

New Covenant Lifestyle: Lesson 7 – The Armor of God

There has been a lot of teaching about the armor of God, probably because it is an important part of our lives. Unfortunately, much of it has been erroneous. This lesson is a succinct summary of the armor of God that is ours as part of our New Covenant life. We will look at why God has given it to us, what it does and what it is for.

Let's start out by reminding ourselves that we are not just flesh and blood beings living in this natural world. We are eternal spiritual beings, who currently reside in this natural physical body because it connects us with this natural world. The real us is connected to the spiritual world (the real world), where we have a role to play in the real world activities that influence this natural world. God's kingdom is the real world and it is from there that he created this natural world and gave it to man as a kingdom. Unfortunately, Adam turned the natural world over to Satan and made it subject to Satan's power. We saw this in NCP Lesson 5 on Dominion. Because of this reality, after we are born again, we become partakers of the New Covenant, the second clause of which includes the armor of God and its role in our lives today. Write out this second clause (**Hebrews 8:10**): _____

This means God has covenanted to protect, bless, provide for and guide us in every area of life. He teaches and leads us in dealing with the enemy forces of the real world, whose goal is to kill, steal and destroy (**John 10:10**). Jesus often taught on the role of the real world in the affairs of men. Let's look at some of his comments:

During his earthy life, did Jesus have a kingdom (**John 18:36**)? _____.

Was this kingdom part of this natural world (**John 18:36**)? _____.

What could Jesus have called on from his kingdom (**Matthew 26:53**)? _____.

Who controlled the kingdoms of this world (**Matthew 4:8-9**)? _____.

What was Satan's offer to Jesus regarding the natural world kingdoms (**Matthew 4:8-9**)? _____

What two kingdoms did Paul refer to in **Colossians 1:13**? _____.

This tells us that in the real world there are two kingdoms that oppose each other. You all know this, but this opening is simply to remind you that both these kingdoms have power in this natural world. When Jesus came to earth, Satan was the prince over this world. It was Satan's power that connected with man's authority to increase the curse that operates in the earth because of Adam's sin. However, Jesus' death and resurrection destroyed Satan's power connection and restored man's connection to God's power for those who believe.

In **Colossians 2:9**, who was in the body of Jesus? _____.

In **Colossians 2:10**, what is Jesus the head of? _____.

In **Colossians 2:10**, what have you been made? _____.

In **Colossians 2:15**, what did Jesus do to the principalities and powers of the real world? _____

Did the powers of darkness know what putting Jesus to death was going to do (**1 Corinthians 2:8**)? _____.

What verse tells us that when God resurrected Jesus, he sat him at his own right hand? _____

What does the next verse say Jesus is far above? _____.

According to verse 22, where are all these things now? _____.

The last verse of this chapter tells us that we are Jesus body, so everything that is under Jesus' feet is under us also. Let that sink in!! We are above all the real and natural world beings. This verse also says that Jesus' body is the fullness of him. Thus, all of the fullness of God resides in each of us, which is why Paul said in **1 Corinthians 10:13** "Oh what power you have". When we renew our minds to this reality, we become kingdom builders.

Now read **2 Corinthians 10:3-5**. What do we walk in (v3)? _____.

What do we not war after (v3)? _____.

If our weapons are not carnal, what must they be? _____.

What makes your weapons mighty (v4)? _____.

What are we to cast down (v5)? _____.

What are we to do to every thought (v5)? _____.

According to **John 5:19**, what was the obedience of Christ? _____.

In **Matthew 26:39 & 42**, what was Jesus' obedience? _____.

So our warfare is waged in our thinking. The only influence the power of darkness can have on you is through your thought life. The enemy puts thoughts in your mind in the first person to make you think they are yours. These are the thoughts we learn to reject. We stand on the first clause of the New Covenant where God covenanted to put his way of thinking into our hearts and minds. Our part in this is to embrace his thoughts and change our way of thinking to agree with his. That is what enables us to take captive our thinking so that we live like Jesus did – only saying and doing what God says and does.

One important aspect of our warfare that we need to address is something that God has done for us. Since we don't usually have visibility into the real world, it would be a challenge to prevent every attack of the enemy. We know it is almost impossible to stop a physical attack in this natural world if we are blindfolded and our attacker is not. It is even more impossible in the real world where we don't have visibility but the forces of darkness do. Well our loving heavenly father knew our limitations in the real world, so in His mercy He has equipped us to defeat the enemy at every turn without us having to do anything. We simply rest in Jesus completed work and receive the abundant supply of his grace and God defeats the enemy for us. Paul teaches us this in Ephesians 6 when he describes the armor that God has given us. Now, let's dig in and get some revelation on this.

Read **Ephesians 6:10-18**. In verse 10, Paul uses three of the five Greek words for power (see BCT Lesson 9), *Dunamis*, *Ischus* and *Kratos*. All three are in the present tense, imperative mood in the Greek. Notice, it is not our power or ability, it is supplied by God.

What are you commanded to be every day? _____.

What are you told to put on in verse 11? _____.

In verse 11, the verb 'put on' is '*endusasathe*' (G1746) which Strong's defines as "array, clothe with, endue, have on". It is in the Aorist tense and Imperative mood. From your Greek aid sheet, what does the Aorist tense mean?

What does the Imperative Mood mean? _____.

At what single point in time did you put on God's armor? _____.

Paul uses the Greek word *'panoplain'* (G3833) for 'full armor', which comes from two Greek words meaning "all, any, every, the whole" and "implement, utensil, tool, instrument and weapon". There is no shortage, hole or lack in the armor that we have on. It is a force field of protection around us that never leaves us. The KJV phrase "that ye may be able (dunamis) to stand" is better translated from the Greek as "for it [the armor] gives you the power (dunamis) to stand'.

What do we stand against? _____.

The devil is constantly devising schemes and strategies to get you to believe his lies so that he can short circuit the abundance of grace that you live in. The armor you have makes these wiles null and void because you know the truth of the covenant of protection you have.

What do we "wrestle" against? _____.

In verse 12 the Greek word for wrestle is "*pale*" whose root means "vibrate, cast out, throw down". Our wrestling is not in the natural world against other people or ourselves. It is not a consuming, energy sapping struggle; it is simply casting out or throwing down every thought of the enemy from the real world. Since Jesus has already defeated the wicked forces, standing against the wiles is simply using our authority to reject the lies he puts in our minds and rebuking the enemy for attempting to use natural world circumstances against us.

Having told us our role in defeating the evil forces in the real world, Paul repeats his command regarding the armor that God has supplied. Again, he uses the Aorist tense for the verb "take" at the start of verse 13. The phrase "may be able" is the Greek word *'dunethete'* which is the Aorist/Subjunctive form of the verb *'dunamis'*.

When is the evil day that verse 13 cites? _____.

The KJV uses the phrase "having done all" which is the Greek word "*katergasameno*" which Strong's says means "work fully, accomplish, finish, fashion, perform, work out". The literal Greek says "and all things having worked out, to stand". Furthermore, both verbs (having worked and stand) are Aorist tense. Since Jesus has already defeated all the works of the devil, this means you get to stand because Jesus has already worked all things out. Putting this verse in New Covenant speak, we get "*Wherefore, having already taken unto you the complete protection of God, you have the power to reject and cast out every lie and attack from the darkness of the real world, because Jesus has already overcome them and you stand in his victory*".

There has been a lot of teaching in the church that has caused many to live defeated, thinking that Satan and his forces have great power over them. People were taught they needed to click on the armor each day or Satan would get them. They've been taught that every trial was a battle in which they had to use all their effort to overcome. You will hear them say, "I'm fighting the enemy" or "Satan is getting at me". This supposed struggle is even sung about in songs. They think the forces of evil have great power and that these verses in Ephesians are telling them to exercise their self effort to stand against the devil and the forces of darkness. Hopefully, you can see from our insight into the Greek that these are all lies from human reasoning and the enemy. Paul is telling the church that God has already given us his complete and perfect armor. He put it on us the day we were born again. Our daily walk does not require us to come against people, but to identify and reject the lies of the enemy from the real world. Jesus has already completely destroyed the enemy's power and we simply need to stand in his completed victory and declare the truth on the occasions that the demonic forces or the curse come against us. We are supposed to live a life of rest and enjoyment, not of struggle and fighting; that is what Jesus paid for.

In **Ephesians 6:14-17**, Paul proceeds to describe the armor that God has provided. Every verb related to having the armor on is in the Aorist tense. Jesus has already provided us with truth and righteousness (v14). The good news of shalom (v15 - nothing missing, nothing broken) and the enveloping shield of Jesus' faith encompasses us (v16). Our minds are full of the goodness of God (the salvation of the New Covenant) and Holy Spirit wields the word from our hearts (v17). These are all extant realities that we live in. But not knowing this will result in us believing lies (succumbing to the deception of the devil) and trying to "win" by our self effort. This results in the curse operating in our lives. Now we get to the main point of this whole passage.

What are we instructed to do in **Ephesians 6:18**? _____.

The verbs in verse 18, starting with 'pray', are the only ones in all of verses 11-18 that are in the present tense. Everything Paul says leading up to verse 18 is in the Aorist tense. Everything in verses 11-17 has already been provided and it is all for the purpose of us praying in the Spirit. Walking in New Covenant life is not about our performance, nor fighting the enemy, nor being "devil or sin minded"; it is walking in fellowship with Jesus and letting Holy Spirit speak the word of God through us. That is what brings heaven to earth and fulfills our lives.

This brings us to a short discussion on the most essential gift that God has made available for every Christian.

In **Ephesians 4:18**, what are you to continually pray in? _____.

What was the spiritual gift Jesus gave to the Church in **Acts 2:4**? _____.

How did this gift show in their natural bodies? _____.

If you are given a new group of people to equip for their employment tasks, wouldn't the first thing you give them be the most important and useful tool that they need to be successful? That is what God did for us as believers. He filled us with Himself, because He knows we cannot succeed using self performance, and gave us the gift of tongues, because he needed to get our mouth speaking the truth so that his power could make it come to pass on our behalf.

Paul picks up on this truth in **1 Corinthians 12 and 14** when he discusses the gifts of the spirit. Notice that right in the middle of this discussion of the gifts, he inserts Chapter 13, which is the chapter on love. He does this to remind us that the gifts and abilities of God through us are pointless (wasted, harmful and irrelevant) if they are not from a heart of love. Fortunately for us, God has shed His love abroad in our hearts (Romans 5:5), so when we remain resting in Jesus and not our performance, then the gifts operate effectively in love.

What does speaking in tongues do for us (**1 Corinthians 14:4**)? _____.

The Greek word used here is '*oikodomen*' which means "house build, construct, confirm".

What three parts make up a human being (**1 Thessalonians 5:23**)? _____.

Using scripture to amplify scripture, what do you think praying in tongues does to you as a complete person?

This is why God gave us this most basic of gifts; he wants us whole in every area of our lives. In **1 Corinthians 14:18**, Paul states that he prays in tongues more than all of them (Greek implies 'all of them put together'). I suspect this is why he received such great revelation from Jesus and wrote most of the New Covenant teaching.

Final comment on why we should pray in tongues. We exercise our dominion by what we say. When we pray in tongues, we are letting Holy Spirit speak the perfect words of God into this world using our voice of authority. Oh what power is released into this world to loose, dissolve and undo the work of the devil when we pray in tongues; the perfect prayer. Make it a daily habit to beat up on the enemy by praying in tongues continually.