “truth” is often used in conjunction with “righteousness,” “goodness” and “holiness” (Eph 4:24; 5:9). John reminds us that there is a direct correlation between the truth we proclaim and the way that we live. You are called to live out the truth you believe by “walking in the light,” that you would commit your ways to following Jesus by maturing and growing in Him.

Do you live the truth you say you believe?

PRAY: Lord, teach me Your ways so that I may walk in Your truth (Ps 86:11).



DAY NINE: 1 CORINTHIANS 13:6

Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

YOU LIVE IN A CULTURE where loving others is defined by the blind acceptance of others. The problem is that because the world has no set truth or right way to live, any form of pushback toward someone's life is deemed as hate. This is unbiblical, for true love "does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth." Part of what it means to put on the belt of truth is to understand that truly loving others means never compromising the Truth. It doesn't give you a license to be a jerk (see tomorrow's devotion!), but if you desire to truly love your family, neighbors, friends, etc., then you must hold on to the Truth.

Is your love for others defined by the Truth?

PRAY: Lord, help me to love others by delighting in what You say is true.



DAY TEN: EPHESIANS 4:15

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

YOU NEED TO LOVE OTHERS with a “Velvet Brick.” With a brick: you need to see the Word of God and His truth as unchanging and firm. But also with velvet: you need to present those truths to others with compassion and gentleness. If you only approach others with velvet and no substance, you fail to love them with truth. If you only hit others with a brick of truth, you fail to love them with kindness. As you put on the belt of truth, you are called to speak it with love, for this is a part of growing closer to Jesus.

Do you speak the truth in love?

PRAY: Lord, give me strength and wisdom to speak Your truth with love.



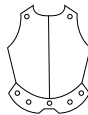
DAY ELEVEN: EPHESIANS 6:14b

Stand firm then... with the breastplate of righteousness in place.

THE SECOND PIECE OF ARMOR Paul encourages these believers to wear is the “breastplate of righteousness” (see Isaiah 59:17). A breastplate was basically a metal shield worn over the chest to protect all the vital organs located in and around the torso. It was highly protective, lightweight and pieced together for flexibility. Though no one is righteous by themselves (Rom 3:10), when you were saved you were given Jesus’s righteousness, goodness and blamelessness to wear like a breastplate, protecting you from the enemy. Therefore, to put on the breastplate of righteousness is to clothe yourself with Jesus’s righteousness and live in a way that honors Him.

Does your life display Jesus’s righteousness?

PRAY: Lord, thank You for clothing me with Your righteousness. Help me reflect it with the way I live.



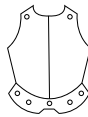
DAY TWELVE: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD REQUIRES YOU TO BE PERFECT. Scripture makes it clear that all the good things you do are like filthy rags to the Lord (Isaiah 64:6). This means that no matter how hard you try, no matter how good you think you are, and no matter how much you try to clean yourself up, you will always fail to have a relationship with God. You need Jesus. Jesus is the perfect substitute Who took your deserved punishment. By believing in Him, you gain undeserved righteousness and can have a relationship with God again.

Is your life marked by a foreign righteousness?

PRAY: Lord, forgive me for my self-sufficiency. Thank You for Your righteousness.



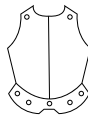
DAY THIRTEEN: ROMANS 1:17

For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.”

GOD’S WORK IN YOUR SALVATION through Jesus reveals God’s righteousness and perfect nature. And though you fall short, the beauty of this good news is that you can be declared righteous by believing in God’s ways. All through the Bible, God’s people were declared righteous, not by their actions, but by their faith. Specifically, a faith that proclaims God is Who He says He is and He will do what He says He will do. This belief becomes the fuel of God’s people to act in a way that reflects God’s righteousness. Right actions flow from right beliefs.

Do your actions flow from your faith?

PRAY: Lord, strengthen my faith in You so that it overflows in a righteous way of living.



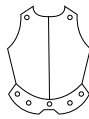
DAY FOURTEEN: PHILIPPIANS 3:8-9

What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

PAUL TRIED TO EARN THE FAVOR OF GOD by doing all the right things. In the end, he realized that his righteousness was not determined by his actions, but by God's grace as he believed in Jesus. This realization caused him to drop everything and live for Jesus. God doesn't love you because of all the good things you do. God loves you because that's Who God is. Quit trying to earn the favor of God by doing everything right. Instead, live by faith that it is only by His grace that you are loved and restored.

Do you try to earn God's favor?

PRAY: Lord, forgive me for trying to earn Your love. Show me Your grace and teach me what it means to live by faith.



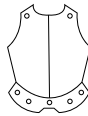
DAY FIFTEEN: MATTHEW 5:6

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

WHEN A PERSON IS STARVING, it is silly to think that their hunger would be quenched with something like cotton candy. Why? Because starving people lack and therefore need essential nutrients to satisfy their deficiencies, or they will continue to suffer. You long to be satisfied in this life. But to try and seek satisfaction in anything other than the Lord is to settle for a cotton candy diet. But the promise in Scripture is that when you hunger, thirst and seek righteousness in Jesus, you will be filled.

Do you seek satisfaction in the Lord?

PRAY: Lord, satisfy me as with rich food so that my mouth will praise You with joyful lips (Ps 63:5).



DAY SIXTEEN: EPHESIANS 6:15

[Stand firm then...] with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

THE THIRD PIECE OF ARMOR every believer needs to wear are the “shoes of peace” (see Isaiah 52:6–7). Typically, Roman military shoes were made from layers of thick leather, and many had hollow-headed metal studs on the bottom for both traction and added support. Without them, soldiers would lose their footing and be unable to fight. In a world filled with turmoil, chaos and a variety of obstacles that will trip you up, may you always be ready to stand on and be supported by the peace that is offered in the good news of Jesus.

Is Jesus your source of peace?

PRAY: Lord, show me Your path to peace.



DAY SEVENTEEN: ROMANS 5:1

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

BEFORE BELIEVING IN JESUS, you were an enemy of God. God was the One you attempted to battle as you fought for your way of living. But in Christ, you now have peace with God. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus signed a peace treaty between you and the Lord so that you can stop fighting a losing battle and instead join His winning side. Thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ for helping us walk in His peace.

Do you live as an enemy or as an ally of the Lord?

PRAY: Lord, forgive me for fighting against Your ways. Help me be at peace with You as I walk in Your truth.



DAY EIGHTEEN: MATTHEW 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

AS YOU WEAR THE “SHOES OF PEACE,” not only do you experience peace with God, but you are then called to be a peacemaker. As you have received peace, you are now called to pursue peace in every area of your life. Your interactions with others should be saturated in gentleness, humility and patience as you stand on God’s truth. As Paul says in Romans 12:18, *“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”*

Would others classify you as a peacemaker?

PRAY: Lord, as I have received Your peace so help me to bring Your peace wherever I go.



DAY NINETEEN: JAMES 3:18

Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

WHEN YOU SEEK to sow and cultivate God's peace in your life, the Bible promises a return with fruit of righteousness. Your life will be marked by peace as you aim to be a peacemaker. The world is broken and in constant discord. You are called to preach the way to peace with God through your words and deeds. You can do this through things like seeking the good of the voiceless, counseling the concerned, showing hospitality to the outcast and sending missionaries around the globe. God's righteousness is on display when the feet of His people walk in peace.

Do you display the peace of the Gospel?

PRAY: Lord, teach me to display Your peace to the world.



DAY TWENTY: 1 PETER 3:15-16

But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

PART OF WEARING THE “SHOES OF PEACE” is that your feet “would be fitted with readiness” to go wherever the Lord needs His Gospel of peace to go (Eph 6:15). Peter encourages believers to always be ready to share your hope in Jesus with others. As a believer in an unbelieving world, your life is under a microscope. Everything you do and say should be respectful, gentle and always clearly represent Jesus.

At any moment, are you ready to give reason for the hope that you have?

PRAY: Lord, remind me over and over again that I represent Jesus wherever I go.



DAY TWENTY-ONE: EPHESIANS 6:16

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

THE FOURTH PIECE OF ARMOR Paul urges believers to carry is the “shield of faith.” The shield was the biggest piece of equipment on a soldier, made to take the blows of hand-to-hand combat or the shots from long-distance attackers. Paul states that its purpose is not to extinguish the “fire-tipped missiles” of the enemy. Your faith in God is your primary protection against the enemy’s evil attacks. No matter what the evil one fires at you, faith in God will always serve as a faithful defense.

How strong is your faith in the faithful One?

PRAY: Lord, I believe that You are my fortress and my shield, faithful to save me from the attacks of the enemy (Ps 18:2).



DAY TWENTY-TWO: HEBREWS 11:6

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

WHILE PART OF FAITH IN GOD is acknowledging His existence, it is also believing God is who He says He is and that His ways are better than your ways. Living with this kind of faith is the only way to please God because you give Him total control of your life. You are called to humble yourself and constantly seek Him. As you do, God is faithful to reward you with His presence and life in Him.

Do you believe God rewards your faith in Him?

PRAY: Lord, forgive me for trying to please You in my own strength. Humble me and show me how to live by faith in You.



DAY TWENTY-THREE: GALATIANS 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

AS A BELIEVER, you are called to give up your way of living and live by faith in Jesus. Taking up a shield of faith daily means that you live fully convinced that God is able to make good on His promises. God has promised that though His way is narrow and hard, it will always lead to life. As Proverbs 3:5-6 says, *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”*

Have you died to your way of living?

PRAY: Lord, strengthen my faith in Your promised Word so that I may walk confidently in Your ways.



DAY TWENTY-FOUR: 2 CORINTHIANS 5:7

For we live by faith, not by sight.

IN THE BOOK OF EXODUS, God's people saw God do miraculous works to deliver them from their oppressors. You would think that they would be able to trust God as they headed to the Promised Land. But instead, they grumbled, complained and eventually abandoned God to worship a golden calf (Ex 32). Simply seeing God work doesn't transform your heart. Instead, the only way you can follow God is by trusting Him in every aspect of your life.

Do you believe God is who He says He is?

PRAY: Lord, help me to live by faith and not by sight.



DAY TWENTY-FIVE: 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.

AT TIMES, you may feel as though the weight of the world is on your shoulders. You may feel like the cycle of sin you find yourself in is too great. You may feel that the enemy has defeated you. However, the object of your faith is perfectly faithful. Amid your temptations, there's always a way out. The way out is not in self-reliance but in trusting God to give you the strength to run to Him.

Do you trust that God has provided a way out of your temptations?

PRAY: Lord, give me strength to not be overcome by temptation, but run toward Your way out.



DAY TWENTY-SIX: EPHESIANS 6:17

Take the helmet of salvation...

THE FIFTH PIECE OF ARMOR Paul encourages every believer to put on is the “helmet of salvation” (see Isaiah 59:17). The first-century Roman helmet included material to cover the neck and shoulders. It was essential for the survival of every soldier as it protected the command center of the body. The only way to have victory over the enemy is to wear the helmet that is given to you in your salvation. As a believer, you have the assurance that the enemy will never be able to attack you with a fatal blow. Instead, you are to wear your salvation daily as it protects you from the suggestions, thoughts, traps and lies of the enemy.

Do you live as though you are wearing the helmet of salvation?

PRAY: Lord, remind me that my salvation in You is sure and that I am protected from the fatal blows of the enemy because of Your grace.



DAY TWENTY-SEVEN: ROMANS 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes...

SALVATION BEGINS WITH THE REALIZATION that apart from God's intervention, because of your sin, you will be forever separated from Him. The good news is that God intervened by sending Jesus. He brought salvation by coming down to earth as a man, living a perfect life, taking our punishment by dying on the cross and raising from the dead to conquer sin and death. The power of God is revealed in Jesus's work, and by believing that Jesus is the only way back to the Father, you are saved. Therefore, if you believe this is true, then you shouldn't be ashamed of it! Instead, you should live out the joy you have received in boldness and confidence.

Do you live as though you are ashamed of the Gospel?

PRAY: Lord, remind me that salvation can only be found in You. Give me boldness to live unashamed.



DAY TWENTY-EIGHT: 1 THESSALONIANS 5:8-9

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. ⁹ For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

ACCORDING TO THE SURROUNDING VERSES, every believer belongs to the “day” light (1 Ths 5:4–7). You aren’t called to live in the darkness, where you sleep and stumble, but to be alert and self-controlled as children of light. Paul encourages every believer to live in this light by putting on three essential Christian virtues as armor: faith, love and hope. You can stand firm in Jesus by trusting in the Lord with all of your heart, loving Him and others as a result and reminding yourself constantly of the hope that you have in Jesus.

Is your life marked by light or darkness?

PRAY: Lord, teach me to be distinctly Christian by living in faith, hope and love.



DAY TWENTY-NINE: ROMANS 12:2

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

PART OF WHAT IT MEANS TO WEAR THE HELMET OF SALVATION is understanding that Jesus is the One who protects and transforms your mind. Your mind is a battlefield where either God or the enemy can rule the day. When your mind is shaped by the enemy, you will always fail to walk in God's will. When God's ways transform your thinking, you walk according to His will and experience His life. Therefore, you need to be constantly renewing your mind in the ways of Jesus by "setting your minds on things above, not on earthly things" (Col 3:2).

Who controls your thinking?

PRAY: Lord, transform my thinking so that I may walk in Your will.



DAY THIRTY: PHILIPPIANS 4:8

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.

RIGHT THINKING LEADS TO RIGHT LIVING. When your mind is saturated by the things of this world, you will fail to live in the joy of your salvation. But, when you choose to let your mind be shaped by the very character and nature of God, your life will be filled with Him. When your mind is focused on the things of God, your attitude will no longer be affected by the people and circumstances surrounding you. Rather, your thinking will look beyond external situations and rest in the unchanging truths of the Gospel.

How can the good things of God infiltrate your negative thoughts?

PRAY: Lord, I believe You are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy. Help me to dwell on You and not this world.



DAY THIRTY-ONE: EPHESIANS 6:17b

... And [take] the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

THE SIXTH PIECE OF ARMOR every Christian needs to embrace is “the sword that comes from the Spirit.” This piece is listed as the only offensive weapon for the Christian marching into battle. According to the passage, this sword is the Word of God. When Jesus was in the wilderness for forty days, He quoted Scripture to combat every temptation from Satan (Mt 4:1-11). If this was Jesus’s strategy, how much more do you need to realize that your greatest weapon against the enemy is reading, believing, studying and understanding the Bible?

What role does God’s Word play in your life?

PRAY: Lord, remind me that my only weapon against the enemy is Your Word.



DAY THIRTY-TWO: 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S AUTHORITATIVE WORD to humanity that provides everything we need for a life with Him. Like a parent to a child, the Word of God comes alongside and teaches you the right way to live, calls you out when you're in sin, sets you back in the right direction and then equips you to stay the course. The only way to live the way God has determined is true and trustworthy is to know Him through His Word.

Do you live as though the Bible is true and trustworthy?

PRAY: Lord, help me to live a life where Your Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path (Ps 119:105).



DAY THIRTY-THREE: HEBREWS 4:12

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

SATAN WILL DO EVERYTHING HE CAN to keep you from opening your Bible. Why? Because the Bible is unlike every other work of literature. When you read the Word of God in the power of the Spirit, it is always faithful to convict you where you need convicting and show you where you fall short. Every time you open the Scriptures, you have an opportunity to humble yourself in repentance as you allow your pride, arrogance and self-dependence to be revealed, judged and corrected.

Do you believe God's word is alive and active?

PRAY: Lord, move me to read Your Word humbly so that I may be transformed by it.



DAY THIRTY-FOUR: 1 PETER 1:24-25

For, “All people are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall,²⁵ but the word of the Lord endures forever.” And this is the word that was preached to you.

PETER IS QUOTING ISAIAH 40:6-8 in this passage and, in doing so, he recalls the enduring truth of the Word of God. People come and people go. What is popular today will be mocked tomorrow. Technology changes. Entertainment changes. Everything changes. Except God. He is immutable. He doesn't change. And His Word possesses the same quality. As you get frustrated with trends, current events and the ever-changing culture, look to the everlasting Word of God as the standard of unchanging Truth.

Do you live your life according to the fickle culture or the enduring Word?

PRAY: Lord, thank You for being the same God of yesterday, today and tomorrow.



DAY THIRTY-FIVE: REVELATION 2:16

Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

UP TO THIS POINT, the study has shown that the “sword that comes from the Spirit” is the Word of God that brings life and salvation to all those who believe. At the same time, His Word is also a sword that brings judgment on all those who reject Him. Though the culture claims anything exclusive is unloving, God makes it clear that His Word is a dividing line. You must believe in Jesus to be saved. You can either choose to believe that His Word is true and have life. Or, you can reject His Word and therefore be judged by it.

Do you believe in His Word?

PRAY: Lord, I know one day soon You will judge the earth. Help me use Your Word as a weapon against the enemy and a light to the world.



DAY THIRTY-SIX: EPHESIANS 6:18

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

THOUGH NOT ASSOCIATED WITH AN OFFICIAL PIECE OF ARMOR, prayer closes out Paul's encouragement to the Ephesian believers. How does this practice relate to the armor of God? The famous puritan Matthew Henry explained, "Prayer must buckle on all the other parts of our Christian armor." Prayer is simply talking with God. If you desire to put on the armor and keep wearing the armor, you must stay in constant communication with God. In every occasion, any way you are able, make prayer a priority so that you are always equipped for every spiritual battle.

Is prayer a priority in your life?

PRAY: Lord, by the power of Your Spirit, prompt me to pray in every situation so that I may put on the armor You have given me.



DAY THIRTY-SEVEN: ROMANS 12:11-12

Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

EVERY BATTLE AGAINST THE ENEMY should be fought with passion, enthusiasm and a commitment to serving the Lord, all while finding Your joy in Jesus and patiently enduring the attacks of the enemy. Your source of spiritual help to do all of this is found in prayer. Satan will do everything in his power to keep you from talking with God because he knows that you are weak on your own. Though its common to hear of Christians who struggle with prayer, it's important to understand that every time you pray, you call in back up. Your faithfulness to prayer allows you to be a faithful soldier for Christ.

Do you treat prayer like a last resort or a key strategy in your everyday battles?

PRAY: Lord, I can't be all that You have called me to be in my own strength. Remind me that You are my "refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble" (Ps 46:1).



DAY THIRTY-EIGHT: COLOSSIANS 4:2

Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.

WHEN YOU COMMIT TO PRAYING, you are allowing God to remind you who He is in your life. God is always working. The enemy wants to keep you so focused and so busy on what you have going on in front of you, that you fail to stop and reflect on God's work. This tunnel vision creates selfish people who lack in thanksgiving and become ineffective in God's Kingdom. Prayer makes you aware of God's workings in and around you which will naturally cause more thanksgiving and praise from you.

How does prayer help you stay watchful and thankful?

PRAY: Lord, forgive me for my self-focus. Show me how You are working around me so that I may praise Your name.



DAY THIRTY-NINE: JAMES 5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

AS SIN BREAKS DOWN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, repentance restores our relationship with God. But notice, this isn't simply personal repentance. This is a call to repent and pray with other believers. In a world that will fight you, stab you and shoot arrows at you, it is vital to realize that you are not fighting this battle alone. You need other people in your life who pray for you regularly. In order to keep wearing God's armor and to daily wage war against the enemy, you need to link arms with those who are fighting next to you.

How are others praying for you?

PRAY: Lord, reveal to me people in my life who will pray for me and I can pray for them.



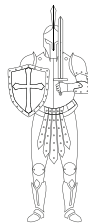
DAY FORTY: EPHESIANS 6:13

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

AS A BELIEVER, you are a Christian soldier called to put on the armor that God has given you: The Belt of Truth, The Breastplate of Righteousness, The Shoes of Peace, The Shield of Faith, The Helmet of Salvation and The Sword of the Spirit, using Prayer to buckle it all together. One thing you can be sure of in this life is that Satan is guaranteed to attack. He wants to destroy you. He wants to distract you. He wants to keep you ineffective for God's Kingdom. He wants you to suffer his same misery. If you desire to stand firm and hold your ground in the everyday battles, then call out to the Lord and put on the full armor of God.

Are you actively wearing the armor God has given you?

PRAY: Lord, I need You to equip me and clothe me with Your armor so that I may stand my ground and serve You well.





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