

The Most Excellent Way

*The Christian Solution to Chemical Dependency
“Becoming GOD-Dependent”*

Bible Study:

“Put On the FULL Armor of God”

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All Scriptures from the New International Version of The Bible, unless otherwise noted.

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Introduction: The Armor of God

Ephesians 6:11-18

First, we see that Paul repeats “stand” three times (vss. 11, 13, 14). The full armor is put on to *stand* against the enemy’s wiles and schemes.

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 NKJV — For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

We need to memorize the six pieces of armor, and we need to know what each represents — they all symbolize the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God.

Second, think of yourself as a Roman soldier putting on each piece of the battle gear which equips you for spiritual warfare.

1. **BELT OF TRUTH** — Jesus is Truth. Put on Jesus and the Word. Only Christians have truth.

John 14:6; 17:17 NKJV — Jesus said: “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” ... [Jesus prayed:] “Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”

2. **BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS** — You have the Spirit of God/Jesus in you, with His righteousness (which is now our righteousness) and almighty power as your armor.

John 17:22-23 NKJV — [Jesus prayed:] “And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.”

3. **Shod your feet with the readiness of the GOSPEL OF PEACE.**

Romans 10:15 NKJV — “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!”

Jesus is the Prince of Peace:

Isaiah 9:6 NKJV — And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace .

God is the God of peace:

Romans 16:20 NKJV — And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of peace:

Galations 5:22-23 NKJV — But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace ...

4. **SHIELD OF FAITH** — Our Heavenly Father gave us the faith to believe in His Son and what He did for us.

Ephesians 2:8-10 NKJV — For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

We have the faith of Jesus who went to the cross for us in obedience to His Father. By faith in His death and resurrection, by His blood (life) we are cleansed of all sin to stand against the fiery darts of the enemy.

5. **HELMET OF SALVATION** — Jesus is the author of our salvation — His Word protects our minds.

Hebrews 5:9 NKJV — And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, ...

Philippians 2:5 NKJV — Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

6. **SWORD OF THE SPIRIT — The Word of God — is both a defensive and offensive weapon against the enemy.** We have the “Spirit of Christ” living within us — the Word — to defend ourselves. We pray in the Spirit and in Christ, using the Word of God. **Jesus and the Holy Spirit intercede for us. The Holy Spirit is our Teacher and our Power.**

Hebrews 4:12 NKJV — For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Spiritual armor and weapons are powerful when used with energy. Our energy comes from prayer and obedience to His Word.

Now, let us put on the Armor of Light and go about our business, fully armed and ready.

Romans 13:12, 14 NKJV

The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. ... put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.

“Put On the FULL Armor of God”

BIBLE STUDY

CONSIDER: Jude 17-25 NIV

Dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold.

¹⁸*They said to you, “In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires.”*

¹⁹*These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit.*

²⁰*But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit.*

²¹*Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.*

²²*Be merciful to those who doubt;*

²³*snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear—
hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh.*

²⁴*To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy—*

²⁵*to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.*



MEMORIZE: Ephesians 6:11-18 NIV

Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

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.*

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.*

¹⁴*Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,*

¹⁵*and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.*

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.*

¹⁷*Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

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 saints.*

I. The purpose of God’s spiritual armor:

- A. God’s armor prepares Believers to resist the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:11).
- B. God’s armor enables Believers to stand firm in the strength of the Lord. (Ephesians 6:10-11, 13).
- C. Protection by all parts of God’s armor helps Believers to be equipped for walking daily in the confidence of the Lord (Ephesians 6:13-17).

II. The need for putting on the armor of God:

- A. **The struggle for Believers in Christ is not only the physical realm. We are also in a massive spiritual battle against rulers, powers, the world forces of darkness, and spiritual forces of wickedness (Ephesians 6:12).**
- B. **Our adversary, the devil, tempts us to sin so that our effectiveness as a Believer in Christ will be destroyed.**

1 Thessalonians 3:5 ~ For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless.

1 Peter 5:8-10 ~ Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast.

- C. **Satan is the ruler and deceiver of this world.**

John 12:31 ~ Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out.

Revelation 12:9 ~ The great dragon was hurled down--that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

Satan diligently schemes to take advantage of all Believers in Christ.

II Corinthians 2:11b ~ For we are not unaware of his schemes.

- D. **Satan, through his false messengers, continually tries to mislead Believers.**

Matthew 24:24 ~ For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect—if that were possible.

II Corinthians 11:3-4 ~ But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. ‘For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.

Titus 1:15-16 ~ *To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.*

I John 2:24-26 ~ *See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. And this is what he promised us—even eternal life. I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray.*

III. What is the Believer’s confidence in the midst of spiritual warfare?

A. Believers are new creations, and are established in their position in Christ.

II Corinthians 5:17 ~ *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

Romans 8:14-17 ~ . . . *because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.* ¹⁵*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."* ¹⁶*The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.* ¹⁷*Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

I Corinthians 1:30 ~ *It is because of Him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

Galatians 4:4-7 ~ *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.*

Ephesians 2:5-7 ~ . . . *made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 3:20 ~ *But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ,*

Colossians 2:9-10 ~ *For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.*

B. As a Believer, you can be more than a conqueror because of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ:

Romans 8:31-39 ~ *What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us?* ³²*He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?* ³³*Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.* ³⁴*Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.* ³⁵*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?* ³⁶*As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."* ³⁷**No, in all these things we are more**

than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 4:4 ~ *You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*

1 John 5:4-5 ~ *... for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*

C. Believers no longer need to be enslaved by sin.

Romans 6:5-14 ~ *If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.*

⁶*For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—*

⁷*because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.*

⁸*Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.*

⁹*For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him.*

¹⁰*The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.*

¹¹*In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

¹²*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.*

¹³*Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.*

¹⁴*For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*

Romans 6:17-18 ~ *But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness.*

Hebrews 2:14-15 ~ *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

D. As a Believer, you have free access to the mercy, grace, wisdom, and power of God in Jesus Christ through prayer.

Matthew 26:41 ~ *[Jesus said:] “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”*

Luke 22:40 ~ *[Jesus said:] “Pray that you will not fall into temptation.”*

John 16:23-24 ~ *[Jesus said:] “I tell you the truth, my Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.”*

2 Thessalonians 3:1-3 ~ *Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. ²And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. ³But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.*

Hebrews 4:15 ~ *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin.*

James 1:5 ~ *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*

1 John 5:14-15 ~ *This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us--whatever we ask--we know that we have what we asked of him.*

E. As a Believer, you are enabled to discern between truth and error (lies) through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and His divine guidance.

John 14:16-17 ~ *[Jesus said:] And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever--the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.*

Romans 8:9 ~ *You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.*

Romans 8:14 ~ . . . *because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*

1 Corinthians 3:16 ~ *Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?*

1 Corinthians 6:19 ~ *Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own;*

Galatians 4:6-7 ~ *Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.*

2 Timothy 1:14 ~ *Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you--guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.*

1 John 2:18-27 ~ *Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour.*

¹⁹*They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.*

²⁰**But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and all of you know the truth.**

²¹*I do not write to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it and because no lie comes from the truth.*

²²*Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son.*

²³*No one who denies the Son has the Father; whoever acknowledges the Son has the Father also.*

²⁴*See that what you have heard from the beginning remains in you. If it does, you also will remain in the Son and in the Father. ²⁵And this is what he promised us--even eternal life.*

²⁶*I am writing these things to you about those who are trying to lead you astray.*

²⁷**As for you, the anointing you received from him remains in you, and you do not need anyone to teach you. But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is real, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him.**

F. As a Believer, the Holy Spirit can keep you from fulfilling the desires of your flesh.

Galatians 5:16-17 ~ *So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.*

G. God has given you His Word, and because you are a Believer, it should be your sole authority to guide you in every aspect of your life.

Psalms 19:7-11 ~ *The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. 8The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. 9The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. 10They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. 11By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.*

Psalms 119:11 ~ *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

Psalms 119:105 ~ *Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.*

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 man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Hebrews 4:12 ~ *For the word of God is living 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.*

2 Peter 1:2-11 ~ *Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.*

³His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

⁴Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

⁵For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge;

⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness;

⁷and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

⁸For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁹But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

¹⁰Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure.

For if you do these things, you will never fall,

¹¹and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

IV. It is the Believer’s responsibility to put on the full armor of God.

If we put on some parts of God’s armor and neglect to put on other parts, we remain vulnerable to defeat. Each piece of God’s armor is designed to protect us in a specific way in our spiritual battles – His armor is totally sufficient for us to resist the devil and stand firm against him. As the Apostle Paul wrote instructions, he provides a picture of a Roman soldier of his time wearing battle armor. As you proceed through this section, picture yourself as a Christian soldier. (Read Ephesians 6:10-17.)

A. EPHESIANS 6:14a ~ “Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, . . .”

1. Biblical truth allows you to move freely through everyday life, unhindered and unentangled by sin, ready to do spiritual battle. Picture in your mind how his belt held a Roman soldier’s tunic out of his way for the ease of movement in battle. The Believer’s “belt of truth” is essential for moving effectively and safely through daily life.
2. Truth that comes solely from God’s Word emphasizes a correct understanding of the Lord Jesus Christ and your relationship with Him.

Psalm 119:160 ~ *All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.*

John 17:17 ~ [Jesus prayed:] “Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth.”

John 14:6 ~ *Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.”*

John 8:31-32 ~ *To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*

John 8:36 ~ [Jesus said:] “So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.:

3. God’s Word also emphasizes that Believers are to be truthful when dealing with their spiritual growth (maturity) and their relationships with others.

Psalm 51:6 ~ *Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach Me wisdom in the inmost place.*

Matthew 7:1-5 ~ [Jesus said:] “Do not judge, or you too will be judged.

For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?

How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye?

You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”

Luke 6:39-45 ~ [Jesus] also told them this parable:

“Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?

⁴⁰A student is not above his teacher, but everyone who

is fully trained will be like his teacher.

⁴¹*Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?*

⁴²*How can you say to your brother, ‘Brother, let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when you yourself fail to see the plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

⁴³*No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit.*

⁴⁴*Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People do not pick figs from thornbushes, or grapes from briars.*

⁴⁵*The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.”*

John 13:35 ~ [Jesus said:] “By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Romans 12:9 ~ *Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

1 Corinthians 13:4-8a ~ *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.*

⁵*It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*

⁶*Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.*

⁷*It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

⁸*Love never fails.*

4. It is important that Believers recognize the areas in their lives where they are most vulnerable to the attacks of Satan. Be determined to be truthful about specific areas of weakness or temptation, and be alert.

Psalms 119:11 ~ *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

1 Corinthians 11:31 ~ *But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.*

1 Thessalonians 5:6 ~ *So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.*

Hebrews 12:1-2 ~ *Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. **Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.***

5. How to “stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist,...”
- Make time to study what Jesus has done for you through His death and resurrection, placing you in Him and disarming Satan's power.
 - Make a list of your favorite Bible verses and passages.
 - Also list those Scriptures that will give you specific help in times of temptation, selecting verses that deal with your area of temptation. List the verses in order of their relevance to your particular problem.

- d. Determine how many verses you will memorize each week, and how many you will review periodically.
- e. Memorize verses that will give others hope or specific help in facing and dealing with problems in Biblical ways.
- f. Be faithful and consistent in your daily devotions in order to abide in the Lord and in His Word. Keep a list of topics that you want to study in more depth.
- g. Count your blessings each day and thank the Lord.

B. EPHESIANS 6:14 ~ “. . .*with the breastplate of righteousness in place, . . .*”

- 1. The Believer’s obedience to God’s Word in *thoughts, words, and actions* will equip us to stand firm, and not be overcome by any of the devil’s diabolic attacks or crafty schemes in living daily life.
- 2. The Believer’s “breastplate of righteousness” cannot be separated from faith in Jesus Christ as demonstrated by Christlike thoughts, words and actions. (In fact, faith in Jesus and demonstrations of His love can be described as a breastplate: . . . *let us be self-controlled, putting on faith and love as a breastplate, and the hope of salvation as a helmet. I Thessalonians 5:8*)

Romans 1:17 ~ *For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith."*

2 Corinthians 5:7 ~ *We live by faith, not by sight.*

Philippians 3:7-11 ~ *But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.*

⁸*What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ*

⁹*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 and is by faith.*

¹⁰*I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death,*

¹¹*and so, somehow, to attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

- 3. God “put on” the righteousness of Jesus Christ onto Believers as a result of spiritual new birth.

1 Corinthians 1:30 ~ *It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.*

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.*

4. The righteousness of God is demonstrated by the Believer living to please the Lord in every area of life, rather than living to please self by following personal appetites and desires, “common sense,” and the world’s wisdom.

1 Corinthian 3:18-20 ~ *Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a “fool” so that he may become wise. ¹⁹For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God’s sight. As it is written: “He catches the wise in their craftiness”; ²⁰and again, “The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile.”*

2 Corinthians 5:9 ~ *So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.*

2 Corinthians. 5:14-15 ~ *For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died for them and was raised again.*

5. **Does your practice of everyday righteousness – living in obedience to God’s Word in *thoughts, words and actions* – reflect the position of righteousness that is yours in Christ? Explain why or why not:**

6. **God was, is, and will always be righteousness.**

Psalm 116:5 ~ *The LORD is gracious and righteous; our God is full of compassion.*

Psalm 145:17 ~ *The LORD is righteous in all His ways and loving toward all He has made.*

7. **How to have “the breastplate of righteousness in place:”**

- a. Identify areas of your life in which you are weak and are still learning to overcome temptation.
- b. Be alert to attacks from Satan and his attempts to defeat you by making a list of circumstances (i.e., locations, relationships, times of the month, times of day or night) in which you are most tempted to practice the old nature thoughts, words and actions.
- c. Learn to judge yourself in a Biblical way. *1 Corinthians 11:31* ~ *But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.*
- d. Develop and practice a Biblical plan for living to please the Lord in all things, and to be a blessing to others, in your daily responsibilities.
- e. Make an emergency plan that will help you overcome unexpected temptations.

f. Evaluate the opportunities you have to specific steps of your plan into practice. As you go through each instance, answer the following questions:

- 1) What happened this time?
- 2) What did I do?
- 3) What should I have done?

If you responded Biblically and pleased the Lord, the second and third answers will be the same. If the answers differ, make the necessary changes to your plan and renew your commitment to be faithful in living God’s way.

C. EPHESIANS 6:15 ~ “. . . and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.”

1. Believers are equipped spiritually by the liberating message of Jesus Christ to help keep them from slipping. The Roman soldier’s “sandal-boot” was made to protect his feet from injury, and enable him to take long marches through rough terrain.
2. Being readied by the gospel of peace, Believers have great encouragement and assurance because they have been reconciled to—are at peace with—God through Jesus Christ, who is our peace.

Ephesians 2:17-18 ~ *He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.* ¹⁸*For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.*

Colossians 1:19-23 ~ *For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,* ²⁰*and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*

²¹*Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.*

²²*But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—*

²³*if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.*

3. No matter what tribulations may arise, the Believer can be at peace in Jesus since He has overcome the world.

John 16:33 ~ *[Jesus said:] “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

4. Believers can be confidently at peace when they face any spiritual battle on the way to final victory, know that Satan has already been defeated through Christ Jesus.

Romans 16:20 ~ *The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.*

5. As a Believer, are you ready to tell others how they can be reconciled to God and be at peace?

2 Corinthians 5:18-19 ~ *All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. **And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.***

Colossians 4:5-6 ~ *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

1 Peter 3:15 ~ *But in your hearts set apart 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, . . .*

6. HOW TO be equipped with “***the gospel of peace***”:
- a. Remember you, as a Believer, are no longer under the wrath of God, but instead are at peace (reconciled) with Him through Jesus Christ.
 - b. Know the Biblical reason for the **hope** within you.
 - c. Update your testimony about what God has done and is doing in your life. Be ready to tell others about the grace of God in Jesus Christ as the Holy Spirit leads.

D. 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.***”

1. Believers can be confident of God’s protective care and sufficiency through Christ Jesus and God’s Word in any life situation by *taking up* the shield of faith. The Roman soldier trusted in the protection of his large “body shield,” even while flaming arrows rained down on him.
2. However, unlike the Roman soldier, the Christian soldier is fighting a battle from within – a spiritual battle. Believers must remember that their own strength is never adequate enough to win any spiritual battle with Satan, and must depend totally on the Lord for victory.

Proverbs 3:5 ~ *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; . . .*

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 ~ *Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*

3. The Believer’s faith (trust) in God rests on the sure foundation of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the sure foundation overcomes the world.

Galatians 2:20 ~ *I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.*

1 John 5:4-5 ~ . . . *for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.*

4. “Faith” is not simply believing in correct facts—Biblical faith results in action that conforms to the Word of God and brings glory to the Lord.

1 Peter 1:6-7 ~ *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 ~ *We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 ~ *With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith. We pray this so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Hebrews 11:1-12:3 ~ *Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. ²This is what the ancients were commended for. ³By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.*

⁴*By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.*

⁵*By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.*

⁶***And 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.***

⁷*By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.*

⁸*By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going.*

⁹*By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise.*

¹⁰*For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.*

¹¹*By faith Abraham, even though he was past age--and Sarah herself was barren--was enabled to become a father because he considered Him faithful who had made the*

promise. ¹²And so from this one man, and he as good as dead, came descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as countless as the sand on the seashore.

¹³All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth.

¹⁴People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return.

¹⁶Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

¹⁷By faith Abraham, when God tested him, offered Isaac as a sacrifice. He who had received the promises was about to sacrifice his one and only son,

¹⁸even though God had said to him, “It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned.”

¹⁹Abraham reasoned that God could raise the dead, and figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back from death.

²⁰By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau in regard to their future. ²¹By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed each of Joseph's sons, and worshiped as he leaned on the top of his staff.

²²By faith Joseph, when his end was near, spoke about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and gave instructions about his bones.

²³By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born, because they saw he was no ordinary child, and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

²⁴By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. ²⁵He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. ²⁶He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

²⁷By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. ²⁸By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

²⁹By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned.

³⁰By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days.

³¹By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient.

³²And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, ³³who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions,

³⁴quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies.

³⁵Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection.

³⁶Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison.

³⁷They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated—

³⁸the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground.

³⁹These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. ⁴⁰God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.

^{12:1}Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. ²Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, scorning its shame,

and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

James 2:14-26 ~ *What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? ¹⁵Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. ¹⁶If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? ¹⁷In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

¹⁸But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds."

Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. ¹⁹You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.

²⁰You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? ²¹Was not our ancestor Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²²You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. ²³And the scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness," and he was called God's friend. ²⁴You see that a person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone.

²⁵In the same way, was not even Rahab the prostitute considered righteous for what she did when she gave lodging to the spies and sent them off in a different direction?

²⁶As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without deeds is dead.

2 Peter 1:5-8 ~ *For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. ⁸For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

5. Roman soldiers protected one another as a unit by enclosing themselves behind overlapping shields when under severe attack from their enemy. Since Satan’s attacks against the Body of Christ never cease, it is obvious that Believers are to be linked with one another in their common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which results in faithful and loving obedience to God’s Word, and victory over spiritual warfare.

Proverbs 24:6 ~ . . . *for waging war you need guidance, and for victory many advisers.*

Ephesians 4:16 ~ *From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.*

Hebrews 10:23-25 ~ *Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

6. HOW TO “**take up the shield of faith**”:

- a. Remember that the circumstances and relationships in which Believers have the most intense trials are the ones in which we especially need to “**take up the shield of faith**.” God uses these trials to develop Christlike character in the Believer’s life, and the trials give the Believer an opportunity to die to self in order to live for Jesus Christ.

- b. Believers are to respond to difficulties in a way that pleases the Lord, instead of focusing on self-interests in thought, words, and actions.

E. Ephesians 6:17 ~ “Take the helmet of salvation . . .”

1. Believers should rely on the completeness and certainty of salvation to protect them from *thoughts* that would keep them from becoming more like Jesus.
2. Believers realize that the penalty for sin has been paid, and that God is presently working to conform us into the character of His Son, Jesus.

Hebrews 10:10-14 ~ *And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹²But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. ¹³Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool, ¹⁴because by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.*

1 Peter 3:18 ~ *For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit,*

Romans 8:28-29 ~ *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. ²⁹For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.*

2 Corinthians 3:18 ~ *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

Philippians 1:6 ~ . . . *being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 3:12-14 ~ *Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. ¹³Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

3. Believers have no reason to fear as we remain obedient to the Word of God in anticipation of seeing Jesus face to face.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 ~ *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

Titus 2:11-14 ~ *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹²It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴who gave Himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for Himself a people that are His very own, eager to do what is good.*

1 Peter 1:13 ~ *Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.*

1 John 3:3 ~ *Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

4. Believers are able to bring their **thoughts** into subjection and concentrate on being obedient to Jesus because of our salvation in Him.

2 Corinthians 10:5 ~ *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.*

Colossians 3:2 ~ *Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.*

5. God continually renews the minds of Believers, changing us into the image of Christ.

Romans 12:1-2 ~ *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. **Do not conform any longer 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.***

2 Corinthians 3:18 ~ *And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.*

Ephesians 4:22-24 ~ *You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; **to be made new in the attitude of your minds;** and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

Colossians 3:10 ~ . . . *and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.*

6. HOW TO “**take the helmet of salvation**”:
- a. Know thoroughly, completely, with certainty the fact of your salvation in Jesus Christ.
 - b. Know the difference between living man’s way and God’s way.
 - c. Discipline your thoughts to concentrate on pleasing the Lord and becoming more Christlike. Remember the Holy Spirit is working in you to complete the work. God is with you to do in you what is impossible for you to do without Him.

F. EPHESIANS 6:17 ~ “**. . . and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.**”

1. Believers should know how to use God’s Word effectively to thwart temptations to sin and other devilish attacks, just as the Roman soldier knew how to use his sword effectively in hand-to-hand combat.

2. Just as the Word of God gives Believers wisdom that leads to salvation, it also continues to accomplish spiritual results after spiritual new birth.

2 Timothy 3:15 ~ . . . and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Hebrews 4:12 ~ For the word of God is living 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.

3. The Word of God is very powerful and totally sufficient for every situation in life. Believers are to handle it accurately by being consistent and faithful doers of the Word, since this keeps us from spiritual delusion and enables us to discern good and evil clearly.

Jeremiah 23:29 ~ “Is not my word like fire,” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?”

Psalms 19:7-11 ~ The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. ⁸The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. ⁹The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. ¹⁰They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. ¹¹By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 ~ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 1:3-4 ~ His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

2 Timothy 2:15 ~ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

James 1:22-25 ~ Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.

Hebrews 5:14 ~ But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

4. The Believers constant love for and obedience to God’s Word will give us great peace, and nothing can cause us to stumble.

Psalms 119:165 ~ Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.

2 Peter 1:2-10 ~ *Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. ³His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. ⁸For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. ¹⁰Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, . . .*

5. The Word of God is more than adequate to cause Satan to flee, but it must be specifically applied in order to be used effectively to combat temptations.

Psalm 119:11 ~ *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

Psalm 119:24 ~ *Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors.*

Psalm 119:41-42 ~ *May your unfailing love come to me, O LORD, your salvation according to your promise; then I will answer the one who taunts me, for I trust in your word.*

Psalm 119:133 ~ *Direct my footsteps according to your word; let no sin rule over me.*

Matthew 4:1-11 ~ *Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. ²After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³The tempter came to Him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.” ⁴Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”*

⁵Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. ⁶“If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” ⁷Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

⁸Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. ⁹“All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” ¹⁰Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”

¹¹Then the devil left Him, and angels came and attended Him.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 ~ *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Hebrews 4:12 ~ *For the word of God is living 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.*

6. After Believers put on the full armor of God, they are to stand firm and resist the devil.

Ephesians 6:11 ~ *Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes.*

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.*

James 4:7 ~ *Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

1 Peter 5:8-9 ~ *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.*

7. Believers have the victorious position in Christ when fully covered by God’s armor, from which we must pray at all times by means of God’s Spirit, especially praying for others in the Body of Christ.

Romans 8:26-27 ~ *In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God’s will.*

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 saints.*

8. HOW TO EFFECTIVELY USE “*the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God*”:

- a. The Believer is a student of the Scriptures.
- b. The Believer is a doer of the Word.
- c. The Believer knows how to combat the schemes of the devil with the Word of God.

G. 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 saints.*”

1. There are times when Believers have deep concern over various circumstances in life (personal problems, or concern for loved ones). It is important that we react Biblically during such times in order to be doers of the Word, and receive the peace of God that passes understanding:

Isaiah 26:3 ~ *You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.*

Psalms 119:165 ~ *Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble [doubt, fear, worry].*

2. Believers are to pray when faced with *the temptation* to fear or worry, and redirect attention to God’s will instead of focusing on self or the problem.
- God’s will:** **Philippians 4:6-7** ~ *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
- God’s will:** **Colossians 4:2** ~ *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*
- God’s will:** **1 Thessalonians 5:17** ~ . . . *pray continually; . . .*
3. Believers have an effective pray life when they faithfully examine themselves in a Biblical way and remain dedicated to pleasing God in all things.
- 1 Corinthians 11:31** ~ *But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.*
- 2 Corinthians 5:9** ~ *So we make it our goal to please Him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.*
- James 1:5-8** ~ *If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does.*
- 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 man is powerful and effective.*
- 1 John 3:22** ~ . . . *and receive from Him anything we ask, because we obey His commands and do what pleases Him.*
4. The Believer places all cares and concerns upon the Lord, while continuing to be a doer of the Word.
- 1 Peter 5:6-7** ~ *Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. **Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.***

Onward! Christian Soldiers! . . . God Bless You!

THE MOST EXCELLENT WAY ~ *“Becoming GOD-Dependent”*

• **FOCUS ON GOD’S WORD**

1. How do you protect your home from danger? _____

2. If you were a police officer, what extra precautions would you take to guard against danger? _____

3. Do you tend to be the trusting type, or are you suspicious of other people? Why? _____

• **STUDYING THE WORD OF GOD**

4. What did Paul say to exhort his audience? (6:10) _____

5. What did Paul tell the believers to put on? (6:11) _____

6. Why do Christians need to put on God's armor? (6:11-12) _____

7. What can Christians dressed in the full armor of God expect? (6:13) _____

8. What mandate does God give all Christians? (6:14) _____

9. How should Christians be armed for battle? (6:14-17) _____

THE MOST EXCELLENT WAY ~ *“Becoming GOD-Dependent”*

10. What last two pieces of armor did Paul tell all Christians to take up? (6:18) _____

• **UNDERSTANDING GOD’S WORD**

11. Why do you think Paul used the detailed description of a Roman soldier’s armor to explain spiritual warfare?

12. How would you describe the armor of God in your own words? _____

13. What is spiritual warfare? _____

14. How often are you engaged in spiritual warfare? _____

15. In what way is the Christian life like a battle? _____

16. Why is the Christian life like a battlefield? _____

17. What pieces of armor are you missing? _____

18. How often do you pray in the Spirit? _____

THE MOST EXCELLENT WAY ~ “*Becoming GOD-Dependent*”

19. How often do you pray for other Christians? _____

20. In what ways do you need peace, love, faith, and grace in your life right now? Explain: _____

• **DOING THE WORD**

21. How often will you put on your spiritual armor? _____

22. How will you rely on God’s armor when facing temptations of the flesh and from the world? _____

23. How will you lean on the Holy Spirit’s help in doing battle for the kingdom of God each day? _____

24. How can you encourage another Christian in his or her spiritual battles? _____

***Onward, Christian soldiers, marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus going on before.
Christ, the royal Master, leads against the foe;
Forward into battle see His banners go!***