

Pre-sermon Comments

2 Timothy 3:16 NASB95

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

2 Peter 1:20–21 NASB95

But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a matter* of one's own interpretation,

for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

John 14:26 NASB95

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.

John 16:13 NASB95

“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.

1 Corinthians 2:2 NASB95

For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

1 Corinthians 2:4–5 NASB95

and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

1 Corinthians 2:6–7 NASB95

Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away;

but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden *wisdom* which God predestined before the ages to our glory;

1 Corinthians 2:8–9 NASB95

the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;

but just as it is written,

"THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD,

AND *which* HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN,

ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM."

1 Corinthians 2:10–16 NASB95

For to us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

For who among men knows the *thoughts* of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the *thoughts* of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*.

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.

For WHO HAS KNOWN THE MIND OF THE LORD, THAT HE WILL INSTRUCT HIM? But we have the mind of Christ.

The MacArthur Study Bible Chapter 2

The wisdom that saves, which man's wisdom can't know, is revealed to us by God. He makes it known by revelation, inspiration, and illumination.

Acts 17:11 NASB95

Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily *to see whether these things were so*.

Many have puzzled themselves about the origin of evil. I am content to observe that there is evil, and that there is a way to escape from it, and with this I begin and end. - John Newton

Mook's Theological Dicta

1. Receive Theology from above; don't build it from below.
2. Revere the Triune God in interpreting Scripture: God must be seen as eternally transcending man.

Num 23:19 ""God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

3. Because God is Who He is, He does what He does.
4. Possibly both/and, not either/or: Beware the forced choice.

When there is a tension in Scripture:

- Admit the tension, and affirm both aspects as true with total confidence:
 - God's Word is truth
 - Ultimately, God knows all truth about Himself and reality
 - God has revealed both sides
 - His thoughts are higher than our thoughts
- Do not try to "solve" the apparent opposite truths. Accept both. To do otherwise will result in denying one or the other or both. The result will be heresy. Reject only real contradictions.

Example of a tension in Scripture:

Divine Sovereignty and Human Accountability: God is completely sovereign over the lives of humans.

He directs all things according to His will, and has unconditionally ordained some to be saved (Eph. 1:11; Rom. 8:28-30).

Yet people are held accountable for their own decisions and actions (John 3:36; 1 Pt. 4:17; John 1:12-13)

Sermon Text

Ephesians 6:10–17 NASB95

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;

in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil *one*.

And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Introduction to our Text

Review

Acts 19:16 NASB95

And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

| Acts 19:15 (NASB95)

| And the evil spirit answered and said to them, "I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?"

Acts 19:18–19 NASB95

Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices.

And many of those who practiced magic brought their books together and *began* burning them in the sight of everyone; and they counted up the price of them and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.

Ephesians 2:4–6 NASB95

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 1:13–14 NASB95

In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of *God's own* possession, to the praise of His glory.

| As an obedient believer, you are to stand firm in the strength of the Lord, to be sober in spirit, and to remain alert in order to resist the schemes of the devil. However, in all areas of your walk as a believer, you are

incapable in your own strength and insufficient in your own resources to overcome the wiles and temptations of Satan. Therefore, you must put on the full armor of God to be an overwhelming conqueror in your continuing spiritual battle. ~ John Broger

Proposition and Outline

- In Eph 6:13, which we looked at last week, Paul reiterates the urgency for the Christian to take up the full armor of God to be able to resist the evil of our day. In 6:14-17, Paul gives six critical pieces of armor for resisting. You must prepare by:
 - Girding yourself with the belt of truth (6:14a)
 - Putting on the breastplate of righteousness (6:14b)
 - Shodding your feet to share the Gospel of Peace (6:15)
 - Taking up the shield of faith (6:16)
 - Taking up the helmet of salvation (6:17a)
 - Taking up the sword of the Spirit (6:17b)

You must prepare by girding yourself with the belt of truth (6:14a)

Ephesians 6:14 (NASB95)

Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

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It is not so much content as it is commitment. Attitude is the real issue here. We have a heart for the battle. We're not out there unprepared. We've got all the loose ends pulled together. We've put on the sash that holds our weapons and marks us as soldiers. We have a heart for battle.

We've counted the cost. The true Christian loves the truth and is ready to fight for the truth. We will earnestly contend for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. We'll go to battle for the truth, but we'll go to battle for our own spiritual protection. You will never win the spiritual battles that come day by day against your formidable enemy unless you are seriously committed to that victory. ~ John MacArthur

If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at the moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved to be steady... [It] is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point [of attack]. ~ Martin Luther

Christians who have not girded their loins with the truth are content with:

- Infrequent worship with the church
- Indifference toward the great doctrines of Scripture
- A shallow understanding of God's word
- A shallow or nonexistent prayer life
- A superficial understanding of God's glory
- A general apathy toward sin
- An avoidance of service to God and His people

Hebrews 12:1 (NASB95)

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,

You must prepare by putting on the breastplate of righteousness (6:14b)

Ephesians 6:14 (NASB95)

Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

The breastplate was not made from one solid piece of metal the way most of us imagine they were. Most of us, when we think of a breastplate, think of the armor that knights used in medieval England. We think of knights mounted on horses with their lances and broadswords and covered in armor from head to toe.

The soldiers had to be able to run 24 miles in 5 hours with their armor on. In contrast, there is no way a medieval, fully armored knight could probably even run five miles in five hours. This type of armor was better suited to the type of combat the Roman soldiers found themselves in when out on the field.

Ephesians 6:14 HCSB

Stand, therefore,

with truth like a belt around your waist,

righteousness like armor on your chest,

2 Corinthians 5:21 NASB95

He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Genesis 15:6 NASB95

Then he believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.

Romans 4:22 NASB95

Therefore IT WAS ALSO CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Romans 3:21–23 NASB95

But now apart from the Law *the* righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

even *the* righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

One day as I was passing into the field . . . this sentence fell upon my soul. Thy righteousness is in heaven. And methought, I saw with the eyes of my soul Jesus Christ at God's right hand; there, I say, was my righteousness; so that wherever I was, or whatever I was doing, God could not say of me,

he wants [lacks] my righteousness, for that was just before [in front of] him. I also saw, moreover, that it was not my good frame of heart that made my righteousness better, nor yet my bad frame that made my righteousness worse, for my righteousness was Jesus Christ himself, "The same yesterday, today and, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Now did my chains fall off my legs indeed. I was loosed from my afflictions and irons; my temptations also fled away; so that from that time those dreadful scriptures of God left off to trouble me; now went I also home rejoicing for the grace and love of God ~ John Bunyan

When God counts somebody righteous on the basis of faith, it is not because He looks at them and sees that they are inherently righteous. Rather, they have been clothed by the imputation, or transfer, of the righteousness of Christ to that person by faith ~ RC Sproul

The first verse of the great hymn of the faith - Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness written by Count Zinzendorf and translated by John Wesley - proclaims -

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed
With joy shall I lift up my head.

Ephesians 5:7-11 NASB95

Therefore do not be partakers with them;

for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light

(for the fruit of the Light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them;

2 Corinthians 7:1 NASB95

Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Conclusion:

The Gospel

Ponder the Real Gospel by J.C. Ryle

Christ's death is the Christian's life. Christ's cross is the Christian's title to heaven. Christ "lifted up" and put to shame on Calvary is the ladder by which Christians "enter into the holiest," and are at length landed in glory.

It is true that we are sinners—but Christ has suffered for us. It is true that we deserve death—but Christ has died for us. It is true that we are guilty debtors—but Christ has paid our debts with His own blood. This is the real Gospel! This is the good news! On this let us lean while we live. To this let us cling when we die. Christ has been "lifted up" on the cross, and has thrown open the gates of heaven to all believers.