

Christians are under attack! If we don't believe this and acknowledge who our struggle is against, we won't use God's weapons that promise victory. There are forces that don't want us walking in light of our new identity or in a way that is pleasing to God. **The world** tries to pressure us into conformity with its way of thinking, talking, and behaving. **The flesh** tries to pressure us into operating by our desires/urges, without taking the Spirit into consideration. **The devil** tries to mislead and destroy us by deceptive schemes, causing evil days.

Evil days are those periods of time when I'm especially vulnerable, when it seems I can't possibly live without some pleasure, when who I am IN Christ and the Spirit doesn't seem that important, those days when evil thoughts seem to come out of nowhere and I can't seem to shake them, those days when I wonder if the Bible really is the ultimate authority & when Jesus seems distant, those days when the future seems bleak, with no hope, those days when there's great discontentment with everything and everyone around me. Those to me are evil days of demonic attack! What can we do during those dark, wicked, seemingly overwhelming days? The answers are in Eph. 6:10-18 (read).

Please understand, our battle is a spiritual one, one that can be won only by using the resources that God has furnished. Yes, He's provided them, and we're unwise, foolish, and sinning if we ignore His protective gear.

Eph. 6:10-18 explains the Christian's adversary and his evil schemes, and how to deal with him. If you are a new recruit to Christianity, there is a battle-scarred veteran of the faith, the apostle Paul, who greets you: "I'll teach you who our enemy is and his forces and schemes. I'll teach you how to stand firm, no matter the attacks. To arms, fellow soldiers, to arms!"

Let's take a look at this amazing passage. As we study **6:10-13**, it should be pointed out that there are three commands. The 1st is in **:10**: "**Be strong**." The 2nd is in **:11**: "**Put on**." The 3rd is in **:13**: "**Take up**." Whenever God commands us to take action, it is important, urgent. Notice what each command involves—the Lord and His armor. We as Christians must understand that our daily struggles are at their depth 'spiritual' encounters. And the only way to win a spiritual battle is with spiritual weapons. These God has abundantly supplied. There are 6 pieces listed. But before we get to those, let's see who our God is, how He has supplied, and who our true enemies are.

:10 Finally (wrapping up how to walk worthy **4:1**), **be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might**. The first command is in the tense meaning to "**Be continually strengthened in the Lord**." We must be continually strengthened in the Lord and His power and might (see **1:19, 3:16,20**). This is God's power that raised Jesus from the dead, that gave life to dead sons of disobedience and children of wrath, that took believing Jews and believing Gentiles and created them one new man!! We are guaranteed losers if we begin any battle with our own fleshly resources. Remember, this is a spiritual battle, one not fought with earthly or fleshly armaments. Paul says elsewhere (**2 Cor. 10:3-4**)—"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh,

but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses." We are to do battle with the safeguards He's provided. "Lord Jesus, You and Your strength are my answer during evil days. May I realize my own human, worldly resources are absolutely futile during these periods of intense attack, yet through Your Life and power, I can walk in victory; I can stand firm."

:11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. The second command is to put on the complete, life-long gear God has furnished. The reason we are to put on this Divine armor is because we have an enemy, known by many names in the Scriptures, but here referred to as the devil, which means accuser/slanderer (the word Satan means adversary). This opponent is always trying to malign or tear down Christians. In fact, in **Jn. 8:44 (read)**, Jesus describes the devil as *a murderer and a liar*, a destroyer and a deceiver. Jesus says *there is no truth in him!* Notice, NO truth at all! **In Eph. 4:21** we learned the truth is in Jesus. The devil is an evil, cunning, powerful, invisible, organized foe against whom no human being in his/her own strength and resources is a match.

Satan wants to destroy lives, relationships, God, truth, salvation, love, joy, peace, trust; he wants people to 'feel' worthless, discontented, to worry, fear, give in to deceptive thoughts, to despair, give up. Because he's been around all of our lives, he knows our strengths and our weaknesses, he knows our past, he knows at what points we're most susceptible. As this verse teaches, he uses schemes or differing methods. He's a crafty foe, using methods that divide and deceive. He wants us to believe our enemy is a mate or parent, that child or school mate, that co-worker or fellow Christian, our boss or an associate at work, our governing authorities. Which do you struggle with? Who/Whatever it is, he/she/it is not the true enemy. Don't fight the wrong enemy! The devil/accuser/slanderer, and his spiritual goons of evil are our enemies.

"Thank You, Lord, that Your armor is complete, there's nothing missing. We can actually walk in victory, continually, no matter who/what we're faced with. Defending us against strategy as well as assault, we can stand our ground when under attack."

Observe how the apostle unfolds this truth of who our enemy truly is in **:12**: **:12 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.** Recognize this unseen reality: This struggle, this battle, this conflict, is not against other human beings; our enemy is not someone like us, made of flesh and blood. No, our enemy has rulers and powers, world forces and spiritual forces; he's got an organized army of demons who do his bidding. Apparently when Satan was cast out of heaven because he pridefully wanted to be like God, one-third of the angels went with him (**Rev. 12:7-9**). Now we know those former angels as 'demons'—wicked, powerful, organized, spiritual squadrons who are also out to destroy and deceive, just like their leader. Notice how they're described:

forces of darkness, goons of wickedness; they're never out to accomplish good. They operate in the heavenlies, the invisible realities all around us.

The devil and his demons try to deceive us by making us believe that our enemy is people or nations or circumstances. If we are misled, we'll never win because we've mistaken the enemy. Although people and governments and circumstances may be used as his tools, our battle is not against them but against Satan and his forces. We're to look to the source of the problems, not his tools. Later we'll see we're to look to the launcher of the missiles, not give all our attention to the missiles themselves. Our enemy is out to throw us off balance, to confuse us, to mistake our adversary, to ignore God's provision, to get us to operate by our flesh/feelings/worldly pressures. If he can accomplish any of these, he's won that battle. We have a powerful, tricky opponent, and in our own strength we'll be defeated every time. We're to take seriously the foe, his methods, his followers, and use the weapons that God has richly supplied.

A sobering word study is the word struggle; it means to wrestle, to hold another down. I've read that in Greek times, the defeated wrestlers lost their eyes. If true or regardless, this is no simple, harmless game we're involved in!

:13 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.

THEREFORE, BECAUSE—of our formidable enemy, he is crafty, he is organized with many forces, he is strong, struggles are inevitable, it's a spiritual battle—the third command is to **take up God's full armor**. Take it up in order to use it! Again, it's the only way of victory. We'll be able to resist in the evil day. We'll be able to stand our ground. Victory is assured when God's plans are followed. He has provided everything needed for walking worthy. There are evil days; oh, how evil they are and how vulnerable we are, but thank the Lord, not every day is evil. Even with Jesus when the devil tempted Him, ...**when the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time (Lk. 4:13)**. There are wicked days, days when everything seems against us, that everything is falling apart, that the battle seems too great, that we're more easily misled, that there doesn't seem any end. However, this verse teaches that we can stand firm and resist even in the midst of those days. There is no enemy too great or circumstance too overwhelming for which God hasn't fully supplied.

Remember who God has created you (**2:4-10, :19-22, 4:24**), be continually allowing the Holy Spirit to fill you (**5:18**), and walk in recognition of the Lordship and presence of the Lord Jesus (**5:21**). What are we waiting for? Let's be strong in the Lord, put on His full armor, and take up everything He's provided. It's God's strength, His armor, the only way for success. Therefore, by faith obey the commands of these four verses. We can't lose the ultimate war, because we belong to the Lord Jesus and He won (**Heb. 2:14**)! So, when encountering evil periods of time, intense periods of struggle against the forces of evil, take up! Stand firm! To arms!

Ray Stedman's messages on spiritual warfare are excellent: raystedman.org

Read Eph. 5:15-21, 6:10-18. In **:10-13**, we have 3 commands: **:10 Be strong** in the Lord and in the strength of His might. **:11 Put on** the full armor of God. **:13 Take up** the full armor of God. Why? So you'll be able to stand firm against and resist the schemes and attacks of the devil and his wicked forces.

In **:14-16**, we have the first 4 pieces of armor. The 1st 3 are permanently on. Jesus is these pieces of armor: He is the Truth, our righteousness/justice, our peace. Similar to **Rom. 13:14**, "**Put on the Lord Jesus Christ...**" The second 3 pieces are to be taken up with each evil day/struggle. Recognize each piece is always there and remind ourselves of what each means, using God's powerful weapons for victory—prayer, armor, fixing eyes on Jesus. As we keep these details in mind, it will help us Biblically deal with the struggles of life, with those evil days, even when the devil himself is the attacker.

Read :10-17. :14-15 Stand firm therefore [a command, urgent, is followed by 3 aorist middle, which means they are already done], **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.**

Already on, the belt of truth is the foundational piece for us: **Having truth as a belt around your waist.** The belt: the six-to-eight inch leather belt the Roman soldier wore was to hold his tunic in place while fighting and also to which was attached the breastplate and the sheath for the sword.

It's the belt of 'truth'! See **4:21**. Jesus said, "**I am the truth**" (**Jn. 14:6**). We also know God's Word is truth (**Jn. 17:17**). *This is the truth of God as revealed in Jesus and in the Bible.* To practically use this Truth, we begin by growing in our knowledge and understanding of Jesus and the Word and how He works in our daily lives. "What has GOD revealed in His Word?" is the question to be asked when attacked in this area. If this issue isn't settled for you, no sense to go on. You'll lose every struggle!

We shouldn't be surprised at the devil's attacks and schemes. That's his character! Satan's attacks: When the devil attacks the truth, he tries to deceive through error, ignorance, saying that there is no such thing as absolute truth, no final authority, no one or word you can absolutely trust, denial, doubt ("God's Word isn't true or isn't enough or is outdated."). Remember, he's a deceiver and wants to lead us away from Jesus and any absolute Standard.

How to practically use the belt of truth: Remember this piece is already on. **Read Jn. 8:31-32, Heb. 4:12.** These verses are foundational. We can trust God's truth as revealed in Jesus *and* in His Word. Our minds are to be renewed by what GOD has spoken. We must be convinced that Jesus and God's Word are our foundation piece, the basis for every thought we think and action we take. God's truth gives strength and freedom of action, and therefore proper confidence as we enter into each skirmish. When attacked, **stand firm** and continue in the Person of Jesus *and* the authority of God's truth revealed in the Bible. There IS an absolute authority, a Person and Place we can go to get pure truth. Jesus and His Word are our absolute Authority.

Having put on the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate (body armor) of the Roman soldier was made from large pieces of metal, like a sleeveless vest. Made of bronze backed with tough pieces of hide, it was molded to each individual; it was made to fit. It went from the neck to the middle of the hips. It protected the essentials like the heart and stomach.

Of 'righteousness': Righteousness or justification means that all the demands of Divine law and justice have been fully satisfied. Because of Jesus' Person and work, we have been made righteous, just, fit for God! Wow! We're to stand firm in Jesus and His justifying work. The case against us because of (1) sins, being sinners by (2) nature and (3) heredity, and (4) sin in the flesh has been fully dealt with; it's settled. GOD is satisfied! Based on what our Lord Jesus did on the Cross and our acceptance by faith of Him and His payment, we're no longer in God's court room. We've moved to the family room instead, where all is right with our Father. Our righteousness is based entirely on who Jesus is and what He did; it's not dependent on us at all. If this issue isn't settled for you, no sense to go on. You'll lose every struggle!

Satan's attacks: He attacks by making us doubt our standing with God, by making us 'feel' unworthy, by false guilt. There is such a thing as 'true' guilt; that is when we have sinned and whether we 'feel' guilty or not, we are still guilty. We must deal with that by confessing our sin, making personal for that sin the forgiveness Jesus won on the Cross, and then go on His strength. But 'false' guilt is often based on non-Biblical standards that we or others have set up, or sins that have already been dealt with before the Lord. Satan tries to make us 'feel' unforgiven or useless or not right/just with God or unworthy of such justice. "When the slanderer accuses us; when he hisses at us that we are no good, not just; when he tries to bury us with a vague sense of guilt but you can't put your finger on it; when he tries to make us 'feel' worthless or like a failure and that God is certain to reject us"—*it's all a lie!!*, from the father of lies. Remember, there is NO truth in him!

How to practically use the breastplate of righteousness: Remember this piece is already on! Recognize we don't appear to God in our own merit; we never have; we never will. **Read Gal. 2:16, Phil. 3:7-11, Rom. 3:19-24, 28, 8:31-35a.** Jesus is the righteous One who died in our place and for each of our sin issues! All demands of God's justice are satisfied. Believe it! Act on it! What a valuable piece when false guilt or feelings and thoughts of unworthiness are the enemy's attack.

:15 And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

:15 The sandals of the Roman soldiers were like cleats, sandals studded with short nails to give secure footing. Soldiers needed firm support as they strode forth to meet the enemy and engage in combat. Why would the preparation of the gospel of peace be associated with sandals? A couple of word studies help us understand. 'Preparation' = readiness or sometimes firm foundation. 'Gospel' = good news. So what Paul is telling us is that the Christian already has his feet shod with the firm foundation of the good news of peace.

What is peace? Peace is rest and contentment, wholeness, calmness of soul even in the midst of attacks. It is God's peace in the face of the Christian's

enemy. **Read Jn. 14:27.** Peace is recognizing that God is in control, and we can trust Him in the middle of any situation or attack. His peace: In the midst of life's uncertainties, even when under attack from the evil one. If this issue isn't settled for you, no sense to go on. You'll lose every struggle!

How would the Christian's enemy attack this area? Satan would tend to attack by trying to knock us off balance: worry, discontentment, tension, disharmony, disunity to deceive and/or destroy us. He tries to make us think we're still in the courtroom. Unrest—whether from bills, children, needs or wants—these are possible methods used by Satan to cause us to grow anxious, troubled, distracted, divided in mind. Aren't attacks in these areas common?

How to practically use the sandals of peace: Again, recognize that this part of the armor is permanently in place. Jesus is who we need to take us through any situation. **Isaiah 9:6** says Jesus is the Prince of Peace. **Read Rom. 5:1 and Phil. 4:6-9.** For worry and discontentment, the answer is the God of peace and the peace of God. These sandals of peace are our readiness for battle, enabling us to have stable footing in the midst of vicious, destructive attacks. We have firm footing (Jesus) and the God of peace and the peace of God!

Often just reviewing these first three pieces is enough for victory. But God has supplied even more! We'll see them in **:16-17**. But before we go on, let's look at how we each applied these three pieces of armor to our own lives. Belt of truth? Check! Breastplate of justice? Check! Sandals of peace? Check! They're already on. Let's use them whenever evil days come.

A friend's notes on **Eph. 6:14-15**

Because the first three pieces of armor represent Jesus and His work on our behalf, it seems like the definition of Jesus as the Truth, our Righteousness, and our Peace should reflect the permanence and unchangeableness of these facts whether I, as a believer, understand or believe or apply them. Jesus is the truth, righteousness, and peace whether I believe those facts or not. Those facts are permanent and unchanging. As a believer, I need to grow in my understanding of those facts as well as how to apply them when I'm attacked.

For example: TRUTH: Jesus is the truth (**Jn. 14:6, Eph. 4:21**), and God's Word is the truth (**Jn. 17:17, Ps. 119:160**). Jesus and the Word are my absolute authority, and they never change (**Heb. 13:8, 1 Pet. 1:25**). How I personally apply the belt of truth: When I am under attack, I must always start with the TRUTH because spiritual warfare is not a POWER encounter; it is a TRUTH encounter. Everything hangs on TRUTH, so I must stand firm (gird up my loins) with the authority of Jesus and the Word of God because Jesus and the Word are THE truth. They are absolute. They never change. They are my final authority, the plumb line, the straight edge, the unchanging standard that I use to measure everything by. Jesus spoke the truth. He demonstrated the truth. He IS the truth. His truth holds everything in its proper place in my life and gives me freedom of movement. Therefore, if I want to stand firm in the battle, I must grow in the knowledge and understanding of Jesus and His Word and how He works in my daily life.

PEACE: To stand firm in warfare I must be convinced that I am not only at peace WITH God (**Rom. 5:1**), but that the GOD OF PEACE is on my side (**Rom. 8:31**). God's peace comes from knowing that He accepts me and is pleased with me because I am right with Him (**2 Cor. 5:21**). Formerly I was an enemy of God, but now I am a friend of God. Formerly the devil was my father; now GOD is my Father. We are at peace with one another forever. Forever in the family room. Therefore my feet are shod (prepared and ready) to face the enemy because I have the firm foundation of the gospel (good news) of peace (with Christ) to stand upon. I can experience the peace of God (**Phil. 4:6-9**) whenever I give my worries and cares over to Him in the midst of the battle. Knowing the God of peace is on my side (the winning side) will give me sure-footed stability against the enemy, who constantly attempts to knock me off balance. The God of peace and the peace of God can calm my anxious, discontented soul.

I need to call to mind that (1) I have the truth of Jesus and the Word as my authority. (2) I am righteous in Christ. I can never earn God's righteousness; therefore, I can never lose it because my right standing with God does not depend on MY performance for Him but on CHRIST'S performance for me. My acceptance before God is Jesus-based, not performance-based. (3) Because I have peace WITH God, I have the GOD OF PEACE on my side. Therefore, no ground I encounter will be too rough or unstable for Christ to tread upon because nothing is too difficult for Him. Jesus is my peace and my source of calm in the midst of any storm. He is in control and that fact gives me solid footing, so I have nothing to be anxious about. I need to remember that God uses even the pressures in life to help me grow spiritually.

In **:14-15**, we have the first 3 pieces of armor. They are already permanently on. Jesus is these pieces of armor: He is the Truth, our Righteousness/justice, our Peace. The second 3 pieces (**:16-17**) are to be taken up with each evil day.

READ :16-17. These last three pieces are to be 'taken up' with each battle. **:16 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.** The Roman shield (which means door) was big, 4' by 2½' in size. This shield was covered with leather to extinguish flaming arrows of the enemy. It was so big because it was used to ward off blows as well as kneel behind when volleys of flaming arrows were launched. The enemy would dip their arrows in pitch, set them on fire, and shoot from a distance. Their goal was not only to pierce the body but to spread the flames. The Roman soldiers would kneel down together to provide a solid wall of protection.

Of 'faith': *Faith is choosing to believe what God has said, firmly persuaded of the truth of God, and committing ourselves to live by (act on) what we believe,* based on the Person of Jesus and the truth of His Word. It includes both belief of and acting on the facts. Faith is only as reliable and helpful as the trustworthiness of its Object, our Lord Jesus.

How would our enemy attack faith? The devil attacks with a steady rain of temptations, launched to shake our confidence in God. Can you imagine the fear of those incoming arrows if you didn't have the shield? Fear would be one tactic. Can you imagine the confusion of those incoming arrows? Evil thoughts that seem to come out of nowhere or from your own mind; you wonder where in the world did that idea come from? Pride or false humility would be another deception, trying to make us believe we can/can't handle it alone, in our own strength. Of course, Satan also tries to get us to focus only on the incoming missiles rather than the shooter of those arrows.

How to practically use the shield of faith: **Read 1 Pet. 5:8-9 and Gal. 2:20.** Faith is always based on Biblical facts; evaluate the attacks by what GOD has revealed in His written Word! "Yes, I believe the Lord Jesus is the truth, my righteousness, my peace. THEREFORE, this attitude/choice/action/word should follow and I'll choose to trust Him in the midst of struggles." Use the faith God has given to each person (**Rom. 12:3**). Also increase your faith. One does this by getting to know the facts of Scripture, believing them, and acting on them. **Rom. 10:17** says, "**So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.**" We must know the facts and choose to rest in God and His Word before we can consistently exercise Biblical confidence. Yet how confident we can be, knowing the Lord of the Word as well as His Word itself; then consciously choosing to rely on Him and His words.

:17a And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION. The Roman soldier's helmet was made of thick leather covered with metal plates. A blow to the head would be disabling so this was an indispensable piece of equipment. The helmet guards our minds and thoughts, the ability to think and reason, to have a clear perspective. For the Christian, it is to preserve us from 'mental confusion'.

Of 'salvation': *Salvation means deliverance and the Bible talks about past, present, and future salvation, which includes justification, sanctification, and glorification. We have been delivered (which the Bible calls justification or righteousness). We are being delivered (which is sanctification). And, we will be delivered (which is called glorification). In this context, it's doubtful whether 'salvation' is referring to past salvation because the breastplate was righteousness, and, the other pieces described are used in regard to battling in the present. In 1 Th. 5:8 (read), Paul refers to the helmet as the 'hope' of salvation. In the Bible, hope is referring to something that is certain but still to come. This helmet would then be referring to the assurance of future and final deliverance. We usually think of hope as "I hope it will happen; it may or may not." But Scriptural hope is a certainty that is still future. (Eph. 1:13, 4:30, Rom. 8:23) The certainties for every Christian are the redemption of our bodies, we'll receive our inheritance, & Jesus is coming back again, for us, to set things right and to reign as Ruler and King.* We should use these certainties to protect our minds/thoughts, to have a Godly perspective, to eliminate confusion.

How would our opponent Satan engage Christians in battle in this area? The devil tries to get us to rely on the unreal and groundless expectations of the

world around us, perhaps placing our hope in a human being or the governing authorities. He tries to make us fearful of how things are going or of what is coming. He tries to make us 'feel' hopeless, depressed! With despair, trying to get us to wrongly focus on everything around us that is seemingly going astray. When one looks at covid, the numerous cults, conflicts around the world, our failing government programs, the up-and-down economy, natural calamities, persecution of Christians, the threat of nuclear war, the crime rate, the drug problems, false messiahs, it can be very disturbing. If we place our focus and minds on any of these, we'll be confused and lose hope and perspective; we'll wonder why or if we should even go on.

How can we practically use the helmet of salvation? If our eyes are fixed on anything other than Jesus, we'll feel hopeless or be fearful or confused or give up. Use the facts—of the *Lordship and return of Jesus, of the redemption of our bodies, and of our receiving our inheritances*—as guides in evaluating the movements of our day. As Christians we need to keep our minds clear, our thinking straight. Our future is certain!!! We need to understand those facts even in the midst of hardships, failures, and/or suffering (**1 Pet. 5:5b-11**). Jesus is even now working out His plans (summing up all things in Jesus **1:10**), and He'll return right on schedule. We also need to use the certainty of His coming as a guide in evaluating where we should spend our resources (time, money, service) and what decisions to make. There are and will always be all kinds of needs; where does the Lord Jesus want you (us) involved? Our spiritual gifts and hearts for ministry are clues! **Read Rom. 15:13, Heb. 12:1-2, Titus 2:11-14, and 1 Pet. 5:10.** Ray Stedman is especially helpful on this piece of armor (raystedman.org, **Eph. 6:17** part 3).

:17b And [take up] the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The Roman sword was the only offensive weapon of the soldier. However, remember we're to stand firm, not gain ground! The weapon was short, only about 2 feet long, sharp on both edges. It was used in hand-to-hand combat. The enemy of that era had a larger sword, with only one side sharp. The Roman soldier was able to get inside the slashes of the larger sword and take care of his enemy.

The Spirit's sword. God's words. Why would the sword of the Spirit be called the word of God? The Greek word is *rhēma*, which refers to GOD'S specific, individual words, specific truths of the Bible, words given by the indwelling Holy Spirit to meet the critical need of the moment. There are hundreds, maybe thousands of such '*rhēmas*' in the Bible. See **Eph. 5:26**.

What would be the combat strategy of the devil? The devil tries to deceive us by quoting Scripture verses or phrases out of context. He tries to keep Christians out of the Bible. He tries to get us to NOT *know or believe or act on* God's specific words. His main attack would be ignorance; he wants us to stay away from God's words. Another approach would be to misquote Scripture, taking God's *rhēmas* out of context. A third method would be to try to convince us that the Bible is only partially true (which part is anyone's guess!). He attacks the Bible, condenses it, changes it, doesn't want us taking it literally. He hates the fact that we have an offensive weapon.

How can we practically use the sword of the Spirit, the word of God? Realize that the Holy Spirit inspired and gave us God's written words; He helps us understand them; He brings them to mind. **Rom. 10:17** says, "**Faith comes from hearing, and hearing comes by a word (rhēma) of Christ.**" Our lives are changed by knowing and using God's specific words for specific attacks. Know which passages deal with specific issues. Copy Jesus' example: The classic use of the *rhēma* of God is where Jesus answered each temptation of the devil by quoting specific OT Scriptures out loud (**Mt. 4:1-11**; also see **Jude 9**). In my own life, I have found that when I'm attacked in the area of peace, I review **Rom. 5:1** and **Phil. 4:6-9**. I have found that when I'm attacked in the area of fleshly urges that quoting **Rom. 6:1-14** and **Gal. 5:16** is extremely helpful for me, reminding me who I am IN Christ and how to walk as the Christian I am. God's words get right to the core of every issue. They eliminate confusion. They enable us to stand firm. The better we know specific verses, the better we're able to resist in the evil days, to stand firm when attacked, to have Biblical information the Holy Spirit can bring to mind. That's the reason for memorization, so the Spirit has ammunition available at any moment, like an ammunition belt filled with bullets. **James 4:7** is helpful.

These are the pieces of armor. We can see that God's provision is a defense against strategy as well as assault. Yet unless we use His armor, even though it's available, we'll be defeated in *every* struggle against our enemy. We're not to fight for victory, but from a position of victory already won in our Lord Jesus. We're not to try to conquer new territory but to stand firm on the ground already won. The Bible doesn't say, "Having done everything, fight! Instead it says, "Having done everything, stand firm!" The victory has been won by Jesus.

Are there evil days? Certainly! There are constant conflicts, evil days, going on in every Christian's life. I have found that these take place in my life in two main areas: worry and thoughts that seem to come out of nowhere. When those days hit, when there's great discontentment with everything and everyone around me and I'm stretched like a rubber band, or those days when evil thoughts seem to come out of nowhere and I can't seem to shake them, I have found the only way of victory is to use the resources, the armor, God has abundantly provided. Victory is guaranteed when we are strengthened in Him. He is everything we need for victory. Join me as we check our armor at the start of each day. Then throughout the hours of the day, review our armor and take it up with each battle, all the while praying that the Lord through us will work out His will and His glory will be displayed. To arms, fellow soldiers, to arms!

Christians are under attack! Every Christian has a very real enemy who is invisible, extremely powerful, and clever. YET, we can be strong in the Lord and put on His full armor. Know these Biblical facts, believe them, and live life on the basis of these truths. In what ways are you attacked? Remind yourself of which piece of armor deals with that particular scheme or flesh pattern or worldly pressure, and then use it! Know and memorize, have a working definition of, and figure out a couple of ways the devil would attack each piece. And, have one or two practical sets of verses (words of God) that deal with each piece.

“Lord, may we realize the victory is won; we’re just to do battle and stand firm in Your strength and with Your armor.” We’ve got it. Let’s use it!

:18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.

The final instruction in this passage on spiritual warfare is not on fighting techniques but on prayer. Why prayer? Prayer admits our lack of strength in these spiritual struggles. Prayer reveals our total dependence upon God for success.

Prayer is spiritual guard duty, keeping our eyes on our Commander. “Your will be done!” It's not part of the armor because prayer is directed God-ward, not toward the enemy. We're to pray in every situation, according to the Spirit's leading, and, we're not only to pray for ourselves but also pray, giving constant attention and intense effort, for all the ‘struggling’ saints. We can't put on another's armor for them but we can pray for them. No soldier entering battle prays for himself alone; the success of one is the success of all. Our Lord is with us, and we should each have a team of saints to pray with and for each other. Praying, according to the Scripture the Spirit inspired and in His strength. Keeping alert! Be sleepless, alert, vigilant!

Practical Ways to **Apply** God’s Word:

1. START WITH JESUS (**Mt. 11:28-30**) and fix your focus on Him (**Heb. 12:1-3**).
2. PRACTICE SCRAT: Search, Confess, Review, Allow, and Thank.
3. AS AN INDIVIDUAL CHRISTIAN: **Rom. 12:9-21, 1 Cor. 13:1-8a, Eph. 4:20-6:18, and 1 Pet. 2:11-3:17** spell out how Jesus will live out His life and love uniquely through you as you trust Him, rest in Him.
4. AS PART OF YOUR IMMEDIATE FAMILY, you have a responsible role to play as a husband/wife/parent/child. Be sure you’re remaining true to who you are.
5. AS PART OF THE FAMILY OF GOD, pray for, love, be hospitable to, serve one another, using your Spirit-given gifts (1 Pet. 4:7-11). Also, consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds (Heb. 10:24-25).
6. Be careful who you listen to and what you watch and read, what you’re continually thinking about. Choose & be a good role model. Be sure there’s a steady input from God’s Word. Pray without ceasing. Realize there’s a glorious, certain, guaranteed future for you and every other Christian.

Remember, this is a life and love only Jesus through the Holy Spirit can live in/ through you! Yet He will as you by faith run the race set before you (**Heb. 12:1-2a**).

Lessons you learned? Applications you made? Questions you have? What impact does this passage have on your daily walk with Jesus?