



## *The Armor of Faith*

### Topic Summary: The Armor of God In Our Lives



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### **Introduction**

[Greeting:] → Welcome to “The Armor of Faith,” a show where we hope to bring our listeners closer to the Word of God and the blessings we receive through living in the fullness of the Catholic faith. My name is Doug and I will be your host as we discuss the blessings of the Church Christ built upon Peter.

I am joined today by my panel: [names]

Our panelists provide support and catechesis for religious formation at St. Philip Benizi Catholic Mission in Cedaredge CO. Our panelists are also in the process of discernment and study to become lay Dominicans who are also known as the Order of Preachers. So, welcome to our panelists as well as our listeners.

Let us open with a prayer:

Heavenly Father, we lift up our hearts in thanks and praise for this opportunity to open and share your Holy Word this day. We pray that You are with us and all our listeners as we share with one another the blessings of faith. We pray You will grant us wisdom and understanding as we seek to learn Your Holy Truth.

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit we pray.

### **Presentation:**

During the last six weeks, we began a discussion as to the six components of the Armor of God.

Last week we discussed the **The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God**. Today, we are going to review what donning the full armor of God means to our lives. Let's listen to the scripture one more time. Paul wrote:

*10 Finally, draw your strength from the Lord and from his mighty power. 11 Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of*

*this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens. 13 Therefore, put on the armor of God, that you may be able to resist on the evil day and, having done everything, to hold your ground. 14 So stand fast with your loins girded in **truth**, clothed with **righteousness** as a breastplate, 15 and your feet shod in readiness for the **gospel of peace**. 16 In all circumstances, hold **faith** as a shield, to quench all [the] flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 And take the helmet of **salvation** and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **word** of God. (Ephesians 6:10-17)*

**(Question:** In verse 10, we are called to draw our strength from the Lord and His mighty power. Let's begin our discussion with examining this verse and asking ourselves, **in what ways can we draw strength from the Lord and from His mighty power?**)

**(Question:** In verse 11, we are called to put on the armor of God so that we may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. **How might we recognize the tactics the evil one may use against us? How might we thwart them?**)

**(Question:** In verse 12, we are told that “...*our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens.*” **What can we do to prevail over the sheer magnitude of evil which faces us in our day?**)

In verses 13, Paul instructs us that to prevail, we must put on the armor of God. So, let's examine the armor and what it might do for us.

The first component is the **belt of truth**. If we look at what a **belt** does for us, it cinches our garments so they stay in place. They are a means to secure and provide a foundation upon which other things might be carried, such as a scabbard for a sword or a canteen of water (maybe holy water?). This enables our ability to move without restriction and to carry a greater load while freeing our hands for other tasks until we have need for what we carry on our **belt**. The **belt of truth**, then, enables us to march and engage the enemy. It provides a foundation upon which we can carry other needs into battle. **Truth** becomes the foundation of our endeavors and is the antiseptic for lies and deception.

**(Question:** **Where might we find the belt of truth and how do we secure it as a component of our armor?**)

The second component is the **breastplate of righteousness**. If we look at what a **breastplate** protects, it is the torso. The torso is where our essential organs are contained. It is also where our heart is. The heart is also referred to as the place of our emotions, the center of our soul. We often think of a heart which guides us in what is **right and just** as a heart filled with sympathy, empathy, compassion, charity, and love.

If we seek to do what is **right and just**, we must protect the virtues within our heart, for if we do not, we leave them vulnerable to be corrupted by evil. If we are committed to doing what is **right and just**, we must also have the benefit of **truth** from which to decide how we may proceed in **righteousness**. So, we see that the components of our armor intertwine from which to enable our strength for the fight against evil.

**(Question: Where might we find the **breastplate of righteousness** and how does the belt of truth enable it?)**

The third component is the **sandals of peace**. If we look at what sandals do, they protect our feet, the base of our body, so that we may march on rough and difficult ground without injury. Where we have **peace**, we are able to focus on what is **righteous** without the distractions of division and conflict, for conflict often seduces us to bad choices.

We should also consider that if we have protection for our feet, it enables us to carry other loads, for should we step, without protection, on something sharp, we are likely to be interrupted in our journey, perhaps even dropping something from our load, as we react to the injury to our foot.

We can have **peace** of heart, even in the midst of trial, if we have a foundation of **truth** and the virtues from which to do what is **right and just**. We cannot have **peace** of heart, even in a period of calm, if our hearts are troubled with the darkness of sin.

**(Question: Where might we find the **sandals of peace** and how will they enable us to bear the load of what we carry?)**

The fourth component is the **shield of faith**. If we look at what we typically do with a shield, it is a means by which we are able to deflect what may cause us harm. If we look at what is the basis of our faith, and therefore the strength of our shield, we must look at **truth** and **righteousness**, for what is a **faith** which is not based on **truth** and what value is a **faith** which is not **right and just**? What is the virtue of a **faith** which does not encourage **peace**?

**(Question: Where might we obtain a **shield of faith** and how may we forge it so it is not easily penetrated?)**

The fifth component is the **helmet of salvation**. If we look at the purpose of a helmet, it is to protect the head, the part of our body which is the command center of our decisions. It is the part of us which processes what we sense and decides our actions in response to our environment. If our head is injured such that our consciousness is impaired, we are likely to make bad choices and perhaps even become ineffective. A **helmet** helps to prevent such injury.

Our ability to think and make good decisions is based upon our ability to discern **truth**. It is strengthened by **righteousness**. We are able to focus on the quality of our decisions when we are at **peace** and it is **faith** which enables us to move forward in situations which are uncertain. If we have made poor decisions in our past, all is not lost, for it is our hope of **salvation** which allows us to learn, to regroup, and continue to forge ahead on the path on which our **Savior** leads us.

**(Question: Where might we obtain a **helmet of salvation** and how do we enable its strength?)**

The sixth component is the **The sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God**. If we look at the purpose of a **sword**, it provides a means to both defend against blows and to strike to defeat or drive an enemy away. As we discussed last week, Satan made the attempt in the desert to

seduce Jesus with portions of God's Word. The evil one twisted the purpose of the Word and presented it in a deceptive context, but Jesus rebuked Satan with the full context of **truth and righteousness** which the **Word** reveals. Jesus defended against the attack of Satan, then, prevailed with the fullness of **truth** and what is **right and just**.

Our ability to use **God's Word** for the purpose which He intended requires our study, reflection, and contemplation. We must study it if we are to navigate it. We must reflect upon it if we are to absorb its meaning. We must contemplate it to discern how to share it, not only for our blessings, but for the fulfillment of the two greatest commandments (Matthew 22:36-40), for it is these commandments of love which define the relationship God desires to have with us as well as the relationship God desires that we have with one another.

As I mentioned last week, we face many challenges in our ability to absorb and comprehend the vast meaning of **His Word**. Indeed, to continue with the analogy of the **sword**, learning how to use it effectively requires considerable effort and practice. Our hope in learning the **Word** does not come from becoming wise in our own eyes or trusting only in the power of our intellect, rather, our hope comes from our relationship with the One who gave us the **Word**.

**(Question:** A question we might have, then, is where might I find the **sword of the Spirit** and where might I learn how to use and wield it?)

**Final Thoughts:** As we discussed the pieces of the armor of God and the questions as to how we might obtain them and use them, we identified the importance of prayer, the Bible, the church, the Magisterium, the Catechism, reflection, contemplation, the communion of saints, the priesthood, religious vocations, ministry, and one another. Alone, we cannot withstand the onslaught of evil. Alone, we cannot defeat the schemes of the evil one. It is only through our relationship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit that we may obtain the protection of this armor. It is through our relationships with one another that we may help each other to not only don and wear the armor of God, but to put it to its most effective use. Let us, then, reach out to all which God provides us so we may experience the blessings of the fullness of faith.

**Wrap Up:** Once more our time has come to an end. We hope you will be able to join us next week as we discuss the fullness of blessings we may receive through our faith.

Let us conclude with a prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank you for this opportunity to open and discuss Your Holy Word. We pray that as we go our separate ways, You will continue to walk with us and help us to see how we may share the blessings of **truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation**, and the **Word** of the gospel not only for the benefit of our lives, but also the lives of all who cross our path. In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Thank you all and God bless.

Next Session: **The Fullness of Faith**.