



Meeting Notes: The Breastplate of Righteousness
(June 19, 2013)

These notes capture our June 19, 2013 meeting. We opened our meeting in prayer and then began our evening. Topic notes may not be in the order discussed during group, and they are not intended to cover everything discussed. They are intended as highlights to capture the essence of our study. General notes follow each topic that was discussed. Documents used or created during this meeting are attached.

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

Closing the loop on last week:

- **Last Week's Takeaway:** Last week, we talked about casting our cares. This week, we closed the loop on how to practically cast our cares. The guidelines are contained in the attached Teaching Notes. During the discussion, someone asked, "How do you know the difference between casting your cares and avoiding a situation?" Several good points were brought up:
 - **Are you being self-righteous or truly praying for someone?** Self-righteousness can be identified through judging another person from a place of condemnation. Truly praying for someone can be identified when you have compassion for the person and you want to see that person healed. Sometimes, it's hard to know the difference in us, but the Holy Spirit can and will bring conviction when needed.
 - **Casting earthly concerns but marinating on spiritual concerns.** When we cast earthly concerns, finances were an example given; when we are marinating on spiritual concerns, we are seeking to work on the condition of our heart. However, we also noted, the earthly concern usually reveals the spiritual concern! For instance, one of us mentioned how there are times when she gets concerned about finances, but once she turns her focus back to the Lord, the situation with her finances works out. Or as it was also put, we take our earthly concerns and try to attach an earthly solution, but instead we should take our earthly concerns and apply a spiritual solution.
 - **Takeaway.** As with all things we study, the motives of the heart are the dividing factor between our heart being good ground for the seed of God's Word or God's Word falling by the wayside, or in the rocky, or the thorny soil.

Memory Verse: Psalm 33:4 and Psalm 51:6 remain our memory verses.

Discussion Topic: The Breastplate of Righteousness:

- **Ephesians 6:14 – “And.”** In looking at Ephesians 6:14, we noted how the belt of truth is connected to the breastplate of righteousness with the word “and.” While this is an English word, even thinking about the Roman’s soldier’s armor, the breastplate was connected to the belt; therefore, the word “and” helps establish the connection between truth and righteousness for us. In addition, we discussed understanding what we are placing our faith in. Are we placing our faith in truth or something else? When we place our faith in truth, we are clothed in what God has given us. **Takeaway.** Truth and righteousness are connected.
- **Defining some key words:**¹
 - **On.** This word carries a very descriptive definition: “in the sense of sinking into a garment.” Another part of the definition is, “to invest with clothing.” These definitions were likened the visual image of when a Mom dresses her young daughter before she is old enough to dress herself. Likewise, God dresses us in our armor each day. But, it’s up to us whether we sink into it and keep it on, or whether we, like a small child, start pulling off our armor the same way a small child pulls off her clothes. I gave the example of how one of my grandsons rarely made it where he was going with his shoes and socks still on. At first, when he pulled them off, he couldn’t put them back on. Now that he’s older, he can put them back on with little or no help. Likewise, in Christ, we can pull off our armor, but He’ll help us put it back on until we begin to mature in Him and learn how to put it back on when we inadvertently take it off. For example, as a Christian, if we stumble and fall, we put our armor back on through confession and repentance. As we confess our sins and repent for them, those actions bring us back into fellowship with God, which allows us to put our breastplate of righteousness back on. **Takeaway.** God clothes us in righteousness, but we can separate ourselves from His righteousness; however, through confession and repentance, we can again be clothed in His righteousness.
 - **Breastplate.** Many of us had a hard time relating to the definition for this word. Thankfully, God has set a nurse in our midst, and she was able to help us get a better and more practical understanding of the importance of our vital organs. For example, the heart pumps blood, but if something happens to the heart, our circulation is affected and our body parts don’t get the oxygen they need. Without the proper oxygen, parts of our body could turn blue! A more practical example is when I wake up in the middle of the night rubbing the numbness out of my fingers, because I’ve slept in such a way that cut off the flow of blood and oxygen to them. **Takeaway.**

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Understanding the importance of the breastplate protecting the Roman soldier's vital organs helps us better understand how God's righteousness provides vital protection for the condition of our heart.

- **Righteousness.** In the simplest sense, this refers to us being in right standing with God. Once we come to Jesus, we are made right with God, and He now sees us through His Son. Thus, it's not our righteous acts that make us righteous before God, but the shed blood of Jesus that does. However, we have to learn how to receive the gift of righteousness. **Takeaway.** Just because God makes righteousness available to us doesn't mean we have received it; it's up to us to receive His gift of righteousness.

- **Additional Scripture Reference:**

- **Romans 5:15-17.** In discussing receiving righteousness, we also looked at Romans 5:15-17, "¹⁵ But the free gift *is* not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many. ¹⁶ And the gift *is* not like *that which came* through the one who sinned. For the judgment *which came* from one *offense resulted* in condemnation, but the free gift *which came* from many offenses *resulted* in justification. ¹⁷ For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. **Takeaway.** When we receive Jesus, we receive the free gift of God's righteousness.

- **Additional discussions:**

- **Wearing our righteousness.** Somewhere during the evening, we discussed being Christian enough for folks to know you're a Christian, but not enough Christian to produce mature fruit. This comment was in relation to people being able to see God's righteousness in our lives. I gave the example of someone I worked with a long ago had an air about him that said, "Now this is one of God's children," and how when I began walking with Christ, I desired for others to see me like I saw my co-worker. However, there have been more years than I like to count where I talked the talked, but did not walk the walk. Thus, rather than seeing God's righteousness in me, they saw a judgmental and condemning Christian! Hopefully, that's changed over the years, but I still aspire for my light to shine as bright as my co-worker's did all those years ago! By the way, walking in obedience is how we keep our breastplate of righteousness on. **Takeaway.** Just like I saw something in someone that inspired me, we hope to have others see something in us to inspire them to be the best they can be.

- **The purpose of our breastplate.** We were reminded the purpose of our righteousness is not just for us; it's to prepare us for battle. Thus, we should expect warfare, especially as we're studying about the armor. **Takeaway.** Righteousness is a weapon to protect us from the enemy lies.
- **Righteousness – both offensive and defensive.** The question was asked how can righteousness be an offensive weapon if we are taught the sword of the Spirit is our only offensive weapon. The sword is the only weapon we have control over. The breastplate only becomes an offensive weapon over time. As the scales on the Roman soldier's breastplate rubbed together, they got shiny enough to blind their enemy. Likewise, as we mature in Christ, the resulting righteousness helps blind the enemy of our souls. **Takeaway.** The breastplate can become an offensive weapon, but it's not one we can control.

Preparing for Next Week:

- **Next week's study.** The current plan is to close the loop on righteousness and begin discussing the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace" (Ephesians 6:15).

Next Week's Assignment(s):

- **Memory verse.** Continue memorizing **Psalm 51:6** and **Psalm 33:4**.

Closing:

- We closed our meeting in prayer with a time of need-specific prayer for the challenges that were lifted up, for the group overall, and as the Holy Spirit led.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns about information contained in this document, or would like to be added to or removed from the email distribution for the meeting notes, please email us at wow2@wow2women.com or complete a Contact Form on our site, www.wow2women.com.



Meeting Summary
(June 19, 2013)

ATTACHMENT: TEACHING NOTES FOR 19 JUNE 2013

Closing the loop on last week:

- **Takeaway.** Last week, we talked about casting our cares on Jesus. This week, we're going to put it into practice.
 - **Proverbs 3:5-6.** ⁵Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; ⁶In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths" (NKJV).
 - **Putting it into practice.** Sometimes, we just need to get things out of our system so we can more clearly hear from the Lord. There are several ways to accomplish this, but here's one practical example:
 - **List your concerns.** Make a list of everything you are concerned about. Be totally honest with the Lord, because He truly does care for you. When finished with the list, seal it up in an envelope. You can either put it away somewhere you know it won't be found, or you can entrust it to an accountability partner.
 - **Take your thoughts captive.** Whenever you find your thoughts turning towards those concerns, take them captive by saying something like, "I will not focus on or talk about my problems right now. Instead, I will choose to trust God and not lean on my own understanding, so He can direct my path.
 - **Follow through.** Commit to doing this for a specific time period determined by you and the person you are accountable to. Then, do it! That means you cannot talk to ANYONE about your problems, nor can you dwell on them. You are to take them captive by trusting in God's ability to lead, guide, and direct you through those circumstances.

Memory Verse:

- **Psalm 51:6.** "Behold, thou desireth truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom" (KJV).

Discussion Topic: The Breastplate of Righteousness

- **Ephesians 6:14.** Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and

having on the breastplate of righteousness

- **Key definitions:**¹

- **On.** (G1746) from two different words (in the sense of sinking into a garment); to invest with clothing (literally or figuratively);--array, clothe (with), endue, have (put) on.
- **Breastplate.** (G2382) of uncertain affinity; the chest ("thorax" [containing the chief organs of circulation and respiration; the chest]), i.e. (by implication) a corslet:--breast-plate.
- **Righteousness.** (G1343) from another word; equity (of character or act); specially (Christian) justification [²Theology – the action of declaring or making righteous in the sight of God];--righteousness.

- **A Few Scripture References:**

- **2 Corinthians 5:21.** "For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (NKJV).
- **Romans 5:22.** "²²even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe" (NKJV).
- **Romans 10:3.** "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God" (NKJV).

- **Letting Truth Produce Righteousness:**

- Accept the truth of God's Word that Jesus was made sin for us that when we believe in Him "we might become the righteousness of God in [Jesus].
- Allow that truth to change how we view ourselves, no longer walking in guilt, shame, and condemnation, but in full confidence that we are a joint heir with Christ (Romans 8:17)
- Allow God's righteousness to open our ears to hear Jesus and be taught by Him, "as the truth is in Jesus: ²²that [we] put off, concerning [our] former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, ²³and be renewed in the spirit of [our] mind, ²⁴that [we] may put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:22-24).

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- **Summing up Dressed to Kill, Chapter 11, The Breastplate of Righteousness:**²
 - **A few key points:**
 - Knowing we are righteous in God prepares our mind and emotions for spiritual warfare (p. 299).
 - “...an attitude of righteousness imparts both confidence and tremendous authority” (p. 297).
 - If we “view [ourselves] through the work of the Cross, [we] will receive a divine impartation of confidence and boldness that will always put us on the winning side of victory” (p. 298).
 - **Takeaway:** Knowing I am the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus enables me to walk in faith and not fear!
- **Revelations from the Lord:**
 - “Knowing you are in right standing with God is the difference in being able to self-examine to receive correction from God and self-examining that brings guilt, shame, and condemnation.”
 - God corrects us so we can come “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we would no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the teaching of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things unto Him who is the head – Christ (Ephesians 4:13-15).

² Rick Renner, *Dressed to Kill: A Biblical Approach to Spiritual Warfare and Armor*, (Tulsa: Teach all Nations, 1991).