

The Whole Armor of God Trey Sullins

Throughout the Bible there are many examples of Christians being referred to as soldiers in war.

One of these examples is in 2 Timothy 2:3, where we are told to “endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” In 2 Corinthians 10:4 the Bible talks about the “weapons of our warfare.” Another great example is in Ephesians 6:10-17, the Bible has a complete listing of all the items that the Christians soldier needs to have when they go to the spiritual battlefield. In this text Paul was telling the church at Ephesus that they need to have certain characteristics as Christians. While in a Roman prison, Paul describes these characteristics as pieces of armor. There are six pieces in total which Paul writes about and they can be divided into two groups.

Before Paul writes about the armor, he tells of the need that Christians have for this armor. Ephesians 6:11 expresses one purpose for the armor when it says, “that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” To “stand” means to set against or to defend against something (Strong’s Greek Dictionary). The “wiles of the devil” means the tricks and temptations of Satan (Strong’s Greek Dictionary). Therefore, this purpose is literally so that the Christian can defend against the tricks of Satan. The second purpose is “that you may be able to withstand in the evil day.” The word “withstand” is the idea of resisting or opposing something (Strong’s Greek Dictionary). The evil day could be referring to the day of temptation, but since we are tempted everyday it could also mean the days of this Earth. Therefore, this purpose is literally to oppose temptations in the evil day.

“Stand therefore” is the first group and carries the ideas of being at the ready, fit for service (Ephesians 6:14). Verse 14 continues with “having girded your waist with truth.” In this verse the term “girded” holds the meaning of “fastening one’s belt” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary). Truth must be at the center of uniform. In the same way that the belt holds other pieces of armor in place, the truth holds the other characteristics of Christians in place. Jesus is this truth that needs to be at the center holding everything together (John 14:6). The second piece of armor which protects the thoracic cavity is the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6:14). Righteousness as defined by Webster’s Dictionary is morally good. Since Matthew 12:35 says that good things come from a good heart and bad things come from a bad heart, Christians need to protect their hearts with righteousness so that they will remain good. The next piece is stated as, “having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:15). The word shod means to “bind to one’s feet” (Strong’s Greek Dictionary). Footwear is infinitely important to the soldier because it determines their balance and footing. If a soldier has a weak footing, he will fall and be overtaken by his foe. The gospel provides the firm footing that allows the soldier to stand strong 1 Corinthians 15:1.

“Above all” is the second group and carries the idea that in everything these pieces are ready for you when you need them. First in this group is the “shield of faith” (Ephesians 6:16). With the shield of faith the Christian is able to “quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one” (Ephesians 6:16). Faith is the strong belief in God, which leads to action. In the same way that a soldier uses his shield to protect himself from attacks, he sees the Christians soldier is able to block the darts from Satan protecting himself from harm. The shield of faith is also capable of protecting fellow soldiers as it can be used to block attacks to them. On the soldiers head must be “helmet

of salvation” (Ephesians 6:17). The helmet protects the soldier’s intellect. Rather than neglecting salvation the soldier of God must wear it proudly as it is the only protection from eternal punishment (Romans 1:16). The final piece is the “sword of the spirit which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17). Though swords are typically used for offense, the armor of God is meant for the protection of the Christian soldier, therefore the sword is used to parry or knock away the attacks of Satan. Since the sword of the spirit is the word of God the Christian soldier must understand the Bible so that he can skillfully deflect oncoming attacks.

The whole armor of God from Ephesians 6:10-17 serves as an excellent account of the Christian armament. God’s soldiers need to understand each piece of armor and know that they must wear the armor in their lives. With this armor Christians are able to protect themselves and their fellow Christians from the temptations and tricks of Satan. If the armor of God is worn, then the Christian will be able to endure hardship (2 Timothy 2:3) and receive the crown of life (James 1:12).