

The Armor of God

By Lori Schaffer

Many months ago, on the day before my mother passed away, God spoke to me and told me to prepare for a battle. I immediately allowed fear to take over. I had already been through so much; I couldn't bear the thought of more. I walked beside and cared for my mother through her terminal illness. I was stretched further than I ever thought possible. At one point, I was even praying for God to just take me! In hindsight, I now treasure this time I had with my mom. Caring for her, taking care of her wounds, and just showing her the love of Christ. I had the privilege of praying for her, reading scripture to her, and ultimately laying hands on her and praying over her as she entered heaven's gates. So after all of this, God tells me to prepare for battle. Wasn't this the battle? I literally felt like I was kicked in the stomach. I didn't want to hear it. Picture a small child with their hands over their ears screaming, "I can't hear you!" This was me. I immediately began thinking of the worst-case scenarios. I wasn't sure how I was going to endure what was facing me. I let fear take over and I was just a big mess. WHY do we do this to ourselves? This is the enemy attacking us. I then began studying the armor of God. Every day I would read Ephesians; and every day I would pray for God to protect me with his armor. Isaiah 54:17 says, "No weapon formed against you will prosper." Notice, it doesn't say that the weapons will not form, they will! It says they won't prosper.

As a Christian, you have probably heard the phrase, "Put on the full armor of God." But what does that really mean? Why do we need the armor of God? In your life, you will face many attacks. The enemy will do his best to distract you, tear you down with lies, and to draw you away from God. His number one objective is to cause you to doubt your faith in Christ. Spiritual warfare is very real.

Ephesians 6:11-17 says the following, "**Put** on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, having belted your waist with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having strapped on your feet the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

This section of the bible is speaking clearly about being prepared for battle: spiritual warfare. The attacks of the enemy are very real. Oftentimes, the battles we face in life just seem to keep coming. We feel like our life is spinning out of control. However, God has given us clear instructions on how we are to prepare. Now, we are not going into our closet and putting on a full suit of armor. Rather, we are arming ourselves with the spiritual weapons God has given us for our own protection. We are to put on the FULL armor of God.

I am going to discuss each key piece of armor that God has given us and how it benefits us. First, is the belt of truth. It protects God's will. The enemy fights with lies, deception, and falsehoods. If you are a believer in Christ, you have God's truth. Strap on that belt knowing you can stand firm in the truth of God's word. Next, is the breastplate of righteousness. A breastplate is used to protect our most vital organs. Satan will try to attack your heart through your emotions. You can stand firm in the truth that you are forgiven by God. Your feet are strapped with the gospel of peace. God wants you to be ready and able to tell others about him, to spread the good news. He desires you to experience the peace that only He can give. The shield of faith is used to protect us from the enemy's attacks. Envision the devil shooting flaming arrows at you; but those insults, temptations, and lies are extinguished as soon as they hit your shield. The helmet of salvation protects your mind. The enemy will try to attack your mind with lies. You can rest assured that salvation is freely given to you. All you need to do is ask God into your heart. Satan has already been defeated. Finally, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God: God's truth. I believe the greatest weapon we can use is reciting scripture. Speak it, claim it, believe it! Take note: the armor of God begins and ends with God's truth. All the weapons that we need to be prepared for the battles we will face, are found in His Word. All we need to do is open up the book. Get your bible out. Let His Word speak to you, change you, and transform you.

Arming yourself with God's weapons will prepare you for the battles ahead, or the battle you may be facing now. The word "battle" is mentioned in 174 verses throughout the bible. If something is mentioned that many times in God's Word, then you know it is important to God. He wants you to be battle-ready. You need to have a plan of attack. It's key that you recognize you are facing spiritual warfare. Put on the full armor of God. Seek God for instruction. He will guide you. Conduct every step in full faith. Do not allow fear to take over. Satan wants you to be fearful. Ephesians 4:27 says, "Do not give the devil a foothold." Stand in full confidence that you are capable of fighting.

I focused my heart and mind solely on God. I began praising my way through this battle. By drawing near to God, I began to feel a complete sense of peace. Truly giving control to God is a hard thing to do, especially if you are the type of person that likes to be in control. It requires trust. We must trust God with our problems and circumstances. We must trust that he has a plan for our lives and that it is good. The hardest thing of all, is that EVEN if things don't go the way we plan or pray for, is trusting that God's plan is GREATER. Every day, lay it at his feet and ask him to work. After a few months, I felt God speak to me again. This time he said, "I would not call you into battle to abandon you. I will go before you and fight for you." I rejoice when I think of this. God is in control, and He has this! While the battle is not over, my battle is. The battle belongs to the Lord. Hallelujah!

Reflection

I am in a situation where I cannot do anything BUT to trust and give it to God. There is nothing I can do in my own power to resolve it. Maybe you can relate. Is there a battle you are facing right now? What have you done to prepare? Have you put on the full armor of God? If not, what are you waiting for? Don't try to do it alone. Allow God to walk by your side. Ask Him to guide your steps and direct you. You may just be amazed at what He does and how He works.

Application:

Scripture verses to remember - get God's word in your heart

Ephesians 6:10-17 ~ *Armor of God*

2 Corinthians 5:7 ~ *"I will walk by faith even when I cannot see."*

Psalm 18:39 ~ *"You armed me with strength for battle, you humbled my adversaries before me."*

Psalm 28:7 ~ *"The Lord is my strength and my shield. In Him my heart trusts."*

Jeremiah 29:11 ~ *"For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."*