

THE ARMOR OF GOD

2. THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

We've been talking about the armor of God. Even though God has already won the war against sin and defeated Satan through the blood of Jesus, the battle is still happening because not everyone knows about Jesus, or is truly serving Him and we live in a fallen world where sin abounds.

Ephesians 6:14 NLT “Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness.”

AMP “So stand firm and hold your ground, having tightened the wide band of truth (personal integrity, moral courage) around your waist and having put on the breastplate of righteousness (an upright heart),”

The Purpose of the Breastplate

The breastplate would have been fastened around the chest. There are two types. The first was a breastplate with metal bands put on by joining several broad metal bands together using leather tongs and the second type was a type of chain mail breastplate that linked small metal rings together until it formed a mesh type of vest.

Both types of armor was to protect the soldiers vital organs. If a soldier failed to wear his breastplate an arrow could easily reach the soldier’s chest piercing his heart or lungs.

Definition of righteousness:

- *Right standing with God.
- *Being in right relationship with God and others.
- *The quality of being morally right.
- *In the Bible righteousness primarily means aligning with God’s will and commands, reflecting inner integrity, moral uprightness, and right behavior in His sight. It's conforming to His standard of holiness, includes doing what is right in God’s eyes and walking in obedience to His law.

Functions of the Breastplate of Righteousness

We can see 2 different functions of the breastplate of righteousness.

- Being in right relationship with God
- Being/walking in righteousness

A. What is the Breastplate of Righteousness?

First: *Being in right relationship with God, being in right standing with God.*

The breastplate of righteousness is the spiritual revelation that through faith by grace we are in right relationship with God and we have rights as citizens of the kingdom of God.

The Word says that our righteousness is as filthy rags but thanks be to God who offers His own righteousness to every believer in Christ. Righteousness is not something that anyone can gain by doing good deeds. It comes from faith in Jesus Christ. This righteousness belongs to Jesus who freely bestows it upon us when we believe in Him. We don't earn that.

Titus 3:5 NLT “He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit.”

2 Corinthians 5:21 NLT “For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.”

Philippians 3:9 NLT “and become one with Him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God’s way of making us right with himself depends on faith.”

Romans 3:21-22 NLT “But now God has shown us a way to be made right with Him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.”

So when we put on the breastplate of righteousness we:

1. *Believe in Jesus in His righteousness, not our own*

Galatians 2:20-21 NLT “My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. I do not treat the grace of God as meaningless. For if keeping the law could make us right with God, then there was no need for Christ to die.”

2. *Know that God promises his protection against the forces of evil for those who have faith in Jesus*

2 Thessalonians 3:3 AMP “But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen you [setting you on a firm foundation] and will protect and guard you from the evil one.”

How can we apply this truth?

As mentioned before, the breastplate protects our central organs, the heart and lungs, the liver, and our stomach. Spiritually, righteousness guards our hearts and souls against enemy attacks. We understand and know who we are in Christ.

***Quote by Mike Thompson:**

“If we understand who we were created to be by Jesus Christ and by His blood, we are new creations in Him, standing righteously before Him in the spirit even though we have failings, then that’s the biblical imperative. That’s the place where strength comes from, boldness and hope. But when those accusing spirits come in and they constantly accuse your heart and batter your mind, that’s the enemy’s tactic to try to rob you of who you are. You are perfect. You are redeemed. You are clean in the Lord Jesus Christ. You have to start there in order to resist the devil.”

When you’re in right standing with God, the enemy or anyone else for that matter, can’t attack you and say, “you’re just some loser. God doesn’t care about you. He won’t answer your prayers. You’re probably going to hell anyway. Who do you think you are? You’re no good, etc.” You can recognize that those are lies. And you don’t have to believe those lies. Why? because you are in right relationship with God and when you have that revelation that you are in right standing in God through Christ Jesus those thoughts, those voices, those words will not be able to affect you and you can address those voices and words by saying, “that’s a lie, I don’t receive those lies, I rebuke that in the name of Jesus.”

That truth becomes your defense against shame, and guilt. (Guilt = I did bad / Shame = I am bad / Sin=not your identity any more when you repent, the blood of Jesus is your identity).

That truth becomes your breastplate that guards, that protects you. It protects all your organs, it protects your torso, it protects who you are in God. You need to wear it every day in everything that you do.

B. What is the Breastplate of Righteousness?

Second: *Being righteous in aligning with God's will and commands, reflecting inner integrity, moral uprightness, and right behavior in His sight. It's conforming to His standard of holiness, includes doing what is right in God's eyes and walking in obedience to His law.*

Simply put, righteousness is being honest, good, humble and being fair to others. It means standing up for weaker people.

Righteousness is doing the right thing according to God's Word. We don't always say the right thing, we don't always listen to our parents, or our teachers or our elders, maybe we get into a fight or disagreement with a friend or a relative.

When we wear the breastplate of righteousness we are mindful about doing the "right" thing, living "right" way, God's way, not our own way and loving one another. When we use God's armor we do our best to live rightly.

We are doing our part in our *relationship* with God.

First, we receive righteousness from God when we believe and trust in what Christ has done for us, but this truth isn't purely academic, meaning we cannot just have a mental assent about it. It must be lived out.

***Quote from Pastor Allen Jackson:**

"We have got to stop playing church and doing polite little bible studies. It's like patty cake for Christians. I've got no interest in it. I love studying my Bible, and I believe in going to church, but at the heart of all of those behaviors is submitting ourselves to the King of kings and making a decision to lead a righteous life, not to earn our way into heaven, but to walk uprightly before God so that the power of God can be made evident through our lives."

Putting on the breastplate of righteousness means standing firm against injustice and corruption. It means living a lifestyle of Truth; walking in no deceptions and walking in holiness.

Holiness: what it is/isn't

Romans 14:1-18 (NLT) **v.17** (AMP) **Romans 15:1-19**

Let's read some scripture on how we should live.

1 Peter 1:13-23 NLT "So think clearly and exercise self-control. Look forward to the gracious salvation that will come to you when Jesus Christ is revealed to the world. So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, "You must be holy because I am holy." And remember that the heavenly Father to whom you pray has no favorites. He will judge or reward you according to what you do. So you must live in reverent fear of him during your time as "foreigners in the land." For you know that God paid a ransom to save you from the empty life you inherited from your ancestors. And the ransom he paid was not mere gold or silver. It was the precious blood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. God chose him as your ransom long before the world began, but he has now revealed him to you in these last days. Through Christ you have come to trust in God. And you have placed your faith and hope in God because he raised Christ from the dead and gave him great glory. You were cleansed from your sins when you obeyed the truth, so now you must show sincere love to each other as brothers and sisters. Love each other deeply with all your heart. For you have been born again, but not to a life that will quickly end. Your new life will last forever because it comes from the eternal, living word of God."

1 Peter 2:1 NLT “So get rid of all evil behavior. Be done with all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and all unkind speech.”

1 Peter 4:1-5 (v. 1-2) AMP “Therefore, since Christ suffered in the flesh [and died for us], arm yourselves [like warriors] with the same purpose [being willing to suffer for doing what is right and pleasing God], because whoever has suffered in the flesh [being like-minded with Christ] is done with [intentional] sin [having stopped pleasing the world], so that he can no longer spend the rest of his natural life living for human appetites and desires, but [lives] for the will and purpose of God.

(v. 3-5) NLT “You have had enough in the past of the evil things that godless people enjoy—their immorality and lust, their feasting and drunkenness and wild parties, and their terrible worship of idols. Of course, your former friends are surprised when you no longer plunge into the flood of wild and destructive things they do. So they slander you. But remember that they will have to face God, who will judge everyone, both the living and the dead.”

Romans 14:17 AMP “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking [what one likes], but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”

Matthew 6:33 NLT “Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.”

2 Timothy 2:20-25 NLT “In a wealthy home some utensils are made of gold and silver, and some are made of wood and clay. The expensive utensils are used for special occasions, and the cheap ones are for everyday use. If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work. Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts. Again I say, don’t get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. A servant of the Lord must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone, be able to teach, and be patient with difficult people. Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people’s hearts, and they will learn the truth.”

***Quote from Pastor Allen Jackson:**

“If You’ve accommodated and opened the door for ungodliness in your life, or you’re practicing it, you need to repent and say to the Lord, “I’m sorry. Please, forgive me.” And if you haven’t been saying yes to the Lord, just begin right now: “Lord, I will begin to say yes to You.” God is moving in the earth and we have to decide that we are going to move with Him. There’s a difference between stumbling in your faith-walk and practicing ungodliness. You should not imagine you can practice ungodliness and still participate in His Kingdom.”

The commandments of God are not given to us for suggestions; they are given to us for our protection against the things that can hurt us.

***Quote from Ron Cantor:**

“In the end it will not matter whether we stood close to presidents, any leader, any teacher, any pastor, any friend, etc. It will matter whether we stood close to the heart of God, whether we helped the hurting or put our hands over our ears so we cannot hear the bleating sheep.”

As we’ve been commissioned with the same purpose as Jesus, we being His ambassadors, we must put on the righteousness of Christ. So, **not only do we receive the righteousness of Christ** which makes us in right standing with God, **but we also have to put on the righteousness of Christ** and walk in Him, as Him, representing Him.

Romans 13:12 NLT “The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.”

Many want the righteousness of God but they don't want to practice righteousness. We are made righteous in Christ when we believe in Jesus but we also need to practice righteousness. Paul writes in Romans are you going to yield your members to sin which ultimately brings death or are you going to yield your members as weapons of righteousness? Therefore, if we are made righteous in the spirit by the blood of Jesus, we should also be righteous in the flesh.

How do we know when we are doing something wrong?

***Conscience and Conviction**

1 Timothy 4:1-2 NLT “Now the Holy Spirit tells us clearly that in the last times some will turn away from the true faith; they will follow deceptive spirits and teachings that come from demons. These people are hypocrites and liars, and their consciences are dead.”

Amp: Consciences are seared as with a branding iron (leaving them incapable of ethical functioning)

Romans 1:18-20 AMP “For [God does not overlook sin and] the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who in their wickedness suppress and stifle the truth, because that which is known about God is evident within them [in their inner consciousness], for God made it evident to them. For ever since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through His workmanship [all His creation, the wonderful things that He has made], so that they [who fail to believe and trust in Him] are without excuse and without defense.”

***Quote from Pastor Allen Jackson:**

“We live in a time where people are easily offended. But when it's the Word of God that offends us, that's not a sign that something is wrong with scripture. It's a sign that something is out of alignment in us. God's Word doesn't change. It's eternal, unshakable truth. And while it may challenge our attitudes, our behaviors, even our beliefs, it does so for a purpose: to bring us into alignment with God's best for our lives. If you come across something in God's Word that's uncomfortable, don't walk away from it. Sit with it. Pray through it. Ask the Lord what He's trying to show you. If scripture offends you, you need to change.

***Quote by Andrew Knox**

The word Repentance:

This word can scare people — Repentance. Yet it is simply acknowledging you've gone against God's ways and followed the flesh instead of living for God's pleasure. The way He designed us to live. Genuine repentance brings freedom. The psalmist celebrated this, saying as far as the east is from the West, so far has He removed our sin from us.”

Psalms 145:17 AMP “The LORD is righteous in all His ways and gracious and kind in all His works.”

Ephesians 2:10 NASB95 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

2 Timothy 1:9 NLT “For God saved us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus.”

How can we apply this truth?

So how do we practice righteousness?

1. By the grace of God.

Grace empowers you to live a godly life.

*Definition of Grace:

In the Bible, grace is primarily God's unmerited favor and loving kindness extended to us, especially in the act of salvation through Jesus Christ, providing forgiveness, acceptance **and the enablement** to live according to his will. It is not earned but a free gift of God's goodness, demonstrating His love and mercy towards the undeserving.

Enablement = equips Christians to serve others, exercise spiritual gifts and overcome weaknesses

A. *We have to live a certain way to have a relationship with God. With the law, we try to earn our relationship with God on our own which proved to be impossible. So God sends Jesus, He dies on the cross for us, pays the price for our sins, gives us His Spirit when we accept Jesus into our hearts, He puts His nature into us and He empowers us so that we can keep His commandments and have a relationship with God. We have the nature of God now on the inside of us which enables us to live righteously and that righteousness will be seen outwardly.

Grace is given to us so we become empowered to live a godly life. Grace is **not** given to us so we can live like the world (killing, lying, cheating, sexual immorality, watching things you shouldn't watch, using foul language, gossip, etc.) and say it's OK because I have Jesus, I said the prayer. You cannot have Jesus and live like the world too.

Romans 6:1-4 NLT "Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives."

We are called to be separate. We are called to come out of the world. We cannot flirt, entertain, or engage in worldly things. If you become a friend of the world, you become an adulterer to God, and you make yourself an enemy of God because you're taking the betrothal of Jesus, we are his bride, lightly. You are taking the great price that He paid for you and disregarding it. We cannot abuse, misuse or take for granted the grace of God.

B. *1 Timothy 1:12-14 NASB95 "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service, even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; **and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus.**"

>We think Jesus chooses the people that are kind and timid, but Paul's example shows otherwise. Paul had been a blasphemer, a persecutor and a very violent man towards Christians. The same man who had persecuted Jesus followers would now be persecuted. And in the midst of it all, he thank God for His grace. Don't ever think that your past mistakes will hinder your present ability to participate in God's Kingdom. Nothing could be further from the truth. Your past mistakes don't define you and His grace is enough for you. He chose you and may He help you to use the lessons that you've learned to strengthen those around you for his Kingdom purposes.

Mistakes teach — walking — riding a bike

C. **James 2:24 NLT “So you see, we are shown to be right with God **by what we do**, not by faith alone.”
James 2:24 AMP “You see that a man (believer) is justified by works and not by faith alone [that is, by acts of obedience a born-again believer reveals his faith].”

Example: power outlet and hair dryer

I could say I have faith, I could say Jesus is my Lord, I can say, I said the prayer but James is saying the evidence that you have faith is the fact that your Going to show by what you do that you're right with God and your life is going to be changed.

So let's ask some questions and I want you to listen and be honest with yourself because Paul said to examine yourself to see if you're really in the faith (Paul said that to the Church of Corinth which was a very worldly church)

1. Is your life different than before you believed?
2. Do you stand out in a lost world or do you blend in?
3. Are you advancing the Kingdom?

If not, you have a faith that is not real by heaven's standards and grace is not at work in you, for true grace is not ineffective.

God's standards for righteousness goes further than merely behaving properly. True righteousness consists not so much of the outward things we do, but the inward way we are. God's always molding us into His image.

So you have to ask yourself these questions daily and be honest with yourself. Why do you do what you do? What's your motives? There were many who live like the world all week long and they appeased themselves by going to church, by doing good works, by feeding the hungry, giving money, etc.

*We have to examine ourselves daily because what you don't confront doesn't change you.
 And pain that is not transformed is transferred. The Lord wants us healed and transformed into His image.

1 Thessalonians 2:13 AMP “And we also thank God continually for this, that when you received the word of God [concerning salvation] which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of [mere] men, **but as it truly is, the word of God, which is effectually at work in you who believe [exercising supernatural power in those of faith].**

>**What is** the Word of God doing? It's transforming you.

That's why we say read, read, read the Word. That's why we preach, preach, preach the Word. That's why we teach, teach, teach the Word; Because the Word of God changes you – forever. The Word is powerful. It's mighty, It divides between the soul and spirit. It brings life into your being. The Word of God will effectively work in you and it will bring change.

*Let's go back to James. The book of James is basically saying OK you say you have faith but you do not have the corresponding obedient actions. And what James is saying I will show you that I really have faith because I do walk like Jesus walks. And when I miss it, I deeply repent and ask people to forgive me. I'm not saying I am or we are perfect, I'm saying that you should be being transformed from glory to glory into the image of Jesus Christ. That's God's goal for us.

>**Now, some people** just don't want to grow, they're complacent in where they are, They don't want to come out of there comfort zone or they're just afraid of change. Some people say, I'm trying, I'm really trying or I'm stuck. And yes, we know it's a process but we cannot diminish the wonder working power of God and His grace. You need to know your transformation is based on your cooperation and obedience to the Word of God. This is something that you need to take seriously and stop making **excuses**.

We truly want to see you free in Christ and growing in the Lord and that's why we want you to be a person that when you're reading the Word and the Holy Spirit convicts you that you don't ignore those convictions and that you listen to them. Convictions are good. They keep us safe, on the right path, and they will help us maintain our relationship with the Lord.

Responding to conviction comes from the fear of God. If you are not responding to conviction that means you have the fear of man because the fear of man eliminates conviction.

We have to make choices. God gave us a free will. In order to make godly choices we have to respond to the convictions of the Holy Spirit, to our conscience and to what the Word of God says. If we don't, we will slowly begin to lose the fellowship and the intimacy that we have with the Lord. Our heart will become hard, we'll become distant from the Lord, we won't be able to hear the Holy Spirit as well and it will cause us to slowly lose our strength, our direction, our purpose, and we will also lose our influence in the world.

The Lord is more concerned about the condition your heart, and your character transformation than He is about your comfort.

I want you to remember this:

1. We need to be serious about our walk with God. We can't be casual. It's not business as usual. We're living in the end times and we need to be focused.
2. We need to make godly choices. It may seem like work and hard work in the beginning because we're battling the flesh

But

3. We need to remember God is gracious and His grace is sufficient

And

4. To be gracious to yourself.

Remember it takes at least 30 days to break a habit. The Bible allows a month to mourn and a year for other things, big life changes such as buying a house, getting married, having a baby, etc.

Walking in the grace of God versus walking in legalism

(Excerpts taking from Pastor David Hernandez teaching)

Walking in righteousness is doing God's will despite what you want to do.

Walking in holiness is **not** misery.

This is how most Christians think their faith works.

Monday morning, I woke up. I prayed. I read my Bible. I went to work. I was a good Christian for most of the day, I behaved, so if I die today I'll go to heaven.

Tuesday I didn't sleep so well the night before so I didn't pray as much today. Had a little trouble understanding the Word of God. I think I thought of a couple of things I should not have thought of, so if I die today there's a 50/50 chance I'll make it into heaven.

Wednesday didn't set my alarm properly, so I rushed out of the house without prayer, and without reading the Word. I made a mistake. I compromised. I didn't listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. If I die today, I'm done and I won't go to heaven.

Many Christians don't trust the work on the cross. When you don't trust the work that Christ did on the cross it will lead you into legalism which will affect the way that you approach prayer, the way that you approach the Word, the way that you approach worship and the way that you think God sees you. Legalism causes you to think that God is angry with you and you feel condemnation which leads you then you second guess your position with Him.

We mentioned Matthew 7 before where they said Lord, Lord did we not prophecy in Your name, did we not do miracles in Your name, did we not cast out demons in Your name, and Jesus said depart from me I don't know you. Now what I want to bring up here is that not only did they say **we** did this and **we** did that -- they weren't giving God the glory but when confronted by the Lord, you can see that they also gave excuses that they thought would save them. See, they were trusting in their works to save them and Jesus says depart from me you workers of lawlessness. They were then judged by the law. They were deceived which means they weren't living under grace.

So, the enemy can warp this; Your church attendance, your evangelism, your giving, all the things you do for Christ, if it is performance driven, if you're thinking you're going to get kudos from the Lord or you think that by doing these things you're earning your relationship with the Lord, they will become a burden rather than an expression of worship. If we don't correct that thinking and rely on what Christ has already done on the cross for us for our salvation and believe in God's grace that enables us to do good works, will be miserable the rest of our lives. Works are the fruit of salvation. You don't do good works to be saved or **continue** to be saved. You do good works because you are saved you love the Lord and want to glorify your Father who is in heaven.

2. Must feed our spirit and starve our flesh

Living by the spirit's power

Galatians 5:16-26 NLT "So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses. When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another."

Galatians 5:16-26 AMP "But I say, walk habitually in the [Holy] Spirit [seek Him and be responsive to His guidance], and then you will certainly not carry out the desire of the sinful nature [which responds impulsively without regard for God and His precepts]. For the sinful nature has its desire which is opposed to the Spirit, and the [desire of the] Spirit opposes the sinful nature; for these [two, the sinful nature and the Spirit] are in direct opposition to each other [continually in conflict], so that you [as believers] do not [always] do whatever [good things] you want to do. But if you are guided and led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the Law. Now the practices of the sinful nature are clearly evident: they are sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality (total irresponsibility, lack of self-control), idolatry, sorcery, hostility, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions [that promote heresies], envy, drunkenness, riotous behavior, and other things like these. I warn you beforehand, just as I did previously, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit [the result of His presence within us] is love [unselfish concern for others], joy, [inner] peace, patience [not the ability to wait, but how we act while waiting], kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature together with its passions and appetites. If we [claim to] live by the [Holy] Spirit, we must also walk by the Spirit [with personal integrity, godly character, and moral courage—our

conduct empowered by the Holy Spirit]. We must not become conceited, challenging or provoking one another, envying one another.”

Ex. Walking dead/zombies/blind leading the blind

3. Surrender

4. Have to put it on and choose to do it.

As we said, It's both, when we're made right in Christ we ought to behave righteous in our acts and again it only works if we yield to our members to the Holy Spirit. You cannot say, I put on the breastplate of righteousness because I'm righteous in Christ, yet you're living like the devil. You're lying, cheating, stealing, disobeying the laws of God and man, watching porn, etc.

***Put on:**

Remember, we have to put off the old man and put on the new man.

Colossians 3:10 NLT “**Put on** your new nature, and be renewed as you learn to know your Creator and become like Him.”

***Choose to do it:**

>**Walk circumspectly** ≈ Cautiously; with watchfulness in every way; with attention to guard against surprise or danger.

Ephesians 5:15-19 NLT “So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts.”

Ephesians 5:15-19 AMP “Therefore see that you walk carefully [living life with honor, purpose, and courage; shunning those who tolerate and enable evil], not as the unwise, but as wise [sensible, intelligent, discerning people], making the very most of your time [on earth, recognizing and taking advantage of each opportunity and using it with wisdom and diligence], because the days are [filled with] evil. Therefore do not be foolish and thoughtless, but understand and firmly grasp what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is wickedness (corruption, stupidity), but be filled with the [Holy] Spirit and constantly guided by Him. Speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, [offering praise by] singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;”

>**Press on to the End**

Philippians 3:7-14 NLT “I once thought these things were valuable, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death, so that one way or another I will experience the resurrection from the dead! I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.”

>**Be Faithful**

Hebrews 3:14 NLT “For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.”

>He will keep you strong

1 Corinthians 1:8 NLT “He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns.”

Many started off well but did not finish well.

Kings: Saul, Solomon, Joash to name a few.

Cain

Disciples: Judas

Followers of Jesus: the crowd that left

*They all began godly until tested. When tested their true beliefs were revealed.

Are struggling to obey? Ask for prayer and support

We have to take a stand and stand up for God’s ways in a mocking, criticizing culture. Are you willing to do that? Are you preparing your heart and your mind for persecution? Know that you will never stand alone. God will be with you, always; as He said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

You’re putting on is an action. We have to actively engage daily with the Holy Spirit. You can’t say that you’re holy and righteous because Jesus makes you holy and righteous, you have to do holy. You have to do righteousness.

***Keep your Garments Clean:**

Isaiah 61:10 NLT “I am overwhelmed with joy in the LORD my God!

For he has dressed me with the clothing of salvation and draped me in a robe of righteousness.

I am like a bridegroom in his wedding suit or a bride with her jewels.”

Ephesians 5:25-27 AMP “Husbands, love your wives [seek the highest good for her and surround her with a caring, unselfish love], just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify the church, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word [of God], so that [in turn] He might present the church to Himself in glorious splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy [set apart for God] and blameless.”

*We are God’s ambassadors - 2Corinthians 5:20

*We see and reflect the glory of the Lord, We are changed into His image - 2Corinthians 3:18

*He chose us to produce lasting fruit - John 15:16

*We are the light of the world to do good deeds to glorify our Father which is in heaven - Matthew 5:14

We are told to keep our garments clean and white. We are not to soil our clothes with evil.

James 1:27 says, “pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the father is this, to keep oneself from being stained by the world.”

Note: other translations say contaminated by the world, refusing to let the world corrupt you, not be polluted by the world, or unstained by the world.

Read Jude, especially

Jude 1:23 NLT “Rescue others by snatching them from the flames of judgment. Show mercy to still others, but do so with great caution, hating the sins that contaminate their lives.”

So we are to hate the garment that is stained by the flesh.

Revelation 16:15 NLT “Look, I will come as unexpectedly as a thief! Blessed are all who are **watching** for me, who keep their **clothing ready** so they will not have to walk around **naked** and ashamed.”

Now this is Jesus speaking.

Watching ≈ Awake

Clothing Ready ≈ one who stays spiritually ready for the Lord's return

Naked ≈ spiritually unprepared

Jesus is coming back for a bride without spot or wrinkle

Matthew 22:1-14 Again, this is Jesus speaking.

Imagine if a bride shows up on her wedding day and her wedding gown it's all stained up. She's got ketchup on it, she's got makeup on it, she spilled soda on herself; How do you think the groom would feel? That the bride did not take the marriage seriously and or did not prepare her beauty for that day. We cannot sleep around with the world and expect Jesus is going to come and and take us away with Him.

Note: We are supposed to be at the bedside of the world not getting in bed with the world. The world is a hurting place, a wounded place, a dying place. The church, us, is a hospital. we are supposed to be at the bedside of the world, with good bedside manner, ministering to them, bringing healing and hope, health and life to a dying lost world.

Remember: Don't receive the grace of God in vain. God puts the robe of righteousness on us, He gives us our bridal clothes. It's our responsibility to keep it clean. When we sin, we must truly repent and He then washes us clean.

Note: the white clothes that the Lord speaks of us having in revelation is the same Greek word that is used in Matthew 17 that depicts Jesus's clothes on the mount of transfiguration.

So, what armor are you wearing?

How well does your robe of righteousness fit? Ask God to mend any holes.

Are you wearing your own armor (apron) or are you wearing God's armor which is the breastplate of righteousness?

Which would you rather go into battle with your own righteousness or God's breastplate of righteousness?

We can live in righteousness by the Spirit. Walking in Christ's righteousness means repenting and obeying with God's power, not our own. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live for God. The breastplate strengthens and humbles us. It strengthens us because we know that we cannot do it in our own strength and we need to rely on His grace and power. We become humble because we begin to believe and agree with what God says about us. We align ourselves with who the Bible says He is and who the Bible says we are.

We are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus.

We are seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.

We are children of light.

We are filled with the Holy Spirit.

We are God's beloved.

Remaining in Christ's righteousness guards our hearts against doubt, condemnation, and apathy. With God's righteous protection, we can live with confidence and purity.

5. Let's tie in the belt of Truth with the breastplate of righteousness. You become what you behold.

2 Corinthians 3:18 NLT “So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.”

2 Corinthians 3:18 AMP “And we all, with unveiled face, continually seeing as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are progressively being transformed into His image from [one degree of] glory to [even more] glory, which comes from the Lord, [who is] the Spirit.”

Beholding God is not passive. It is transformative.

The more you gaze upon Him, the more you become like Him. The more you meditate upon His goodness, the more goodness will flow through your life.

When you spend time beholding the Lord there will be a radiance that others we'll notice; Others will notice a peace, a joy, a confidence, that cannot be explained by circumstances. It can only be by the fact that you have been with Jesus.

***You Tube:** See Jesus, Be Transformed by Pastor David Hernandez 2:42

***Song:** Take My Life by Scott Underwood 3:52

Prayer:

My heart for you is:

Philippians 1:9-11 NLT “I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ’s return. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.”

Heavenly Father,

Thank You for giving us Your righteousness. Because we are not perfect, You graciously protect us with Your own righteousness because we believe in what Christ Jesus has done for us on the cross. Clothe us today with the breastplate of righteousness. Thank You for making us right with You by the blood of Jesus and inviting us to walk in His righteousness through His resurrection and by the Spirit. We choose to put on the breastplate of righteousness. Holiness is what we need, righteousness is what You want from us. Help us to follow You and walk in obedience to guard our hearts, our emotions and our breath. In Jesus name, Amen.