

ARMED AGAINST THE DEVIL'S TRICKS

Ephesians 6:11

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INTRODUCTION

“Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might”—we must not have **carnal confidence** in this battle. Don't rush into the battle naked and unprepared. *We must have divine armor in order to win the fight.*

STAND AGAINST SATAN'S TRICKS WITH GOD'S FULL ARMOR.

There are two important truths here: *We must be properly dressed for battle, and we must stand up against the devil's tricks.*

I. DRESS PROPERLY FOR BATTLE

A. The Equipment for Battle: Armor

What is the armor?

1. Christ (Rom. 13:14)
2. His graces—e.g. truth, righteousness, etc. (vv. 14-17; cf. Eph. 4:24)

Outside of Christ we are naked and destitute (Adam in Gen. 3:7).

We are alienated (2:12), ignorant (5:8), and impotent (5:6)

No wonder so many follow Satan! No wonder he hates the gospel!

B. The Quality of the Armor (“of God”)

He is its source—it comes from Him.

Soldiers must wear and use the equipment issued to them.

Illus—Don't be like Nadab and Abihu.

1. Avoid Counterfeit armor such as traditions (celibacy, monasticism, asceticism, prayers to saints, to Mary, etc.), motives (what will people think? rather than how can I sin so against God?)
2. Don't use the armor for non-appointed purposes (to cover up sin—the hypocrite, trust in the means of grace rather than the God who appoints them—e.g. prayer, repentance, works, faith,, etc.)

Illus. David would not fight in Saul's armor!

C. The Completeness of the Armor: whole

1. Every part—soul and body (**Illus—Ahab left a joint exposed!**)
Satan will attack the eye, the ear, the heart, etc.
2. All the pieces and weapons must hang together.
3. Each piece must be complete.

D. The Use of the Armor: put on.

The armor is made to be worn—not admired!

Don't lay it aside until the battle is over.

Satan wants to find us napping.

Once we are properly dressed, we must stand up against the Devil's tricks.

II. STAND UP AGAINST THE DEVIL'S TRICKS

There are **two** key thoughts here: *The Great Danger if unarmed*, and *The Certainty of Standing if armed*.

A. The Danger if Unarmed

- Did you know that the Devil is a “Methodist”?
- He has “wiles”—tricks, schemes, *methodeia*.
- He is “methodical”, calculating, uses subtlety, ingenuity, and acuteness.
- If he was too crafty for a perfect man in the garden, how much more for man in sin?

Satan has two main designs against us: To draw us into sin and to accuse, trouble, and discourage us.

1. The Tempter (Draw us into sin)

His best seasons:

New Christians—cf. Egyptians’ and Herod’s activity against the babies!

- Compare a child with a supposed friendly “stranger.”

Time of Afflictions

- Job and Satan
- Christ and His 40 day fast
- A city after a long siege

Some important work

- Joshua the priest in Zech. 3
- Problems with Christ’s beginning to His ministry, and the exit from His ministry.

After a spiritual high

- Fair weather and the growth of weeds
- Peter’s testimony of Christ in Mt. 16.

At the time of death

His Crafty Methods

False Colors—Comes as a friend

- Masquerades as an “angel of light”
- Quotes Scripture (Mt. 4:6)
- Mixes Error with truth
- Seeks to take God’s place (II Thes. 2-4)
- Usurps what is intended for God (e.g. the temple—Mt. 24:15)
- Teaches that good can be attained through evil (Lk. 4:6-7)

Knowledge of our weaknesses—from his investigations, that of his helpers, and from much past experience.

Asks only a little at first—in order to get a lot!

He has many reserves—fresh troops, fresh approaches.

- Illus. Temptation of Christ—stones to bread, let God protect you, etc.

He uses strategic retreats—e.g. Unclean spirit goes out, then returns.

His Choice Instruments (Illus—Joab gets the “wise woman of Tekoa”)

Persons of place and power—in the state or church

- Elymus’ hindrance to Publius’ conversion
- David’s numbering of the people.
- Lying spirits in the mouths of the prophets.

Persons of great ability—Balaam, Ahithophel, Haman, Sanballat, etc.

Spiritual people (The “old prophet” of I Kings 13)

Close companions

- Eve for Adam
- Delilah for Samson
- Job’s wife
- Peter and Christ
- Paul’s friends (Acts `21:13)

YOU HAD BETTER STUDY HIS “WILES”—HIS METHODS (II Cor. 2:11)

2. The Troubler (He accuses, troubles, and discourages the believer.)

- Illusionary sins or failures
- Making real sins seem worse
- Ridicules our Christian deeds and duties (**But, our imperfections are covered by His perfections!**) See Zech. 3:2—The Lord rebuked Satan in his attitude toward Joshua and Zerubbabel. *We are to do our deeds out of love for Christ—not as an official repayment of a debt owed.* **CHRIST IS THE PAYMASTER—SEND SATAN TO HIM!**
- Discourages the believer; you need to suffer more for your sins; your sins are too serious for His grace.

Do Christians sometimes serve as Satan’s henchmen?

- Bringing up sins already under the blood
- Looking for failures and weaknesses
- Blaming our sins on others (Ahab with Elijah)

Don’t let Satan rob you of your food and send you to be hungry!

Avoid Satan’s traps: for example,

Am I one of the elect?

Have I committed the unpardonable sin?

*Keep the **old receipts** of the pardon of your sins.*

If Still troubled, renew your repentance and faith.

B. The Certainty of Standing if Armed

Standing in battle and even after the battle

“Stand against” Satan—*anti-histamine*

1. Satan will not defeat a soul armed with grace!

- He and his cause are defeated (Gen. 3:14-15)

2. God in His wisdom limits Satan’s work

Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, but the angels later came and ministered to Him.

CONCLUSION

Through Satan’s temptations and tests, God accomplishes His own glorious purposes.

He cuts off the devil’s head with his own sword; to put it otherwise, sin causes grace to abound.

God purges our sin, strengthens our faith.

Satan is indeed tricky, but God is wiser!

“Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”