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The Holy Spirit's Power to Overcome Evil

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The Holy Spirit's Power to Overcome Evil

Have you ever thought about the very real presence of “evil” in our world? Sometimes it’s hard to imagine ... and other times it is not! The truth is that evil *is* in our world and does surround us. There are places in the world where it may be more or less pervasive, but Satan is working throughout the world and in the lives of all believers. His ultimate goal is to persuade people to leave behind the relationship with God that defines them! A distorted, inaccurate view of God will result in a distorted, inaccurate response to Him.

Be assured that Satan will choose a precise weakness for his attack. If your marriage is not strong, that is the place where he will surely try to break through your lines of defense. If you struggle with honesty, he will throw a temptation at you that will compromise your ability to be truthful. If you struggle with your self-image, Satan will find a way for you to question God’s great love for you. A distorted, inaccurate view of God will result in a distorted, inaccurate response to Him!

God has given us a way to not only resist temptation but to also overcome evil! Ephesians 6 reveals that we have spiritual weaponry for fighting our spiritual battles! We need to be prepared!

“Finally, be strengthened in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Clothe yourselves with the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens. For this reason, take up the full armor of God so that you may be able to stand your ground on the evil day, and having done everything, to stand. Stand firm therefore, by fastening the belt of truth around your waist, by putting on the breastplate of righteousness, by fitting your feet with the preparation that comes from the good news of peace, and in all of this, by taking up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit (which is the word of God).” —Ephesians 6:10-17

Faith, salvation, truth, the Spirit ... we seldom think of these as protection—but that is exactly what they are!

The Belt of Truth

Satan likes to interfere in our perceptions of reality through deception. The bottom line is that he doesn't want us to know the truth. God's truth shows us the way things really are—and His truth is the real truth! Each one of us must ground our lives on the truth of God's Word so that misguided ideas will not get in the way of our living for God.

Your thoughts, values, decisions, beliefs, fears, joys, emotions, and attitudes are all by-products of what is in your mind!

If we fill our minds with God's Word and instruction, our decisions and behavior will reflect that.

A distorted, inaccurate view of God will result in a distorted, inaccurate response to Him.

Q. In what ways are you putting God's truth into your life?

The Breastplate of Righteousness:

We have been made righteous through Jesus Christ's death on the cross ... and nothing can change that! Satan wants us to believe that God sees us as failures and he will try to degrade our sense of worth through false guilt and accusations. God's righteousness, given to us through faith in Christ, protects our spiritual self-image!

Q. How can you focus your attention on God's righteousness?

The Shoes of Peace

Peace protects the well-being and effectiveness of the body of Christ—it protects our unity and the shoes of peace help us to spread God's peace to others.

Q. In what ways are you currently experiencing God's peace?

The Shield of Faith

A shield is a protective piece of armor! The shield of faith protects us from Satan's flaming arrows of temptation and doubt. We hold on to our trust in God and His ability to not only protect us but also empower us!

Q. How are you making your shield of faith stronger?

The Helmet of Salvation

The helmet of salvation protects us against Satan's efforts to fill our minds with whatever will draw us away from God. He wants us to be self-centered. The helmet of salvation keeps our minds on Christ!

Q. What are you doing to train yourself to wear the helmet of salvation at all times?

The Sword of the Spirit

The sword is the only offensive weapon on the list of spiritual armor. The Holy Spirit will give us wisdom for each tempting situation that confronts us. The Spirit is our source of power!

Q. What are you doing to prepare yourself to immediately pick up the sword of the Spirit when you are faced with temptation or evil of any kind?

Make sure you are wearing all the protection God gives for spiritual safety!

What you put into your mind influences your behavior! Fill your mind with God's Word! Everything a person puts into their mind, sticks—every word, every image, every idea.

What is in your mind comes out in your behavior! Satan will try to attack you through a "chink" in your "armor."

Make sure you are wearing all the protection God gives for spiritual safety!

Q. Which piece of armor are you most comfortable using?

Q. Which piece of spiritual armor do you need to proactively take up?

Sometimes the whole idea of aggressively fighting against Satan can be overwhelming, but it's important to remember that God is infinitely greater than anything Satan can throw at us. First John 4:4 says, "You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."

Q. What in this lesson has challenged and/or inspired you?

Q. What can you do to make sure that you are ready with your spiritual armor the next time you need it?

Application

Memorize Ephesians 6:10-17, really! This is quite a long passage, but by memorizing it, you will be reminded at critical times of God's ability and availability to help you when you need it most!