

***The Christian Life***  
***Part 6b***  
***The Armor and The War***

Eph 6:10-20

- 10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
- 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
- 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
- 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
- 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
- 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
- 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:
- 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;
- 19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,
- 20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. KJV

**Introduction:**

Ever since I began to consider this passage as it concludes our little ‘mini-manual’ of the Christian life, I have been struck with the word ‘whole.’ ‘Put on the *whole* armor of God,’ Paul said. There are a number of things involved in that one word which we will discuss today.

But where did Paul get this word-picture, this mental image, of a Christian properly prepared to meet the world and serve God in it? Remember that Paul spent a great deal of time with soldiers. He had been arrested by them, protected by them, imprisoned by them and carried on a journey by them as a prisoner. He had sailed with them, been shipwrecked with them and even had them watch over his shoulder as he penned parts of our New Testament.

He had seen them prepare for their day in various circumstances. Probably, aboard ship, he had seen them put only part of their equipment on since they were in relative safety. Then, when the ship would land and they were preparing to disembark, he had seen them carefully put on the entirety of their armor, not knowing what they would face during the day. And, as he watched them, this image of a Christian dressed in his spiritual preparations for the day fashioned itself in his mind. No doubt he had discussed the various elements of their attire with them and had been told the function of each piece.

Having seen them in all stages of preparation, he could tell at a glance whether a soldier was properly outfitted for a day in the world or not

## I.     **The *WHOLE* Armor.**

The word that Paul used ‘*olos*’ is variously rendered ‘whole’ and ‘all’ in the New Testament. It is possibly the root of both English words. As used here, it means the complete assembly of all the parts of a unit or collection.

The word itself reminds me of the great failings both of soldiers and Christians when they have been caught by their enemies unprepared to do battle. One of the surest ways to defeat either is to attack them when they are not ready, to catch them either by laziness, ignorance, or sleep surprised and unready.

Commanders live in dread of surprise attacks. They drill and prepare, station guards and then test the guards to make sure that they cannot be caught by surprise. On the other hand, they study their enemies for any weaknesses that might allow them to be caught unawares or unprepared. It is a continual thing on the mind of good soldiers that they be ready for any contingency. Those who are prepared have a much better chance of survival than those who are lazy.

I am reminded as I think on this issue that the great failings of the church and of individual Christians in every century and every generation have to do with half-hearted preparations to serve God and half-hearted devotion to Him.

I remind you of Christ’s own words to the lukewarm church at Laodicea.

Rev 3:15-16

15     I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16     So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. KJV

The great debacle at Pearl Harbor in WWII was partly due to the fact that our military believed such an attack impossible and were, therefore, unprepared.

Half-hearted soldiers and lukewarm Christians are not ready to do battle. Considering the fact that our enemies are entirely prepared, bloodthirsty, and vicious, this makes for a deadly combination of events.

So, as Paul lays out the package of our armor here, remember that the instructions and the necessity require that we put on the ***WHOLE*** armor, not just parts of us. We are thus encouraged to become and remain totally devoted to the project of advancing the Kingdom of God by earnest and continual efforts, daily preparing ourselves for the task at hand.

There is one particular use of this word ‘*olos*’ that we must continually and perpetually remember.

Matt 22:36-38

36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment. KJV

We are not merely to love God with the heart, but with the whole heart, not just with the soul but with the all of the soul, and not only with the mind but with the entirety of the mind.

This picture that Paul gives to close out his little manual is that of a completely sold out, entirely devoted and prepared soldier, ready to do battle with any and all enemies of his King's cause.

I. That being said, he exhorted us to gird our 'loins' with **TRUTH**.

The soldier's armor was anchored at the waist with a broad belt which served a number of functions. It tied down the breastplate and held all of the hand weapons that the soldier carried. It also served as protection for the weak middle area of his body.

The Christian is to gather about him, bind to himself, lock himself into **truth**.

My father left me some incredible little pieces of instruction that I have tried to carry with me. "**Son, always follow the truth, wherever it leads you.**" He knew that truth, the truth of God's Word, what it honestly and plainly says, is eternally the friend of the sincere and seeking soul. He also knew that even an honest soul can recoil and pull back from some ugly things and some embarrassing realities that truth exposes.

But one cannot hide from truth. One cannot segment it into appropriate and inappropriate elements, holding fast to the one and pushing the other aside. This is a 'toggle switch.' One either **is** or **is not** the friend of truth. One either gathers it about him and binds it to him or lays it aside because it, like Saul's armor on David, is cumbersome and does not fit well his hopes and aspirations.

If a person is looking to be comfortable, coddled, warm, and have fuzzy feelings, the truth is not his friend but his enemy. The truth is **Wonderful** but it carries with it cold, brutal, harsh and difficult realities. But one either loves truth in its entirety or he tries to cut it up in pieces, cast away the undesirable elements and then reassemble it into a form he likes better. But the end result is not **Truth** but rather some monstrosity masquerading as truth and the one who would do such a thing is no friend of truth.

The truth is:

1. You are a much worse sinner than you have ever faced up to being. Regardless of how deeply you have searched the matter in sincere repentance, there are still sins that are hidden from you or that you have hidden from yourself. The truth

about you, when you even get close to it, scares you so badly that you still turn away and put your mind to something else.

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1. You have never even come close to responding fully to the Lord's call to whole-hearted service. You do not love Him with the whole heart, the whole mind, or the whole soul. You do not love your neighbor as yourself. As such, you are an abiding violator of the Two Greatest Commandments of God.

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1. You are helpless to resolve these issues and you have no abiding purpose to do so. You know that any serious and abiding effort to draw close to God would require much more prayer and sacrifice than you intend to give to God.

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1. These three issues of truth alone may identify you as unconverted, a false professor of faith in Jesus Christ, hopelessly lost and without any ability to change the course of your life.

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1. Unless God grants you grace, you will never move forward from where you are, you will die in these sins, and, unless the scriptures are wrong, you will eternally perish.

The truth is uncomfortable, unkind, harsh, and unyielding. Yet, Paul said that you are to bind it to you as a soldier binds his wide belt about him and let it be a protection to your most vulnerable areas, those places where you are most likely to be wounded fatally.

I. Put on the breastplate of righteousness.

This part of the soldier's armor protected the chest and the shoulders from blows from the enemy. One versions of the first century Roman's breastplate was impenetrable to sword, spear and arrow.

But the *truth* is that my righteousness is worthless.

Isa 64:6

6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.  
KJV

Yeh, put that on and got out to face the roaring lion seeking to devour you! How long do you think that you will last with that?

So, what is he talking about?

Rom 4:3-6

- 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.
- 4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.
- 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.
- 6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, KJV

God imputes righteousness to those of true faith, the kind of faith with which Abraham believed God. And He did it through a specific mechanism.

2 Cor 5:21

- 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. KJV

Paul is saying not that we should smugly arrogate to ourselves righteousness because we have some weak belief system that 'guarantees' that we are righteous. He says that we are to bind to ourselves, like a soldier would bind on his breastplate, the Finished Work of Jesus Christ and the Righteousness of His Holy Person that has been given to us as we abide in Him.

You must have the confidence of soul that Jesus Christ did indeed bear all of your sins on the cross and you must have the assurance in your soul that you have forsaken them all or the enemy will find chinks in that armor and plague you into complete paralysis with accusations and memories of sins unconfessed and unforsaken. Then, he will plunge his darts into every chink and render you an ineffective and wounded soldier who can only watch the battle but not take part.

Bind to yourself, as a breastplate, the Work of the Savior. Reckon yourself as dead to sin and alive unto Jesus Christ. Present your members as instruments of righteousness unto God

I. Having done this, according to v.14, Stand Up!

Remember, Paul is writing this to people who need to hear it, people who are losing ground in the battle with evil, Christians who are wounded and crippled by the onslaught of the enemy. They are, as it were, lying on the ground bleeding and weak, helpless and crippled, and Paul is exhorting them to 'get up.'

“Bind Truth and Righteousness to you,” he says. “Identify fully with both of them.” “Embrace God’s Word and what it reveals to you about yourself, the Work of Christ and your Only Hope.

Confess and repent of those ugly things that Truth reveals about you. Give yourself completely to Jesus Christ and trust Wholly in His Finished Work.

Now, get up, stand up, rise up and join the battle. Take the ground back that the enemy has stolen from you and then take some of his ground for good measure. Make your life count by the grace of God as an act of worship and devotion for the great mercy that He has shown to you.

We do not have the time in this message to speak of all of the elements of this armor but this is where Paul begins and this is a good starting place for you and me.