

*Having Done All,  
to Stand*

*Overcoming in the Final Great Conflict*

Frank Anderson

*“Having Done All, To Stand”*

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Illustrations and front cover design:  
Taken from *Treasures of the Bible* by  
Henry Davenport Northrop:  
International Publishing Company, 1894.

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All Scripture quotations in this book are taken from the  
King James Version Bible unless otherwise stated.

Printed September 2014  
in the United States of America

ISBN # 1-59665-169-5

For more information, please contact:

Zion Christian Publishers  
A Zion Fellowship ® Ministry  
P.O. Box 70  
Waverly, New York 14892

Phone: 607-565-2801  
Toll free: 1-877-768-7466

Fax: 607-565-3329

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# *Dedicated*

This study is dedicated to one of my lovely daughters,  
Rebecca Mae, who helped manage this project  
and had the hunger to ask me,

*“How do I know I am clothed with the Armor of God?”*

Thank you my sweet!



## *Special Thanks:*

To Pastor Jason & Ashley Gohl and Suzanne Ying  
for their hard work and attention to detail in editing.

To Carol Scheid, Elizabeth Rosales, Rebecca Anderson,  
and Barbara Fuller for proof reading.

To Hannah Schrock for formatting.

To Carla Borges and Rebecca Anderson for  
helping create the front cover



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# *Introduction*

In Ephesians 6:10-12, the Apostle Paul states, *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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.”*

Every believer is engaged in a spiritual battle with the enemy, and knowing the tactics of the enemy is an important key to winning this battle. In this book, we will consider at least three major conflicts recorded in the Word of God where Satan attempted to manipulate mankind to turn against God. These three conflicts are a precursor to the fourth and final conflict, which will take place in the days in which we live. In studying these conflicts, we will seek to expose the tactics of the enemy so that we may receive wisdom to gain the victory over him.

We will also clearly identify three areas of temptation in the life of the believer by examining the temptation and ultimate victory of Jesus Christ against His adversary, the devil.

Finally, this book seeks to uncover some of the hidden treasures found in the truths associated with the Armor

of God, as developed by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians chapter 6. The Armor of God is a doctrine of great importance, but one that much of the Church world has yet to fully understand. It is another important key to winning the battle, for it is through the Armor of God that the saint is protected and armed against the devil and his schemes.

Jesus made the declaration that the prince of this world came and found nothing in Him that he could fasten on to or take advantage of (Jn. 14:30). One reason He was able to say this was because He Himself was clothed with this armor.

Ephesians 6:10 says, “*Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might...*” This armor produces strength and might in the life of the believer. If we are weak and unable to stand against the enemy’s attacks, the very remedy is for us to put on the whole Armor of God.

God gave the revelation of the spiritual Armor of God so that the saints might be strong and walk in the power of His might.

Paul goes on to say in verse 11 “*...that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil...*” The wiles of the devil are the assaults, deception, and pressures he brings upon the saints and upon churches. We wrestle against

unseen enemies who seek to deflect us from God's appointed course for our lives and who seek, if possible, to cause us to lose our very salvation. We must never underestimate the importance of understanding the wiles of the devil—how he approaches, assaults, and at times effectively slays the saints of God. Failing to understand this can be fatal for believers.

In the coming days, the saints will also be facing the most formidable assault the world has ever known, and it is with a great burden to clothe them with the Armor of God that this book is written. Saints are falling in battle today at alarming rates through sin, offense, deception, and all manner of disobedience because they are not armed against Satan. Perhaps there are people we know and love who are already casualties of the enemy. This is why this message must go out to every believer that all may be armed.

In speaking of the Armor of God, it is my conviction that the Apostle Paul was not referring to it as an allegory or a metaphor. He was not using the armor of a soldier just to make a point. Rather, I am convinced that he had a divine revelation of this armor so that it became real to him in battle. He actually witnessed this armor in the Spirit and completely understood its use.

In this book, we will study in greater detail each piece of the Armor of God:

**Loins girt with truth – Being lovers of the truth.**

**Breastplate of righteousness – Being protected as a result of walking uprightly.**

**Helmet of Salvation – Maintaining a blood-washed conscience.**

**Feet shod with the Gospel – Being a good witness of the Gospel and being ready to share it.**

**Shield of faith – Being rich in faith, which comes from hearing from the Lord.**

**Sword of the Spirit – Having lips like a two-edged sword, speaking what Christ speaks.**

As you prayerfully read this book, may I encourage you to seek the Lord for His revelation so that you may understand the armor and its need in your life. May we be clothed with the Armor of God so that we will be able to stand successfully against the wiles of the devil in these final days, and in so doing, be more than conquerors through Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:37).





**Part I**  
**THE FOUR GREAT**  
**CONFLICTS**





## **Revealing the Tactics of the Enemy**

There are at least four times in the Word of God when the ‘cloak’ is removed from the enemy and he is exposed for the threat he really is in his quest to turn mankind against God. This threat is not metaphoric; it is real and very serious.

Our words often reveal who we are. Just as the Sermon on the Mount revealed the heart of Christ toward mankind, the enemy’s words reveal who he really is, and the purpose of his interaction with man. We will therefore study each conflict, focusing on the conversations that took place between the enemy and God, and the enemy and mankind. This study is not intended to glorify the evil one in any way. Its purpose is to give believers insight, wisdom, and understanding concerning the nature and heart of the enemy, what he is really after, his most effective strategies against mankind, and God’s provision to all believers to overcome him.

When I was younger, I went fishing with my father. Before we fished, I would go hunting for bait by lifting rocks to see if I could find some worms. When the rock was lifted, I remember seeing all kinds of things that were previously hidden in darkness seconds earlier, but that were then exposed in the light. Dear reader, I want to encourage you to ask God for boldness to ‘lift up the rock’ so that we can see clearly the true nature of the

adversary and be instructed and made wiser in fighting against this enemy. The enemy is more effective when his prey is ignorant about him, when he is hidden, and his wiles are not clearly understood (2 Cor. 11:13-14). The intention of this study is to ‘lift the rock’ and to allow the light of the Word of God (Ps. 119:105) to expose his works so that he will lose some of his effectiveness.

When Christ came to earth, His earthly occupation was a carpenter—one who builds. If Satan had an occupation on earth, it would most likely be in marketing or as an attorney. The reason is that both of these occupations use words as the main tools to paint believable pictures, and we will see that Satan is the same way—his main tools are words.

An enemy who overcomes by brawn will always have a fight on his hands because those he conquers will, inevitably, revolt at some point. The adversary of all believers is selling something that he wants mankind to believe in and comply with. Satan is in the business of selling “*beliefs*,” through subtlety, personal assault, or temptation. He is cunning enough to bend the will of mankind through his arguments, which are carefully crafted to appeal to the ‘old man’ or our sin nature. When one is deceived into believing what the enemy is saying, one is brought down spiritually. We must understand that an enemy who conquers with his words does not need to worry because those who believe him will not resist him; in fact, they are on his side.

There are four major conflicts in the Word of God where Satan tries and, in some cases, successfully takes mankind captive through his lies, deception, personal assault, and temptation:

- 1. In the Garden of Eden** (Gen. 3:1-6) – Here, the enemy assumed the form of a serpent. Through subtle deceit, he convinced the woman to desire something that God had said was not for her. He also convinced her that she needed to be a free thinker, making her own choices and acting independently. It is interesting that the enemy never laid a finger on her. Neither did he force her to do what was against her will. Instead, through smooth arguments, he persuaded her to change her will and violate the command of her husband and her God.
- 2. The Book of Job** – In this trial the enemy wanted to destroy Job's testimony through cruel suffering. He sought the permission of God to put tremendous pressure on this godly man through a personal assault on his family, possessions, and health. His primary objective was to cause him to become offended and curse God. Job went through a time of darkness and great personal suffering. The pain, grief, loneliness, and loss, together with the apparent injustice of it all, almost pushed Job to the breaking point.
- 3. The Temptation** – After forty days and nights of fasting, Christ was suffering certain needs. The

enemy sought to take advantage of His vulnerability by tempting Him to gratify those needs by stepping outside the will of God (Mt. 4:1-11). Then he promised Christ great rewards in return for worshipping him. He also foolishly tried to trip up Christ and get Him to act out of character. This assault reveals the enemy as a worship-hungry creature trying to knock Christ off His appointed course.

- 4. The Great Deception of the Last Days** –This is the final conflict that is yet to take place, where the enemy will deceive those who are not lovers of the truth (2 Th. 2:10-12). He wants the whole world (that he despises) to follow and worship him. His tools will be men and women who have swerved off God’s path for their lives, as well as others who have utterly sold out to him. Again, this will be a battle of beliefs, and those who do not love the truth will believe a lie. Whether one makes it in the end or not will be determined by what one believes.

### ***Christ Is the Truth, the Enemy Is the Liar***

To ‘lift the rock’ and expose the foe of all believers, one must understand how he comes against man and what he is all about.

A good starting point is John 8:32 where Jesus reveals the key to freedom: “...*and ye shall know the truth and the*

*truth shall make you free.*” In other words, “If you believe in what is true and you walk in the light of that truth, then that truth you believe in and walk in shall set you free.” On the contrary, if one believes a lie to be true and walks in that lie (as Eve did when she believed she had to have the forbidden fruit), that lie will lead one astray and into bondage.

- Why did Israel rebel in the wilderness? Because of what they **believed**, “...Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?...” (Num. 21:5)
- Why did Abraham lie about Sarah being his sister? It was because he **believed** the Egyptians would kill him if they knew he was her husband so that they could have her (Gen. 12:12-13).
- Why did Jacob pine all those years for his son Joseph? It was because he **believed** he was dead (Gen. 37:33-35)
- How is the Antichrist going to deceive the world into taking his mark? They will **believe** he is God because of the miracles and imitation peace he will bring (2 Th. 2:8-12)

Now let us consider John 8:44 where the Lord describes how the enemy approaches believers, “...*When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*” The enemy knows that if he can get believers to believe a lie is true, then they will walk in that lie and remain in bondage.

For example, the enemy knew Christ was the Son of God, yet he said repeatedly to Him, “*IF thou be the Son of God...*” (Mt. 4:6). He knew that if Adam and Eve ate of the fruit they would surely die, yet he lied to them, saying, “*...ye shall not surely die...*” (Gen. 3:4).

The enemy is most certainly a believer. He believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He is the Savior of the world, and that He is the answer. However, he does not want people to believe that and to walk in the light of that truth. The enemy does not object to those who believe in Christ as long as he can pervert and distort what they believe. There can be a little bit of truth in a lie; however, there cannot be a little lie in the truth. He aims to cause Christians to embrace distorted beliefs (even if they are partial truths) so that they will be knocked off course, and thereby miss God’s mark for their lives. For instance, if he can get us to dismiss just one of the commandments of God, then that belief will produce carelessness in our lives in that area and cause us to offend the Lord.

Mere mental assent to a truth is not enough. It is more important that we believe in what is really true and act on it. People will act according to what they believe and eventually become a product of what they believe. For example, one who believes meat is bad will not eat it, and another who believes meat is healthy will eat it. The point here is that what we believe governs who we are, what we do, and why we do it. The enemy

understands the power of a belief system and seeks to change the belief system of Christians. He knows that if he can change this belief system so that believers begin to question the good nature of God, the leadership capabilities of the pastor, or the intentions of the brethren, he can cause them to step off God's path and miss the mark for their lives.

However, the enemy is wise enough to know that he cannot force one to believe a lie, for this will eventually backfire and lead to resistance. Therefore, he does not approach those he is trying to deceive as a vicious beast. Instead, he will try his utmost to convince people of things that he himself knows are false through tactics such as subtle deception, pressure, and temptations.

In fact, if people can be convinced to believe something, they will defend it to the bitter end. We see this in Christianity. If Christ is not real to the believer, he will not endure trials and difficulties. If, however, he is convinced that Christ is real and believes in Him, he will endure to the very end.

May we as believers cry out to God for purity of heart because the pure in heart will see as God sees (Mt. 5:8). Those who have a pure heart and who are willing to do the will of the Lord will not be deceived, for they will know true doctrine (Jn. 7:17). They are the sheep who hear His voice and will not follow another.

### ***The Enemy Has a Tactic and a Plan***

After exposing the enemy as a liar, we must now dig deeper into his methods so that we can better understand his tactics. We have seen that Satan manipulates belief systems. However, he does not waste his time trying to convince believers of the outrageously absurd. Instead, he begins with small and subtle errors, casting a little doubt here and there. Once he sees someone considering his lies, he begins to pull them away from the good path.

Let me illustrate this by something that happened to me and my family in 2003. We discovered that someone had broken into our bank account and drained away thousands of dollars so that we were devastated financially. After contacting the authorities they recommended that we review our accounts over the past several months.

The reason for this recommendation is interesting. They explained to us that when a conman wants to steal from an account, he will typically start out with very small undetectable withdrawals. However, once he is able to make a few small purchases successfully, he will then proceed to drain that account.

This is a perfect picture of how the enemy works. He sees if the believer will buy into his lies and then, once that believer is hooked, he drops in a big lie that leads that believer astray. Likewise, in the Last Days, deception



will rise to an unprecedented level, and the only antidote will be to love the truth and walk in it.

A portion of a prophecy given in 1965 by Stanley Frodsham, a well-known teacher at Elim Bible Institute, confirms this very thought. Concerning the Last Days, he said this (Frodsham, 1965):

*“I warn you to search the Scriptures diligently these last days. For the things that are written shall indeed be made manifest. There shall come deceivers among My people in increasing numbers, who shall speak forth the truth and shall gain the favor of the people. For the people shall examine the Scriptures and say, “What these men say is true.” Then when they have gained the hearts of the people, then and THEN ONLY shall they bring out these wrong doctrines. Therefore, I say that you should not give your hearts to men, nor hold people’s persons in admiration. For by these very persons shall Satan enter into My people. WATCH FOR SEDUCERS. Do you think a seducer will brandish a new heresy and flaunt it before the people? He will speak the words of righteousness and truth, and will appear as a minister of light, declaring the Word. The people’s hearts shall be won. Then, when the hearts are won, they will bring out their doctrines, and the people shall be deceived. The people shall say, “Did he not speak thus and thus? And did we*

*not examine it from the Word? Therefore he is a minister of righteousness.*

*This that he has now spoken we do not see in the Word, but it must be right, for the other things he spoke were true.”*

*Be not deceived. For the deceiver will first work to gain the hearts of many, and then shall bring forth his insidious doctrines. You cannot discern those who are of Me and those who are not of Me when they start to preach. But seek Me constantly, and then when these doctrines are brought out you shall have a witness in your heart that these are not of Me. Fear not, for I have warned you. Many will be deceived. But if you walk in holiness and uprightness before the Lord, your eyes shall be open and the Lord will protect you. If you will constantly look unto the Lord you will know when the doctrine changes, and will not be brought into it. If your heart is right I will keep you; and if you will look constantly to Me I will uphold you.”*

## Conflict I – The Assault in the Garden



## ***The Enemy' Assault Through Subtlety***

As we have previously stated, the enemy is a believer. Ironically, the enemy may even believe more than do some of the saints, for the Apostle James said in James 2:19, “...*the devils also believe, and tremble...*” He believes in the power of God and the promises of God, which is why he works so hard to discredit God by attacking His character and also His promises. As we shall see, the enemy successfully attacked God’s character in the Garden of Eden.

In Genesis 3:1-3, it says, “*Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.*”

Until this point in her interaction with the serpent, Eve could have been given a passing grade in doctrine. She expressed the commandment as it was given to her, “You can eat of any of the trees except for the tree in the center because that is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

In the original command given to Adam in Genesis 2:17, reading it from the Young’s Literal Translation, the Lord

said, “*for in the day of thine eating of it—dying thou dost die.*”

We understand that when God said, “*lest ye die*”, He meant death in a spiritual sense, being separated from Him because of sin. He also meant death in a physical sense which, as we know it, took place later on. After they had sinned, their relationship with God was indeed marred; they fled from Him when He approached them in the garden (Gen. 3:8). When God created Adam and Eve they were created to live forever; they were not created to die. But because of their disobedience, Christ had to come and die for the sins of mankind, so that they could be born again of His Spirit (Rom. 5:12).

### ***The Enemy Wanted to Convince Eve of Something False***

The serpent, a master at trickery and deception, began to sneer at what God said. His intent was to make Eve ashamed that she believed what her husband and her God had said. This is recorded for us in Genesis 3:4: “*And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die.*” Today, the conversation would sound something like this: “You’ve got to be kidding me! That is utter nonsense. You don’t really believe you will actually die, do you?”

The enemy knew full well that what God said was true, but he was using his arsenal of words to deceive her.

He did this because he knew that if he could convince Eve to believe the lie, she would act on that belief, and thus separate herself from the protection of God and her husband. Once she was outside that protection, she became easy prey for the enemy to slay her spiritually. Not only that, the enemy knew that her disobedience would also affect the entire human race, giving him an advantage over them throughout history.

The lie that the enemy was getting Eve to believe was this—he wanted to convince her that the Lord and her husband were unfair and controlling, and that was why they had denied her what she wanted. In Genesis 3:5 the serpent said to Eve, *“For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.”* These words were as smooth as oil, but what a slanderous accusation it was against the nature and character of God. Many have been slain by the enemy throughout the generations with variations of this same lie.

### ***The Problem Was That Eve Believed the Lie***

Now, the enemy coming and undermining the character of God is not really the problem, as heinous as this is. The problem was that Eve believed the lie. Why did Eve believe it? When the enemy pointed out the “merits” of this tree, Eve turned and she looked. Genesis 3:6 says, *“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for*

*food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”*

Prior to this encounter, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a hated tree. Adam and Eve probably never even looked at it because God, who had always been good to them, told them it would be certain death to do so, and so they dismissed it from their minds. Then the enemy came to her and said something like this, “Let me tell you what the problem is here. God is holding you back. All He wants to do is control your life and keep you back from what is good.” With that suggestion, evil thoughts entered into Eve’s heart and she began to see things in a “new light.”

May we take this warning to heart. If a woman, for example, feels that her husband and the church are holding her back, she should examine her heart and take careful note of who she has been speaking with and what those people have been saying. These are the warning signs that something is wrong.

***Evil Thoughts Entered Her Heart  
When She Believed a Lie***

The lies the enemy told Eve corrupted her. Evil thoughts of self-interest entered into her mind and even worse, she believed them. May we always choose the fear of

the Lord over personal gratification to avoid falling into this snare. It was Eve's self-interest that got her in trouble here.

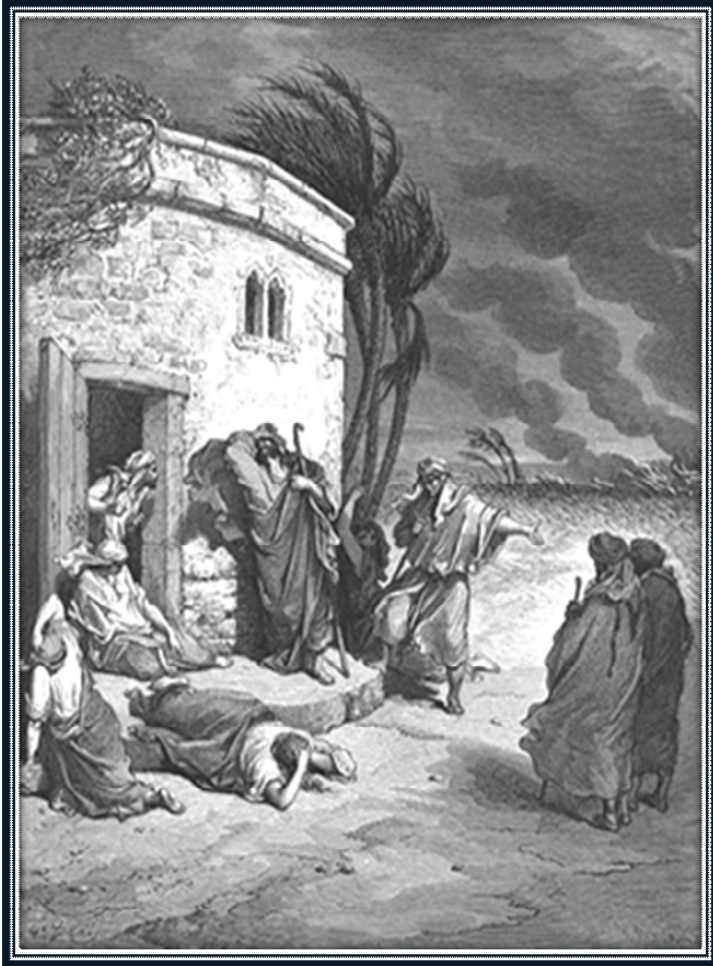
The enemy did not tell her what he knew to be true, that the reason why God had placed those boundaries was because He was protecting her from things that would harm her and the generations that would follow. Instead he imparted to her a doubt about God's character so that she questioned if God truly had her best interests at heart. The enemy also implanted in her a desire for the forbidden fruit. Once he accomplished this, he knew that she would do the rest by acting on those lies, disobeying the commandment of the Lord, and as a result, bringing on herself God's judgment.

In Genesis 3:7-8 it then states, *“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.”* What a sad day it was when the Lord came down into the garden to walk with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day, as He had been accustomed to do, only to find them hiding from Him. He was the One who had lovingly created them with His own hands, breathing the breath of life in them, and putting them in the beautiful garden.



From this first great conflict, we see that what the enemy is really after in the lives of believers is an evil confession of the Lord and a belief in something about God that is false. That is his primary objective. Putting self-interest above all else is a dangerous thing. Those whose lives revolve around their importance, their happiness, and their rights are like putty in the enemy's hand. The enemy easily persuades the rash, the demanding and passionate, but those who have come to the realization that everything that God has given them has been by His benevolent hand, are preserved.

## Conflict II - The Assault Against Job



## ***The Enemy's Assault through Trials***

The second great conflict that we will look at is found in the Book of Job. We begin in Job 1:8 where the Lord gives a wonderful testimony of Job: “*And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?*” Consider the position of this great man of God, of whom the Lord said there was not another man like him in the earth.

When Satan engaged with God to attack Job, what was the enemy really after? Was he looking to remove his blessings such as his wealth and earthly substance, or was he after something more? The answer is found in the enemy's own words in Job 1:11, “*But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.*” The real goal of the enemy was to destroy Job's testimony. His scheme was to cause Job to be offended so that he would believe that God was not just or fair and thereby turn him against God. He wanted to see Job curse God.

Satan knows what is in the heart of man and how to get him to react. Many times when men and women suffer in difficult situations, they sour and tend to blame God. It is a mature saint indeed who remembers all the good the Lord has done and does not doubt the character of God, even in the midst of suffering.

## ***Job Never Curses God***

It is important for us to observe that shortly after the trial began, Job was still able to maintain a victorious confession: “...*Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD*” (Job 1:21). It was only after the trial dragged on that what needed to be purged from Job was exposed. Out from his mouth came forth all kinds of wrong confessions. That being said, although Job made some wrong confessions, he never cursed God to His face. He did not become an enemy of God or do what the enemy said he would.

While Job’s confessions were made manifest in the form of words, one’s confession is not always put into words. Wrong confessions can remain hidden deep beneath the surface of our hearts. But prolonged trials have a way of bringing to the surface what is really in our hearts.

The secret to maintaining a good confession is to know and understand the character of God with deep conviction, so that we do not turn on Him and begin to accuse Him as soon as He begins to deal with issues in our lives. Many times mankind turns on the Lord as soon as the going gets rough. In Job 2:4-5, it says, “*And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he*

*will curse thee to thy face.*” Sadly, in many cases, this is true enough.

### ***Be Careful About the Opinions You Form When Suffering***

The enemy is in the business of changing what people believe. This is because he knows the power of a belief system and how it will ultimately govern and change our lives. He works evil in trying to get us to believe a lie. In this second great conflict, the enemy used the tool of pain and suffering in an attempt to bring this about in Job’s life.

We see this happening every day. Men and women form false opinions about God in the midst of their trials because they are suffering and cannot understand. The enemy seeks permission from God Almighty to take believers through great trials in order to cause their testimony to sour.

Let us remember that all of the enemy’s tactics deal in the realm of beliefs. He knows full well the reality and character of God, and the truth of God’s promises and plans. Yet it is his diabolical plan to shake our confidence in the Lord through fear and doubt. He wants Christ’s followers to believe the same lie that the children of Israel believed in the wilderness, “God has brought us out here to die...” (Num. 21:5). He wants us to believe that God has forsaken us, that He is no longer there for us, and that He no longer cares.

The enemy was after one thing in the trial of Job. He was not interested in Job's children, his cattle, his wealth, or his influence, although these were what had been removed from Job. The enemy did not need camels and cows. He was really after Job's relationship with God, his confession, his testimony, and the promises of God. The fact that God allows things to be removed from those going through trials is not the tragedy; the tragedy is when the enemy can steal one's relationship with Christ and one's testimony. What the enemy is really after is expressed in Job 1:11 where he says, "...*he will curse thee to thy face.*" The enemy wants the love that all believers have for the Lord, as well as their testimony, to sour.

No one is exempt from the vicissitudes of life. Things come and things go, as Paul said Philippians 4:11-13, "*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" Wealth and possessions are not what is most important in life, for they are of no eternal value. What is important is whether we allow the trials that we go through to make us better or bitter. What really matters is our confession and our opinions formed about God after each trial.

It is absolutely critical to maintain a good confession and watch out for attitudes that do not please Him. God

chooses those who will serve Him in the furnace of affliction (Isa. 48:10). What this says is that God brings the fiery trials to see what our confession will be through it, and then He directs our life accordingly. There is grace available from God in the fire if we will humbly cry out to Him because He wants the confession of His chosen ones to be good.

### ***The Devastating Effect of an Evil Confession***

In studying the consequences of one's confession, we should consider the children of Israel in their journey from Egypt into the Promised Land. It was not the giants that kept them from entering into the Promised Land, but their own confession of God.

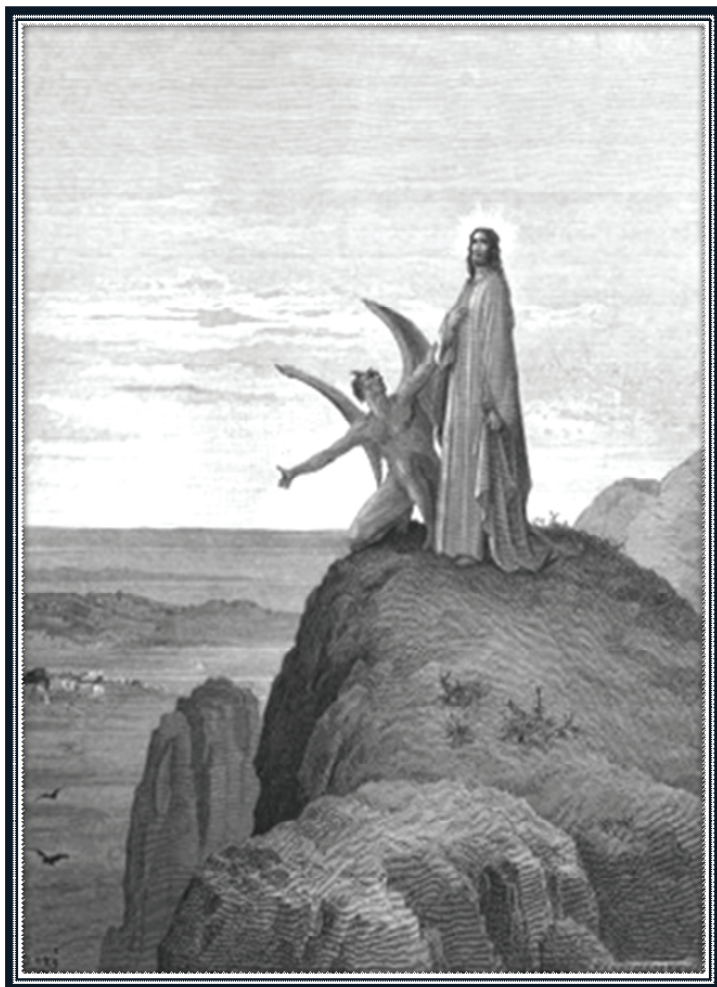
Those who maintained a good confession, such as Joshua and Caleb, survived and gained their inheritance. Those who murmured and complained about God never entered in, for the Lord said, "*... As truly as I live, saith the LORD, as ye have spoken in mine ears, so will I do to you: Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me*" (Num. 14:28-29).

Satan cannot get access to believers unless God first allows it. Therefore our attitude regarding a trial ultimately reflects our opinion about God who has

allowed that trial. When Job said, “...*the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord*” (Job 1:21), he crushed the enemy. By that testimony he contradicted the evil one, who said Job would curse Him to His face (Job 1:11).



## Conflict III - The Temptation of Christ



### ***The Enemy's Assault through Temptation***

The third conflict where the enemy assaulted mankind was through the temptation of Christ. The temptation of Christ exposes the enemy for who he really is—a worship-hungry creature that seeks to trick, deceive, and knock people off their God-appointed course.

The Lord allowed the enemy's words to be recorded in the Scriptures that they might be instructive. The words that come forth from a person's mouth paint a picture of who that person really is. (An important key in life is to learn to listen to what people are saying, for it always reveals who they are).

We can read the account of the temptation of Christ very academically, and be totally confident in the final outcome. However, in doing so, we can lose an appreciation of how powerful and convincing Satan's words and influence can be. May we be careful and not underestimate the power of this enemy. He, of course, was no match for Christ, but he had a significantly detrimental impact on the lives of Adam and Eve.

The reason why Christ is so victorious against the enemy is found in John 14:30, where it says, "*...for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*" There are no sins or areas of disobedience, unrighteousness, wickedness, or evil confessions in Him. Christ walked in loving obedience to His Father and was crucified

in body, soul, and spirit—the three areas in which He was tempted. We will expound on these three areas of temptation later on in this book.

### ***Every Life Must be Tested***

Luke 4:1 shows that it was actually the Holy Spirit who arranged this meeting between Christ and the devil in order to prove out Christ's victorious walk. The victory of all believers will also be tested in like manner. This is a necessary step because nothing is really true until it has been tested.

One might be tested in a different manner than another believer; however, the temptations will always be relevant to one's own experience. The enemy does not tempt us in an area where there are no needs, but rather he targets areas of weakness. As Matthew Henry, an English commentator on the Bible, states in his comments on Matthew 4:1, "It is one of the wiles of Satan to take advantage of our outward condition and those who are brought into straits [a position of great difficulty] have need to double their guard" (Henry, 1706).

### ***Cry Out to God Against Known Areas of Weakness***

Everyone knows the areas that they struggle with. It is vital that one watches and prays constantly over those areas because it is in those very areas that one will be

tempted. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 Paul says, *“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

God does not condemn man for being tempted, provided man cries out to Him against the temptation. The Godhead will preserve those who cry out as Christ did when He was tempted: *“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared”* (Heb. 5:7).

God will be patient with man for a time and a season, but eventually one must deal with sin if one seeks to go on with God. Those, however, who do not deal with sin and temptation in their lives, are not preserved. The key to preservation in the hour of temptation is to cry out to God.

Romans 12:1-2 instructs all believers to present their bodies as living sacrifices to God. If we learn to struggle and strive against these things, God will preserve us from the wiles of the devil and the enemy will find nothing in us. We are to pray as the Lord prayed in Luke 11:4, *“... lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.”*

## Conflict IV - Assault of the Last Days



## ***The Enemy's Assault through Deception***

In the previous chapters, we have looked at the first three conflicts, and man's response to the enemy's assaults which have since come to pass. There is yet one more great conflict to come in the Last Days, and man's response to this assault remains to be seen.

In the Last Days there will be an unprecedented assault from the enemy against the Church with the aim of deceiving those who do not love the truth. We read of this in Matthew 24:3-5: *"And as he sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."*

There will be tremendous deception in the Last Days as the devil, knowing that his time is limited, will seek to use all of his tools to bring down the saints. He will raise up false prophets, false christs, and also the Antichrist (Mt. 24:11, 23, 24). Second Thessalonians 2:8-12 reiterates that the Last Days will be a time of great deception: *"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,*

*And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”*

What forms will these assaults from the enemy take? There will be contradiction of God’s commandments or lawlessness (as with Eve), tribulation, suffering, and persecution (as with Job), and great temptation to sin (as with Christ). Let us consider the following verses for further study:

**1. Lawlessness:** Daniel 7:25: *“And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.”*

**2. Tribulation, Suffering, and Persecution:** Matthew 24:9: *“Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name’s sake.”*

Matthew 24:21: *“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.”*

Matthew 24:22: *“And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”*

### **3. Temptation to sin and become offended:**

Matthew 24:12: *“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”*

Matthew 24:10: *“And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.”*

## ***We Want to be Lovers of the Truth***

The critical point is that if we are lovers of the truth, and serve the Lord in righteousness and humility, we will not be deceived but preserved. Being a lover of the truth is not just believing that something is true; one must also believe in the Truth. The Truth is not some ideal or concept, but a Person. The Lord Jesus Christ is the personification of truth. Believing on and trusting in Him, and walking in obedience to His commandments lead to preservation, but disobedience and the rejection of the truth will lead to deception.

It is essential to understand all things are either true or false. Half-truths are still false. As we shall see, the belt of truth is an important piece of the Armor of God revealed in Ephesians 6:14: *“...loins girt about with truth.”* Those who truly love and embrace the truth are



those who are making the truth their covering or are “*girding their loins with truth.*” The lovers of the truth are seen in John 15:10, “*If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.*” The secret to loving the truth resides not just in what we say, but in walking in obedience to the truth.



**Part II**  
**THE WHOLE ARMOR**  
**OF GOD**



# PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD

*Ephesians 6:11-17*

The four conflicts we have been considering are in reality the reason why we need to appreciate the Armor of God. All of these assaults we have been looking at are engineered by our adversary; they are the “wiles of the devil” as referred to in Ephesians 6:11.

When we turn to Ephesians 6 we find that the very purpose of the Armor of God is that we use it to stand against the enemy: “*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*” (Eph. 6:11). It should be of paramount interest to every believer in these Last Days that we be clothed upon with the Armor of God. The reason is that these are the spiritual tools that will enable us to stand in a time of temptation and persecution brought about by Satan and by his earthly agents (namely the Antichrist, the Beast, and those surrendered to them). The armor will be what enables many dear saints to stand against the very real attacks of the enemy to the very end.

In Ephesians 6:11, Paul tells the church in Ephesus to “*Put on the whole armour of God...*” In this statement, Paul is drawing the attention of the Ephesian believers to what he calls “the whole Armor of God.”

Prior to undertaking this study, the Armor of God always seemed a little mysterious to me. I often pondered if this armor was something God put on special saints, and if so, how did they put it on? What does it feel like? Do they know it is even there? Do they pray for it during a prayer meeting or just before a battle and God puts it on them then? By these unanswered questions it was obvious that I needed a much better understanding of these most important truths.

As a result of engaging in prayerful study, I began to discover that the Armor of God is representative of attributes or virtues that believers are to possess in their personal character more than something that mysteriously comes upon them just when they need it. If these attributes are not developed over time in the life of a believer, they will not be there when they are needed.

To summarize these blessed attributes, one could say that they are realized in the life of the saint in the following ways:

1. **Loins girt with truth** – Being lovers of the truth.
2. **Breastplate of righteousness** – Being protected as a result of walking uprightly.
3. **Helmet of Salvation** – Maintaining a blood-washed conscience.
4. **Feet shod with the Gospel of Peace** – Being a good witness of the gospel and being ready to share it.

5. **Shield of faith** – Being rich in faith (which comes from hearing from the Lord).
6. **Sword of the Spirit** – Having lips like a two-edged sword, speaking what Christ speaks.

In having these attributes worked out in his life, the saint is armed against the devil and has put on the Armor of God. Let us remember that the primary objective of wearing this armor is to be able to say, as did Christ in John 14:30 “... *for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.*” Of course, the great benefit of possessing these attributes is that they enable one not only to withstand the wiles of the enemy, but also to advance against the enemy. Thus the Armor of God is both defensive and offensive in its function. Putting on the Armor of God will cause us to become more than conquerors in Christ Jesus, which Paul spoke of in Romans 8:37.

### ***Three Areas the Enemy Tempts Mankind***

It is important for us to understand that the armor is used in the area of warfare with the enemy. The armor is not effective to mortify, or put to death, the flesh or our sin nature (Col. 3:1-5). Neither can the armor bring us on to Christian perfection (2 Pet. 1:5-8). It is used to put the believer in such a posture so that when the enemy comes, he cannot find anything to trip him up. The Armor of God is a very important key in a believer’s fight against the enemy as Paul exhorts us in Ephesians 6:10-11: “*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of*

*his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”*

The devil will come to tempt and to trip believers up in three areas— the realm of the body, the soul, and the spirit. This is seen in the temptation of Christ as is recorded in Matthew’s Gospel where Christ was tested in those very areas.

Matthew 4:1-11 builds upon the account of Satan’s temptation of Christ. In studying this great conflict between the enemy and Christ, believers can gain insight into the enemy’s intentions toward Christ and mankind. They will come to see his strategies against the saints individually and corporately and thereby glean important truths for their lives. The temptation of Christ exposes how the Lord was tempted of the devil in three areas: **body** (fleshly appetites), **soul** (pride appetite), and **spirit** (worldly appetite). In the same way, the enemy seeks to attack believers in these very areas.

### ***The Body: Fleshly Appetites***

During His temptation, the enemy attempted to entice Jesus to perform a miracle to satisfy the desires of His flesh. This is recorded for us in Matthew 4:2-4: “*And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said,*



*It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”*

He wanted Jesus to command the stones to be turned into bread to satisfy His fleshly appetite. However, even as a man, Christ was a paragon of temperance and did not yield to temptation by this assault. This was because He had already put to death His fleshly appetites.

This is the first of the tri-part working of God—to deal with the flesh. Temperance is essential in the development of holiness in the life of the believer, and it is developed through the putting to death the fleshly desires (Col. 3:1-5, Rom. 8:13). We need to have temperance worked out in our lives so that we do not feed the flesh through our five senses of taste, touch, vision, hearing, and seeing. We have to choose carefully, for example, the images that we allow our eyes to see, the books that we read, the music that we listen to, the words that we speak, and the things that we touch. We need to cry out to God to give us the power to mortify or put to death those things of the flesh that we might be struggling with in our lives.

It is important for us to realize the way the enemy tailored the temptation after he had studied Christ—His circumstances and possible vulnerabilities, especially in the area of strong hunger at that time. The enemy also knows how to exploit the weaknesses in the lives of believers, and so we must make sure that we deal with those weaknesses in the flesh.

There is something we must not lose sight of and it is simply this— these were true temptations for Christ. He was wholly God but He was also wholly man. If these different offers of the enemy did not tempt Christ (in other words tempt the ‘man’ part of Christ) then they would not be called temptations. Each one of these offers was relevant to Christ and would have been temptations to Him. While He triumphed over these temptations, we must not make the mistake of assuming that He was God and was therefore not tempted. We must remember that Christ was also man, and as man, He could be tempted. The reason why Christ was able to stand as a man against the wiles of the devil was because He was clothed upon with the virtues that the Armor of God represents.

The temptations the enemy brings to us will also be real temptations—things that our sin nature will find attractive and desirable. We, too, will be empowered to stand against the enemy in the hour of our temptation as we are clothed upon with this armor.

### ***The Spirit: Worldly Appetites***

The enemy also sought to entice Christ by offering Him the kingdoms of this world in exchange for worship: *“Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it*

*is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Mt. 4:8-10). For a definition of what the world is, we turn to 1 John 2:15-16: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”*

This is the second of the tri-part working of God—dealing with worldliness in the heart. This is a tactic that has been very successful for the enemy over the ages as men and women give in to the allurements of this world. An example of this can be found in 2 Timothy 4:10, where it is recorded that Demas, who was at one time a faithful follower, forsook Paul because he fell prey to this trap of the allurements of this world. However, this tactic was ineffective with Christ because He was not in conflict between His love for His Father and the love for this world. He was totally committed to His Father’s will and was not tempted by worldly things. He knew the kingdom He strove for was not an earthly kingdom, and that He was to inherit all things in due season. Believers, too, must be wholly devoted to the Lord in their affections and live with the vision of obtaining an inheritance in the world to come. An eternal vision will free us from the temptation to fight to gain the temporal pleasures of this present world.

How did Christ combat this assault? The answer is found in Matthew 4:10: “*Then saith Jesus unto him, Get*

*thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*" He responded confirming His devotion and allegiance to the Father.

In Luke 12:19, Luke wrote about one who was satisfied with this world's goods. However, we cannot worship or serve two masters—God and mammon (worldly wealth), for we will hold to the one, and despise the other (Mt. 6:24). In order to be free, believers must be wholly devoted to the Lord so that they do not play into the devil's hands.

In Dr. Brian J. Bailey's book, *The Journey of Israel*, he draws a parallel between the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to Mount Zion, and the journey of a believer from spiritual infancy to spiritual maturity. Egypt, in scripture, represents the world. Mount Zion, the capital city of King David, represents entering in to the highest attainment in God. He made the observation that during the wilderness portion of this journey, the children of Israel kept looking back and desiring to return to Egypt (the world) even after being delivered from slavery in Egypt. It was not until they left the wilderness and crossed the Jordan River, that this desire to return to Egypt was removed from their hearts.

So many times young people are slain in battle by the enemy in their walk because of this same desire in their hearts to return to the world. If one loves the world and

the things of this world, that love will draw one to return to the world.

God wants to work in our lives so that our hearts are completely devoted to Him. He is a jealous God, and will not want His people to have other loves before Him. God took His children out of the world, however, the work does not end there because God must remove the world from their hearts. God will ultimately grant us the desires of our hearts and confirm us in the path of our choosing. This is affirmed in Revelation 22:11, *“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”*

If we desire to return to the world, then there will come a day when we will be released by the Lord to return to what we had once been delivered from. It is therefore vital that we cry out to God to remove that love within our hearts for the world, so that we then can have no more desire to return.

### ***The Soul: Prideful Appetites***

Christ was also tempted by the devil to prove who He was: *“Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any*

*time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Mt. 4:5-7).* In this assault, Satan convincingly misquoted scripture in an attempt to provoke Christ to prove His identity out of pride.

The enemy is very good at misquoting the Word of God. May we never underestimate his ability to pervert convincingly the Word of God, as he did, for example, in the case of Eve (Gen. 2:16-17; Gen. 3:1-3). Unless one is clothed with the Armor of God, one will be vulnerable.

Even though the scriptures above show a seemingly simple dialogue between Christ and the enemy, underlying this dialogue was a vicious assault with sinister intention of defeating Christ by appealing to human pride. Satan tried, through speech mingled with error, to turn the Word of God on Christ and destroy Him.

However, Christ was fully clothed with the virtues of the Armor of God. His love of the truth, clear conscience, walking in righteousness, and vibrant faith produced by a hearing and obedient ear, together with his skill in wielding the sword of the Spirit (the Word of God) caused Him to triumph over the enemy. Christ, the Word of God personified and filled with all wisdom and understanding, returned the assault effectively by rightly dividing the Word of God. He dealt a decisive blow to the enemy and Satan fled, defeated.

God wants to remove pride in our lives so the enemy cannot provoke us to leave the path of God for our lives. In Ephesians 6:11, Paul exhorted believers to, “*Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*” Never has understanding this beautiful truth been more critical than in the Last Days when we will enter into the greatest conflict of all times. The Armor of God enables us to stand in warfare against Satan and his cohorts, so that we may attain to the fullness of the stature of Christ.

### ***The Armor of God Represents Qualities or Virtues***

The Armor of God represents qualities or virtues that a mature saint should possess in character. Adam and Eve did not have this armor when the enemy approached them, and because of their weakness, they fell. The character that the armor represents had not yet been developed in their lives. The reason is that character is generally developed in trials, and prior to their fall, they had experienced no trials. On the other hand, Christ, the second Adam, was completely clothed with the Armor of God during His temptation so that the enemy could not find any weakness that he could exploit. Christ was thus able to triumph completely over the devil.

It is important for us to understand that the Armor of God is not something of external origin that is imparted to us instantaneously through prayer and the laying

on of hands. Rather, the Armor of God is the result of our submitting to God's internal working and dealing in our lives, so that we grow in character and spiritual strength. While prayer does not lead to an instantaneous impartation of the Armor of God, prayer can most certainly contribute to the overall development of qualities or virtues that the armor represents.

The fruits of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5 and these qualities or virtues that the armor represents share a similarity—they do not grow overnight, but are developed over time. The Armor of God is a work done in a life over time that produces strength of character within the believer. The way one develops this armor in one's life is much the same way one has the fruits of the Spirit developed in one's life—by going through trials and by meeting with God. After a believer possesses this Armor of God, the expression of it in his life effectively protects him against the enemy, which is its very function.

***Fully Clothed in Armor so that  
the Enemy Cannot Get In***

Now finally, let us focus for a moment on something said by Christ in John 14:30, “...for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.” As we have seen earlier, because Christ was fully clothed with the Armor of God, the enemy could not find any weakness in Him to exploit. This statement of Christ in John 14:30 reaches right into the core of understanding the Armor of God.



Why did Christ say that the enemy could find nothing in Him? Was it because He was shielded as a result of His privileges as the Son of God? No, it was because there were no weaknesses in His character that the enemy could exploit and as such, no place that the enemy could find to penetrate Him.

When believers allow the Armor of God to be developed in their lives, this armor will preserve the saints of God in the exact same way. They too will say, “The enemy comes and finds nothing in me.” This armor is a believer’s spiritual strength, preventing the enemy from accessing any part of his life. It is not enough to have the anointing of the power of God; it is one’s personal character that is a protection and shield against the blows of the enemy. Samson is a prime example of this. Samson had the power and the anointing, but he did not have the godly character. This opened him to being prey to his enemies, who captured and blinded him (Jdg. 16).

As we shall see later, this armor is not only for defense, but also to equip the saint of God with a powerful tool needed to advance against the devil.

### ***King David and the Armor of God***

The saint who is clothed completely with the Armor of God is one who has achieved a certain level of strength and maturity. We can glean this important truth from the life of David.

The life of David may be divided into three stages spiritually:

- **Babe** – David the lad watching over the sheep and slaying Goliath.
- **Young Man** – David the king reigning over Judah.
- **Father** – David the king reigning over the whole nation of Israel.

While David was in the babe stage of his walk, he could not properly wear the armor. In 1 Samuel 17:38-40, we see that David tried unsuccessfully to wear the armor of a mature warrior. Ultimately at this stage of his life, his victories over his enemies (in the form of Goliath the giant, the lion, and the bear) stemmed solely from the grace of God represented by the five smooth stones that he used in these early battles (five being the number of grace).

From this we can learn that while in the babe stage, God gives those who follow Him victories through His grace. However, it is His desire that we grow in spiritual maturity so that we are clothed upon with the whole Armor of God, and are protected from the attacks of the enemy. These are the ones who are spiritual young men described in 1 John 2:14: *“I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.”* They have overcome the evil one through the Armor of God.

## “Loins girt about with truth...”



The first piece of the Armor of God is the belt of truth. Believers must be lovers of the truth. What is the truth? Christ Himself is described in John 14:6 as “*The Truth.*” He is the embodiment of truth, which means there is nothing false in Him. Having the truth also means having the mind of Christ, and not a warped humanistic view. We have the same balanced opinion as God, confessing what He is confessing, embracing what He is saying.

Not only is Christ the Truth, His word is also truth. The scriptures show that His Word is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path (Ps. 119:105). It also says that the entrance of His word gives light (Ps. 119:130). When we walk in obedience to His word, we do not stumble in the darkness because we are walking in the light and therefore we can see clearly.

Hearing a word from the Lord is hearing the truth, yet hearing from Him can be more of a challenge to some than one might initially think. The prophet Jeremiah said this in Jeremiah 15:16, “*Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.*” When the Lord is speaking to us positive things, it is easy to rejoice. However, it is not as easy to rejoice when He speaks things that are difficult to hear.

The prophet Jeremiah who rejoiced over the Word of God also paid a price for speaking the Word of the Lord as we see in Jeremiah 20:8-9: *“For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.”* Jeremiah found God’s word very challenging in his life. Yet if we are to be lovers of the truth, we are to love *everything* God speaks.

To the rich young ruler, Jesus said, *“...one thing thou lackest...”* (Lk. 18:22). Jesus was putting His finger on an area in this man’s life that needed attention. That one thing was of such great importance that it stopped this follower dead in his tracks, so much so that he ceased to follow the Lord. (The truth, when spoken by the Lord, can cut very deeply when there are serious issues that need to be addressed).

On another occasion the Spirit spoke the truth to a whole group of believers, the Church at Ephesus. He said, *“I have somewhat against thee,”* thus revealing that there were areas in their lives that displeased the Lord (Rev. 2:4). This was the direct Word of the Lord from the Spirit of Truth to them, exposing a dark area.

Although the Holy Spirit speaks the words of truth to His people, sadly, they are not always respected

and embraced. In the case of the rich young ruler, for example, he departed sorrowfully after hearing the truth (Lk. 18:23).

If God is going to redeem man from his fallen nature, we must expect that there are going to be unpleasant things that He will address in the light of His truth. At the root of it all, when receiving correction from the Lord, we must have an unswerving confidence that He is a Father who only wants to remove things that will stunt or hinder the growth and development of His children. Sadly, the corridors of time are littered with those who, like the rich young ruler, made the wrong choice to reject His correction.

### ***God Digs Deep to Reveal What Is in Our Hearts***

In Ezekiel 8:7-12, the prophet wrote, *“And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, portrayed upon the wall round about. And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and*

*a thick cloud of incense went up. Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth.”* The prophet was taken from Babylon to Jerusalem and into the temple by the Spirit of God.

There, Ezekiel saw abominations and unclean creeping insects upon the walls of a secret room in the temple. The Lord revealed to the prophet that this secret room was actually representative of what was in the imagination of the elders. They thought that God did not see what was in their hearts, but God did see. It is a deception to think, as some do, that they can deceive God. Not only did God see what was in their hearts, but He also showed it to Ezekiel. The truth of God was shining on these men and revealing what was really in the hidden places of their hearts.

Believers today can also come into an experience where God is very blunt in His dealings with us, revealing things from the depths of the human heart, such as anger, resentment, and uncleanness. The question is, how will we respond to that light or revelation? It is our response in that moment of dealing that will determine where we go in God.

In Job 24:13, it says, *“They are of those that rebel against the light; they know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the*

*paths thereof.*” This describes those who will not hear the corrections of the Lord. Sadly, because they will not let God deal with them, their heart becomes cold over time and they treacherously depart from the faith, returning to a life of sin. This is the danger a believer faces if God shows him something and he does not receive it. Perhaps not everyone will depart from the faith because of some untouched area of their life. Some will remain in the church and seemingly have fruitful lives, but what will it be like when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ, the Spotless One, with that sin still there?

I have had wonderful experiences in the Lord but the one that I remember the most is actually a negative one. I once stood before the angel of the Lord in an interviewer’s room in Heaven. I was very anxious to see the Lord, and I kept looking diligently past the angel that I might see where He was. In my spirit, I asked the angel to reveal Jesus to me. I was very glad to realize that the Lord was standing right behind me, so I turned to see Him, and He happily greeted me. However, after a few moments He began to deal with a very deep flaw that was hidden in me. In that moment I was so disappointed that I had not pleased Him. He showed me in a split second of time what my eternity would be like if that issue was not dealt with, and it was on a much lower plane than what He had ordained for me. I now live my life, striving every day to have that area removed so that the next time I appear before Him, this flaw will not be even mentioned.

## ***Embracing the Truth***

This, too, needs to be the attitude of all believers. If we are to be counted as lovers of the truth, we must readily embrace the Lord's correction as well as His praise.

When God reveals to us the truth about our faults, embracing the truth may be painful at times. However, we should not be overwhelmed but remember that God's judgment is good and works for our good. We must also consider 1 John 3:20, where it is written, "*Beloved if our heart condemn us God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.*" We may fall prey to discouragement and our hearts may also condemn us because we struggled and, at times, failed in the war against our besetting sins. However, we must remember this truth that "*God is greater than our heart.*" God's desire is to forgive and encourage us until we gain the victory. There are times when we will find that He is more generous to us and kinder than we are to ourselves.

People are so quick to agree with the adversary at times when he condemns them. However, while we are not to think more highly of ourselves than we ought, it is just as much a departure from truth to think more ill of ourselves than we should. Both of these flaws are rooted in pride and humanistic thinking, which leads to bondage.

Embracing the truth, however, will set us free (Jn. 8:32). At the end of the day, we should embrace the truth,



confess it, and submit to God's word (which is the truth). Thus we see that there are several important requirements that relate to having one's loins girt about with truth—embracing the light, walking in the light, and dealing with things when God exposes them to the light. It is very important to have an honest confession and cry out with one's whole heart for grace to know how to respond to the things God is revealing. We must always remember that Satan lurks in the darkness, and those who back away from the light are backing into the darkness where Satan can always keep his hand on their lives.

Another aspect of embracing the truth is to be rid of all hypocrisy and falsehood, which includes the lies of the enemy that he sends to bring down and discourage the followers of Christ. This is one reason why our loins have to be girt about with truth.

Finally, when our loins are girt about with truth, we no longer depend on our warped sense of what is right and wrong. Instead, we seek and depend on Christ for His mind and judgment in every matter. Embracing the truth is to have the words of our mouth and the meditations of our heart acceptable in His sight (Ps. 19:14).

## **Embracing Good Doctrine**

There is yet another aspect of being girded about with truth that is illustrated in 2 Timothy 2:15, "*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not*

*to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*” In this instance, truth is doctrine. Good doctrine is so important, as it determines where one is going in the Lord.

Understanding good doctrine requires integrity of heart. It is not simply a matter of studying the Word of God; we must be a lover of that truth, seeking to be obedient to that truth so that it is established in our lives. Jesus clearly established the connection between the condition of our hearts and understanding truth or good doctrine when He stated in John 7:17, *“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”*

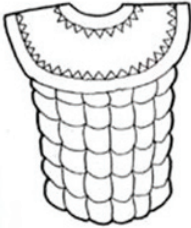
A false balance is an abomination to the Lord (Prov. 11:1). Never is balance more important than when one is speaking about truth. For example, in the area of truth concerning ourselves, that truth must be balanced. Our opinion of ourselves cannot be too high or too low, rather, it is to be founded on what God is saying.

Balance is also very important in the area of doctrine. It is no good to preach on one truth all the time, or embrace one truth to the exclusion of others. A good example of this would be the hyper-faith movement. Those involved in this movement often preach messages emphasizing faith to the exclusion of Christian perfection (2 Pet. 1:5-8). Likewise, there are others who preach only on the importance of the law, and they do so to the exclusion of the beautiful truths of being empowered and led by the Holy Spirit.

These are just a few examples of how one can be unbalanced in truth. We must watch for this very carefully because unbalanced truth produces deformed fruit. This perfect balance in the area of truth is part of the Armor of God needed to defeat Satan. Possessing this balance provides a sure footing in defense against the enemy.

Embracing the truth is essential in the area of pure worship. The Father seeks for those who worship Him in Spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24); therefore, those who embrace the truth are worshippers that the Father seeks out.

## “The Breastplate of Righteousness...”



Righteousness, by definition, is simply doing that which is right in the eyes of the Lord. It is a powerful virtue and one of the most powerful defenses in spiritual warfare. It protects those who possess it from becoming wounded by the barbs of the enemy. The enemy, who is full of unrighteousness, cannot penetrate the armor of one who is truly righteous.

There are fewer things that unravel the victory of believers more quickly than unrighteousness in some area of their lives. While an upright person is not necessarily exempt from attacks of the enemy, the enemy cannot exploit that believer without finding an internal weakness. As Jesus said, “...for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me” (Jn. 14:30).

Judas is a prime illustration of one who was not protected from the wiles of the devil because of a breach in his armor. His covetousness was an area of unrighteousness that he had not allowed the Lord to deal with, and so this opened the door to the enemy. The Apostle Peter warns us, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). This sin in the life of Judas allowed the enemy entrance so that he could provoke Judas into betraying the Lord for the love of money. The

enemy was able to exploit that weakness in his life and in so doing, bring about his ultimate destruction. If Judas had had the character of righteousness worked out in his life, he would have been able to effectively stand against Satan because there would have been no place for the enemy to get in.

May we take heed and deal with all sin and unrighteousness, as Christ did. As we have said earlier, we have an example in Christ, *“who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared”* (Heb. 5:7). The Lord prayed for grace from the hand of His loving Father to effectively resist sin and temptation, that He might walk a straight path and continue to do those things which pleased His Father. What a beautiful testimony, and what an apt description of righteousness! Jesus’ testimony in John 8:29, *“I do always those things which please my Father,”* is somewhat like the testimony of the righteous King David in 1 Kings 15:5, *“...David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing he commanded him all the days of his life...”*

### ***Two Aspects of Righteousness***

It is important to explore the distinction between two different types of righteousness. These types are referred to in Scripture as imputed and imparted righteousness.

**Imputed** means ‘charged to the account of, attributed, or ascribed’ (Noah Webster Dictionary). It is the act of being counted righteous simply by believing in Jesus (Rom. 4:21-24). The word **imparted** means ‘communicated, granted, or conferred’ (Noah Webster Dictionary). It is the act of possessing the character of righteousness because it has been worked out in one’s life (1 Jn. 3:7).

With imputed righteousness we become righteous before God by virtue of the blood of Jesus. God counts us righteous because of the finished work of Christ. However, one who only has imputed righteousness is left unchanged in the sense that one may still have profound weaknesses in one’s life that the enemy can (and will) exploit. On the other hand, one who also has imparted righteousness has become righteous through an intense hunger for righteousness (Mt. 5:6), and through having one’s character polished by God.

It is *imparted* righteousness that is an effective protection against the enemy. This is what the breastplate of righteousness consists of, and the enemy, who is full of unrighteousness, cannot penetrate so long as one continues to walk in righteousness.

There is blessedness for those who love righteousness, for those who yearn for its fruit in their lives. There are scores of believers who are content to simply be counted righteous. However, the heart of Christ is toward those who strive for imparted righteousness as is seen in

Matthew 5:6, *“Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness they shall be filled.”*

## Sowing and Reaping

In this survey of righteousness, we must understand that our choices will lead to consequences, some of which we may not necessarily have intended. Choosing the way of righteousness brings forth good fruit. What are the fruits of righteousness?

**Peace and joy:** In Romans 14:17, the Paul linked righteousness with peace and joy.

**Preservation:** Another fruit of righteousness is preservation. True righteousness gives us power to stand against the enemy. The Book of Proverbs is also filled with verses that speak of how the Spirit of God upholds and protects the upright, whilst the unrighteous fall into pits and snares (below are further references regarding this thought).

*“The righteous is delivered out of trouble,  
and the wicked cometh in his stead.”* **Proverbs 11:8**

*“Righteousness keepeth him that is upright in the way: but  
wickedness overthroweth the sinner.”* **Proverbs 13:6**

*“Whoso walketh uprightly shall be saved: but he that is  
perverse in his ways shall fall at once.”* **Proverbs 28:18**

**Ability to break sin's power:** In Daniel 4:27, Daniel advised King Nebuchadnezzar to break off his sins through righteousness. Walking in righteousness therefore releases the power of God to break sin and iniquity.

What are the fruits of those who practice unrighteousness? While God is certainly merciful towards the weakness of man, He will not be mocked when man insults His offer of redemption by continuing to engage in sinful practices. Galatians 6:7-8, reading from the English Standard Version, says, "*Whatever one sows [by his deeds and actions], that will he also reap. For the one who sows to his flesh will from the flesh reap corruption [sinful bondages], but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.*" Those who continue to practice unrighteousness will be brought into terrible bondage and become prey to the enemy, who is also full of unrighteousness.



## **“Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace...”**



We now come to the shoes of the Gospel of Peace. What is the gospel or “Good News” of peace that we are to bear wherever we are? Is it not found on the lips of the angels themselves at the announcement of Christ’s birth? Luke 2:13-14 says, *“And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”* This message is the greatest message in the entire world.

Some people have a negative impression of Christianity, that it is simply a lot of do’s and don’ts. However, believers are to proclaim that there is good news, that God has goodwill toward mankind through Christ. If we will let Him, He will bring true peace into our souls.

One does not generally associate witnessing as part of the Armor of God but it clearly is. Witnessing and sharing the gospel of peace with others actually is a defense against the enemy. When one sows peace, then one shall reap peace, and peace will bruise Satan’s head (Rom. 16:20). This piece of armor protects the feet, which one uses to walk with, and so sharing the faith, in reality, protects one’s walk with God.

## ***We Must Live the Gospel of Peace***

We must be mindful that this part of the armor covers the feet, with which we use to walk. This signifies that feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace is the gospel lived out in one's walk, not just one's words. Christ's followers are to show the reality of the gospel through their walk. If one does not live a consistent life upholding the tenets of Christianity, there is very little witness and very little protection.

This piece of armor, the preparation of the gospel of peace, begins with our confession or testimony of Christ's faithfulness, His love for humanity, His death on the cross, and His resurrection. However, what we say is all meaningless if our walk does not mirror our beliefs. It is no good to profess Christianity and God's power to deliver, and then live a life inconsistent with Christ's. Over the years I have overheard sinners speak negatively of the saints—how they are hypocrites and how Christianity has not helped the Christians. They then say that this is why they will not accept Christ. Granted in some cases this is simply a sinner making excuses for his own lifestyle, but in other cases I am left defenseless because I know that what they were saying is true.

What is it that really determines our walk with God? It begins with what we think in our mind. The flow generally goes like this: first the mind thinks it, then the mouth confesses it, and then it is walked out in

our lives. Thus, if we are going to share peace of God with others, it only makes good sense that we must first possess that peace.

The reason why sinners do not believe Christians, at times, is because the Christians are preaching something that is not real to them in their own lives. There is nothing more convincing than for a believer to speak what is reality to him. However, if we are full of anxiety and unrest, then we will hardly convince others of the way to peace. If, however, we have the beautiful peace of God emanating from our lives, then that peace will convince others of the reality of what we are saying, more effectively than spoken words.

### ***We Must Overcome Fear***

At times, saints do not share their faith because of fear of what might happen to them. In actuality, when we share our faith and walk it out before men, we are putting on this piece of the Armor of God, which will protect our walk from Satan's attacks. This proclamation from our own lips is a part of the Armor of God; it is our protection.

If we do not put on this particular piece of armor because, for example, we are ashamed of the gospel, there will be a weakness in us that the enemy can exploit. There is a certain strength and boldness that comes into the life of believers when they witness to others. Witnessing somehow releases the grace of God and makes one strong,

which is why it is listed as a part of the Armor of God. Even the Apostle Paul asked for prayer for boldness as it says in Ephesians 6:19-20, “*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, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.*”

### ***It Is the Gospel of Peace, not Debate***

When witnessing, we must remember that it is a gospel of peace and not debate. Believers are not called to debate and wrestle people into conviction. I have found it to be a rare occasion when I felt the Holy Spirit move me to start out a conversation with “Do you know you are going to hell?” (The one specific time I did this, it was directed towards a backslidden saint, and not a sinner). Generally the knowledge that God loves humanity and has made a way for them is more effective in bringing people to Him.

### ***Peace Bruises Satan’s Head***

In Romans 16:20 it states, “*And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*” The God of **peace** shall **bruise Satan under your feet**. This Gospel of Peace brings people into true peace, which actually puts Satan under their feet. This is why the feet need to be shod with the Armor of God because it is the feet that will come into direct contact with the enemy. When

sharing our faith with others, we are, in a very real sense, spreading the peace of God to those who will hear.

Peace is the product of righteousness (Rom. 14:17; Isa. 32:17). That is why the enemy is full of unrest and has no peace (Job 1:7). We must remember that the true peace bruises the enemy, and that he cannot touch a saint who has the peace of God.

## “Above all else taking the shield of faith...”



The language used to form this next phrase “...*Above all else...*” introduces the next piece in the Armor of God. Paul uses this phrase to point out that the shield of faith can be regarded as the most essential piece in the Armor of God, “...*wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked*” (Eph. 6:16).

What is faith? Hebrew 11:1 defines it in the following way: “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*” Faith is not blind as some suppose, but it is a substance and the evidence of things that are not seen by the natural eye. It is a conviction and a discerning of what God is saying to man, and it is one of the most powerful substances known. Faith has the power to overcome every obstacle (Mt. 21:21). By faith Peter was able to walk on water, by faith Daniel shut the mouths of the hungry lions, and by faith we shall be able to quench every fiery dart of the enemy.

Romans 10:17 adds this nuance to faith, “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Simply put, this substance that makes up a believer’s shield is a product of hearing from God. The most important part of one’s relationship with Christ, after

redemption, is hearing His voice. His quickened word births faith in us. As that faith is tried, we grow in faith by God's grace, and this growth in faith gives a good footing to stand and defend against the contradictions of the enemy. We must guard the faith that God deposits in us so that it is not lost. Peter, for example, walked on water by faith. But when his attention became diverted to the negative circumstances, the enemy stole that faith out of his heart by using fear (Mt. 14:30).

### ***Satan in the Garden***

Let us consider this for a moment. What was the first thing that Satan sought to do in the Garden of Eden when he came to God's creation? Was it not to discredit what God had said, even the word of faith? The enemy said to Eve, "*Yea, hath God said?*" (Gen. 3:1). His attack revealed that Adam and Eve did not know how to use the Armor of God, and in particular the shield of faith.

Later, when Satan appeared to Christ during the Temptation, he came to test Christ in the exact same way by twisting God's word and in effect saying, "But didn't God really mean this?" However, he had no success because Christ used the shield of faith effectively when He said, "*It is written...*" (Mt. 4:4, 7, 10). He used this shield to defend Himself and declared back to the enemy, "God has said..." What a devastating blow it is to the enemy when one stands upon the Word of God, rightly dividing it, and throwing it back at the enemy as

a powerful statement of faith. He will most certainly flee for a season, as he did after the temptation of Christ.

### ***Two Aspects of Faith***

We learned that there are two aspects of righteousness, and so it is with faith. There is the gift of faith, and there is the fruit of faith.

The gift of faith is a singular deposit of faith that is placed in the heart of a believer to accomplish a specific task (as was the case with Peter healing the man at the gate beautiful in Acts 3:1-9).

Then there is the fruit of faith. A good illustration of this is found in the life of the great patriarch Abraham (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 3:6). The scriptures tell us that Abraham believed that God could raise his son Isaac from the dead (Heb. 11:17-19). This belief was not based upon a special gift of faith given to Abraham but it came from the fruit of faith that had been developed in his life through his personal walk with the Lord. It was because of this fruit of faith that Abraham was ready to slay his promised seed.

This is why in Romans 4 and Galatians 3, Paul called those who walk by faith “children of Abraham.” As believers, we should come into a place in our lives when our faith goes beyond the ‘gift’ stage, and we simply stand on our experiential knowledge of God and what He has spoken.



Because Abraham had the fruit of faith, he would have thought, “God promised me a son, and if He is asking for him back, it is because He will raise him from the dead.” Abraham did not stagger at his circumstances; he knew through the fruit of faith that God was as good as His word.

### ***The Mechanics of the Shield of Faith***

How does this shield of faith work? Simply put, it works like this: God speaks to the believer, perhaps quickening a verse from the written word or speaking a promise of what He wants to do in his or her life. This quickened word is very powerful if one knows how to hold on to it and not let the enemy steal it. It is for this reason that the enemy tries to come in and challenge that word. He does so often by one or more of the following ways—twisting the interpretation of the word, convincing the believer that he did not really hear from God at all, or convincing him that he does not deserve it. However, the believers need to hold on to the fact that God spoke that word and boldly proclaim what God has spoken, using it as a defense against the enemy. Those who embrace what God is saying will do well against the enemy.

Perhaps one of the best illustrations of this is Peter, who received a word from the Lord to step out and walk on the water. As long as Peter held onto this word, the shield of faith upheld him and he did not sink. But when

the enemy was able to steal it from his heart through fear, he sank into the waves (Mt. 14:25-31).

Let me give a personal testimony to further emphasize how this shield works. In October of 2005, I received a promise from the Lord while I was traveling in a particular country. He said, "I am giving this country to you and to your children." His word came to me in the most powerful way. The Lord Himself came into the back seat of my car and spoke those powerful words to me.

Over the years this word has burned in my heart. But on one occasion when I was particularly low in spirits, I began to doubt if this word was real and so I asked the Lord, "Is this promise You made to me in the car in that certain country still in effect?" The very next morning I received a phone call from a pastor who said, "Last night, the Lord put you on my heart and I am here to tell you from the Lord that the promise of God He spoke to you in the back of your car for this country is still in effect!" That phone call brought my shield of faith back up into place, and now I am quite convinced that no matter what happens, the Lord will fulfill His word.

## “The helmet of salvation...”



What is the function of a helmet? It is to protect one's head from injury, for example, while in a fight. In spiritual battles, the enemy often attacks believers through their minds. This is why the helmet of salvation is so important. Spiritually, salvation is a helmet that comes down over our heads, covering the mind and protecting our conscience from tormenting thoughts sent by the enemy.

Christ's salvation is a helmet to His children. When we are born again, we receive the assurance of God's forgiveness and cleansing, and our conscience is cleansed from guilt. However, this process of cleansing does not stop at the time of salvation but is ongoing. The secret to maintaining our salvation is found in 1 John 1:5-10: *“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”*

These verses reveal that the secret to maintaining our salvation is to walk in the light as He is in the light. Walking in the light is simply walking with our Lord in loving obedience to the present truth God has revealed to us. Walking in present truth means that as God reveals His truth to us, we accept it, commit to it, and endeavor to be compliant with it. When Jesus said to the woman who was caught in adultery “Go and sin no more,” He set a condition for her and it then became her responsibility to break off the former works of darkness and walk in the light of obedience (John 8). When we do walk in revealed light, the blood of Jesus cleanses our hearts from all unrighteousness so that our conscience is clear, and we have fellowship with God and with one another (see also Hebrews 10:22).

Under the Old Covenant, the believer went to the grave with a guilty conscience because of the inferiority of the atonement; the blood of animals cannot cleanse a guilty conscience (see Hebrews 9:6-10). However, the Lord spoke through the prophet Ezekiel of a time when the child of God would be able to walk with a pure conscience: “*Then I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean...*” (Ezek. 36:25). In fact, one of the major differences between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant is the cleansing of the conscience. Under the New Covenant, the conscience is purged from dead works by the shed blood of Jesus as we walk in the light (see Hebrews 9:11-14).

## ***The Importance of a Blood-Washed Conscience***

When a spiritual battle is taking place, the mind is where the enemy assaults the believers the most (Eph. 6:12). If one is able to maintain a blood-washed conscience, it is less likely that the enemy will be able to steal away the word of faith that God has placed in one's heart. Loss of that blood-washed, clear conscience is like removing the helmet in the midst of the battlefield, and then the enemy will be able to effectively assault one's mind and steal away one's faith. When we maintain a blood-washed conscience, we are wearing the helmet of salvation so that it will protect the mind.

In order for the helmet of salvation to be developed in our lives, we need to fulfill certain conditions. We must walk in the light as Christ is in the light, and through the cleansing of the blood of Jesus, continue to keep our spiritual garments always white (Eccl. 9:8). When we do this, the blood of Jesus also covers our mind and conscience (1 Jn. 1:7). May we walk uprightly and make much of the blood of Jesus, so that we might maintain a clear conscience before God. This is the helmet of salvation.

## ***Maintain the Gates of the Mind***

Another aspect of having the helmet of salvation is exercising vigilance over our thought life. What we allow ourselves to think upon is crucial in spiritual warfare, for

the enemy's intention is to introduce evil thoughts so that he can corrupt us from the inside out.

Philippians 4:8 contains eight specific criteria that can be likened to the eight gates of inspection that a thought needs to pass through before being accepted and meditated upon:

1. *“Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest”*— meaning things that are grave or sober;
2. *“Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely”* – meaning delighting in things that are wholesome and lovely in spite of the disgusting appetites of the world;
3. *“Whatsoever things are of good report”* – meaning not having negative opinions or gossiping about people, but looking for the best in others;
4. *“If there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”* – meaning thinking on things that are worthy to be meditated upon, remembering Proverbs 23:7 *“...As he thinketh in his heart so is he...”*

When we apply these eight gates to our thought life, we will safeguard ourselves against evil or unedifying thoughts and be clothed upon with the helmet of salvation.

## **“The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”**



This is the final piece of the Armor of God, and its importance cannot be overstated. Not only can a sword be used to defend us from the blows of the enemy, but it also enables us to advance against and engage the enemy. Believers should not be just interested in holding their own ground, just enduring to the end, but they should also be interested in taking territories that God has ordained for them to possess.

This is where the Sword of the Spirit becomes of critical importance. The sword is the word that God has expressly spoken to His believers. We must never let go of the word that God has spoken to us; it is the key to taking enemy territory, whether that territory is in the form of a personal breakthrough in our life, revival in our church, fulfilling the call of God, or winning cities for Christ. Taking enemy territory begins with the expressed word of the Lord.

### ***Used Together with All Other Pieces of the Armor***

It is also important for us to understand that the effective use of the sword of the Spirit depends very much upon all the other pieces of the armor being in place.

One must be careful, for example, about engaging the enemy if one is not covered with the helmet of salvation by maintaining a pure conscience. A person who has unconfessed sin in his life, or who is not walking in the light will have no end of trouble if he begins to engage the enemy. This is where much of the Church has fallen short. Believers indiscriminately rebuke the devil, but they themselves are not living uprightly. Sometimes God, in His mercy, protects them but they are treading on dangerous ground.

When a believer is not moving against the enemy in faith (the result of hearing and obeying God), but rather in presumption (like those who say that all we need to do is to “name it and claim it”). That believer who moves in presumption is incapable of fending off the darts of the enemy because he lacks the shield of faith, and the result is usually great condemnation and despair.

Again, if one is ashamed of the gospel or not walking consistent with it (one who is without the shoes of the Gospel of Peace), then there is a weakness in one’s life and one will be limited in one’s impact against the adversary.

Yet another risk of engaging the enemy without being properly clothed spiritually is the danger of falling into sin. Take for example a believer who does not really love the truth (one who is without the belt of truth) or who has areas of unrighteousness in his life (one who is without the breastplate of righteousness). If he presumes



to attack the enemy, his weaknesses will be exposed. The enemy will see those weaknesses and easily trip him up by striking back. Apart from the mercy of God, that believer will be in grave danger of falling into sin. That is why it is so important for us to walk in the light and hunger and thirst after righteousness.

Thus we see that all of these other parts of the Armor of God support the saint who seeks to wield this formidable sword of the Spirit.

## The Power of the Sword

There are several illustrations in the Book of Revelation regarding the power of this sword. In the following examples, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself speaks judgment upon His foes as the sword is dispensed from His mouth:

- **Revelation 1:16** – *“And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.”* In the chapters that follow (Rev. 2 and 3), we see a demonstration of this two-edged sword as Christ proceeded to speak into the lives of those in the seven churches and tell them things that would transform them if they would embrace those truths. The Word of God is quick and powerful and able to separate soul and spirit. It is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb 4:12).

- **Revelation 2:16** – *“Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.”* Here Jesus is warning His own people that He can dispense judgment from His very words, making them His enemies, and that He would fight them with the sword of His mouth. It is a terrible thing indeed when one who was once called by His name becomes His enemy. Many unrepentant Christians throughout the years have been unfortunate enough to feel the swiftness and completeness of this sword.
- **Revelation 19:15** – *“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.”* In this verse one begins to see what happens when the Lord begins to execute judgments upon His enemies through the Spirit of His mouth. Such is the power of the Almighty when He speaks.
- **Revelation 19:21** – *“And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”* The fullest extent of the power of His words is seen as He destroys all those who oppose Him at the Second Coming. So powerful is the spoken Word of God that it commands all heaven to advance with Him to judgment as He comes to defend Zion (Rev. 19:14). Here the sword is being

used at its full potential, speaking judgment upon the nations at His Second Coming. His enemies are absolutely powerless to resist Him as the saints and the angels of the Lord advance in unison with His word.

The sword of the Spirit is one of the pieces of the Armor of God, but it is not just a defensive weapon. God also intends for the sword of the Spirit to operate as an offensive weapon. When His people wield this sword by declaring His quickened word, judgment can be brought upon His enemies.

### **Do Not Be Presumptuous**

We must be careful not to engage the adversary unless God has spoken. Presumption leads to disappointment, confusion, and disillusionment. In using the sword, we must always remember that the words that go forth must have first originated from God's lips, not our own. Our boldness should only reflect the boldness of God. Let us remember that even Michael the archangel did not bring a railing accusation against Satan but simply said in unison with God, "*The Lord rebuke thee.*" (Jude 1:9).

I want to illustrate this by sharing something that happened to me shortly after my conversion. I was in a service where the minister unwisely told all of the saints to tell the devil they were going to kick him between the horns. I was a new convert and this seemed like a good idea to me so I said out loud, "Leave me alone or I

am going to kick you between the horns.” This was not, however, what God was saying.

That night, I had one of the most terrifying experiences of my life as the prince of darkness came into my room, laid his hands on my face, pushed my head into the pillow and said in the most horrible voice, “Now who are you going to kick between the horns?”

I learned three things that night. The enemy is very real. He, too, hears what we say and confess, and we should not act presumptuously against him. Rather, we are to step out on the word of God and His word alone, or else we will be exposing ourselves to unnecessary danger.

On another occasion, the prince of darkness came into my room much in the same way. This time God dropped a little chorus into my spirit that I began to sing, and as I did so, it obliterated his power. The difference here was that I had received a quickened word from the Lord, used it, and this word overcame the enemy. He had to shrink back and flee. As Martin Luther sang in the words of the well-known hymn *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*, “One little word shall fell him!”

### ***Using the Sword of the Spirit***

How does one use this sword of the Spirit? As previously stated, it is activated as one speaks the same words that are proceeding from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The primary thing we need in this life is to hear and discern what God is saying. Once this is accomplished, we have our cue, and we will know how to proceed. This truth cannot be overstated. As believers, we need to seek the Lord and learn how to hear God's voice.

Recently while teaching, the Lord spoke to me from Amos 8:11 and said: "*...there is a famine in the land (in the church) of hearing my voice;*" The cornerstone to any healthy relationship is communication. How can it be any different in one's walk with the Lord, which is a personal, intimate relationship? Anyone can experience a dry time where it is difficult to hear from Him, but if that is the summation of our entire experience, then there must be a cry for a fresh move of God in our lives. Apart from these divinely-ordained dry times, it is normal to expect God to speak, as it was Christ Himself who said, "*My sheep hear my voice...*" (Jn. 10:27).

After we have ascertained what He is saying, we must speak these words because there is a real power in them. This truth is beautifully portrayed in Psalm 149:4-9, "*For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;*

*To execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.”*

In Ephesians 6:12, it says, *“For we [believers] 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.”*

Through these two passages, we are now able to see that God wants His saints to execute judgment upon demonic and fallen angelic powers that can be responsible for much bondage. In the times to come, God is going to give to His mature sons and daughters the ability to execute judgment upon their enemies through the spoken word of God proceeding out of their mouths.

Regarding the sword of the Spirit, we should be aware of the key phrase, *“...To execute the judgment written...”* There are two transactions that are to take place in the lives of seeking believers:

1. Colossians 2:14 – The blotting out of the handwriting of ordinances written against them for their crimes, sins, and punishments, and
2. Psalm 149:9 – The pronouncement of judgment against their enemies when they seek the Lord with all their heart and meet with Him regarding their enemies.

We see that the handwriting or judgment against them is blotted out and that God's judgment upon their enemies is written down, becoming "*the judgment written.*" Historically this happened throughout the Old Testament. When the children of God were oppressed, they would seek the Lord, cry out to Him, and He would pronounce a judgment upon the enemy. The prophets recorded it and later that word would be fulfilled.

Once we have obtained a word from the Lord, we should seek Him and simply pray, "Oh Lord, execute the judgment written, the handwriting of ordinances written against my enemy." Psalm 149:9 says, "*This honor have all His saints.*" This "*honor*" is the honor of using the Sword of the Spirit.

Let us fully appreciate the power of the spoken word of God and let us use it. The greatest proof that we know and appreciate the power of His word is to speak it forth and use it as it was intended, to destroy the enemy.





## EPILOGUE

In this book, we have sought to expose the tactics of the enemy in studying the four great conflicts. We have also seen in the temptation of Christ the different areas of our lives that the enemy seeks to attack.

The Lord has given us the Armor of God as a defense against the very same tactics of the enemy that are still in use today. More specifically, the Armor of God is God's provision for His people to be victorious in the Last Days when the enemy launches his greatest onslaught against the saints. This armor is expressly intended to enable us to stand, as Christ did, against the devices of our adversary.

May we seek the Lord with all of our hearts and begin to put on this armor, allowing it to grow into full strength so that we walk in ultimate victory over the devil. As we are clothed upon with the Armor of God, we will experience the reality of the following scripture: *“Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked”* (Ps. 91:5-8).

I pray that God will bless you with these truths on the Armor of God and that you may find a fresh development of them in your life as you prayerfully meditate on each piece of the armor. Ultimately, my prayer is that as we approach the greatest conflict the world has ever known, the great deception of the Last Days, you may stand against the wiles of the enemy. *“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”* (Eph. 6:13).

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