

Getting Wet

Due to gray skies, we took umbrellas when we went out for our morning walk the other day. We didn't bother opening them at first, however, because there was only something a little heavier than mist coming down. Not enough to worry about, and it looked like it would probably stop soon anyway. It didn't stop, though, and we gradually collected enough moisture to make us thoroughly damp. How crazy, I thought, that we literally carried in our own hands the means to stay dry and yet failed to use them until we were already wet! But we're exposed to much more serious threats.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (Ephesians 6:10-12)

We don't like to think about it (and the enemy would prefer we didn't notice), but the forces of evil are always busy – out in the world but also close at hand. Sometimes it's obvious. More often, though, it's slow and insidious, like a drizzly rain. Nothing to get too worked up about, and the unpleasantness will probably stop soon anyway, right? Wrong. While we weren't paying attention, the powers of darkness took a bit more ground in our hearts, homes, and communities.

What a tragedy! – especially when we had the means to prevent it within easy reach. It's the armor of God: *the belt of truth... the breastplate of righteousness... the gospel of peace... the shield of faith... the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God... be alert and always keep on praying...* (Ephesians 6:14-18). With the full armor on, we are fully protected.

Where is darkness subtly advancing? It's in the questionable forms of entertainment we invite into our homes. *Drip*. It's in the unhealthy thoughts we allow to take residence in our minds and imaginations. *Drip*. It's in our complacency – being too busy, distracted, or lazy to deal with what's wrong in ourselves, our families, our communities, our country. *Drip, drip*. It's in the temptation to neglect our responsibility to God, his word, and prayer. *Drip, drip, drip*. Each drop may seem small, but added together we're well on our way to getting thoroughly drenched. God directs us to remain unstained by the pollution of the world (James 1:27). That means every drop of it. So keep your spiritual umbrella close, and remember to use it.

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