

FULLY ARMED

Because Satan is such a formidable foe, and we are so weak by ourselves, we must be well-armed. The armament which the Lord supplies is sufficient, both for protection and for attack. Twice in Ephesians 6, Christian soldiers are urged to utilize the "whole armor of God" (vv. 11, 13). "Whole armor" is from *panoplian* (source of our word *panoply*), meaning "full armor of a heavy-armed soldier." A soldier sent to do battle only partially protected and with a dull or gapped sword is severely handicapped. He is likely to fall. No wonder so many in the Lord's army fall—so many are only half-equipped at best to meet the foe.

All who enter God's service do so by voluntary enlistment, not by being drafted. Likewise, those who have enlisted wait in vain if they suppose they can sit by passively and idly and have the Lord bestow upon them the armor needed to meet the foe. Rather, **we** are to "put on" and "take up" the whole armor that God provides. The armor is readily available and attainable, but one utilizes it only through diligent effort to take it up and put it on. As the Lord's people, we must never rest from nor grow weary with the task of putting on all of the armor provided. Only when we have equipped ourselves as fully as possible will the promise prove effective that says: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as man can bear: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape that ye may be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10:13).

The armor we are to take up and put on is specified in Ephesians 6:14—17. The "girdle of Truth" emphasizes the necessity of knowing the Truth. If we do not know the Truth, we are "sitting ducks" for the errors of the devil. The "breastplate of

righteousness" emphasizes **living** by the Truth as well as **knowing** the Truth. The mere pretender will fail in the daily conflict with Satan. The "preparation [implying study, training] of the Gospel of peace" on our "feet" enables us to stand and fight. The "shield of faith" (actually, "**the** faith," the Gospel) will turn back every approach the devil makes. The Word of God has the answer to every error the devil will ever invent. The hope and confidence we have in our salvation in Christ provides a "helmet" for our protection.

Our one weapon is the Spirit's sword, the Word of God. We should not be surprised that all of these pieces of armor (whether offensive or defensive) relate to the Word of God, either directly or indirectly. Ignorance of the Truth among the rank and file (and even many of the "officers") in the Lord's "army" is the principal cause of so many spiritual casualties.

—Dub McClish

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