

SPIRITUAL WARFARE PART3.

“The breastplate of Righteousness.”

Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

Proverbs 4:23

A lesson from ancient Israel provides an ironic example of just how important armor can be. Perhaps you recall the cowardly and capricious life of King Ahab, but how did this evil king's life come to an end? This selfish leader who allowed a man to be killed just so he could have his vineyard (1 Kings 21)? This king of Israel "who did evil in the sight of the Lord more than all who were before him" (1 Kings 16:30, New Revised Standard Version)?

God had said that Ahab would die in the battle described in 1 Kings 22. So Ahab decided to disguise himself, while his ally King Jehoshaphat of Judah wore his own kingly robes.

Their enemy had ordered his captains, "'Fight with no one small or great, but only with the king of Israel.' When the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, they said, 'It is surely the king of Israel.' So they turned to fight against him; and Jehoshaphat cried out. When the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, they turned back from pursuing him.

"But a certain man drew his bow and unknowingly struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate...at evening he died; the blood from the wound had flowed into the bottom of the chariot" (1 Kings 22:31-35, NRSV).

See this King was married to someone more famous than he, her name was Jezebel.

One may ask why didn't the scale armor and breastplate protect him. To understand one reason you have to know that during this period in history things were custom made. No such thing as someone having the exact same prom dress, jeans or blouse as someone else. Craftsmen would make things to fit the individual. So the breastplate would hug the area of the body it was designed to

protect. The vital organs would have maximum protection. It would fit snugly, not loose allowing a gap to appear. So every inch that this piece of the armor was designed to project was protected.

The Armor was customized...The breast plate in particular. The breastplate almost seemed that it knew its owner. This is one reason David didn't want to use the armor of Saul to fight with Goliath. It didn't fit it wasn't designed for him. Instead of putting on Saul's armor he put on the whole armor of God which was custom fitted for him. Similar to us today we need to know that the Armor of God is customized to fit our situation with the purpose and mission being the same. That is protecting the combatant. No circumstance, no situation, no problem, no pain that God has not shaped the armor, the breastplate to protect.

The Breastplate has a purpose.

First of all being customized it moved with the user, it protected areas of the body that the vital organs existed, one could be wounded in or on the extremities and the wound would not be a mortal wound...Think about you can lose a finger, hand, arm, toe, foot or leg and still survive. But if you caught a shot to vital organ...

According to David Jeremiah: The breast plate symbolizes three things

Christ's righteousness

The Christian's righteousness

Consistent righteousness

Controlled righteousness

Christ Righteousness

Who you with?

Represent!

When we accept Jesus as our Lord, we must know who we represent...A few years back people usta say

“Who you with?” I am not sure where it even came from but I thank God it is Christ who I represent. I became acutely aware of this when studying the prayer of Jabez found in 1 Chronicles 4...Jabez didn’t want to bring shame upon himself because it would cause him grief. Because God is not mocked, if you call yourself the righteousness of Christ but are not representing, not showing who you with...God will deal with you accordingly.

“Represent” I find it interesting that during a campaign, most politician will say I am going to Little Rock, Nashville, or Washington to represent you!!!! But when they get up there, get caught up in scandal are they still representing you...And then when most get caught up they will not have the decency to step down. They fight tooth and nail trying to stay in office trying to justify what they know is wrong...Apologizing but still trying to justify. An apology is not worth anything if the word but is placed therein... all to the detriment of those they supposedly are representing.

Jabez knew that he was representing an awesome God, he knew that no matter what his name meant, the name he was called in God was blessed...So he was not of the mindset to allow shame to come upon God.

The Christian Righteousness

[Isaiah 64:6 \(Whole Chapter\)](#)

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as **filthy rags**; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.

We are the righteousness of Christ...All that we have done up to this point, if it is not in Christ, its luster is as dull, tarnished brass. Everything we have given, every kind act, apart from Christ means notta. Far too many wonderful people are going to hell because they think that all their good deeds along will get them into the Kingdom.

Christian Righteousness -Confession is made unto righteousness

⁹That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Romans 10:9

Many things are gained by your confession to include righteousness. A right confession in Christ renounces the god of this world; the adversary, the enemy as your ruler. The right confession. Verse 10 says that with the heart you believe and what you believe in your heart you will confess with your mouth. Your righteousness is found in Christ.

Consistent Righteousness

¹What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

²God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

³Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

“Wear your Armor-Armor sitting in a closet will not protect you if you are out and about!”

When I was in the Army, of the many types of unit I was in, I was once in what we called a frontline Infantry. A unit whose job it was to fight directly against the enemy. That enemy at that time was the Russians. Our unit called a battalion consisted of a Headquarters and four subordinate units or companies. I was in the Headquarters company for the first 1.5 years of a three year tour. While there I noticed one company, A company always wore bullet proof vest...No not the type you see on soldier today. These vest well heavy, thick, hot and weigh-in at 40 pounds apiece. They wore these vest in our out of training, everywhere they went on post while on duty they had to be in these vest. I had a buddy who was in A company who I asked a simple question once...Why? He said the commander said in order to be in the best of fighting conditions possible they were to get use to the vest and have the vest on at all times protecting them. Now with me that just would not do...I was so glad I wasn't in A company...That was until my 1.5 years in HQ ended and they assigned me to you guessed it. A Company.

One Christmas I got this gift. A radar detector...Now don't get me wrong, I don't practice speeding but sometimes when I am deep in thought which is often I become distracted and will find myself speeding. This Christmas I had been given a radar detector as a gift...Well it was Christmas and we were here in W. Memphis. We decided to try and catch a movie in Memphis. Well while returning I was pulled over for speeding and there in the trunk still halfway in gift wrap, fully in its packaging was my brand spanking new radar detector. Both these stories bear out the fact that the best armor in the world is worthless if not worn.

While speaking to a Senior Executive of the Postal Service once during a training session I asked him what was his biggest challenge in managing his plant and his said. "Consistent Practices". When pressed I found that he meant practice that were proven if not used constantly they are rendered useless. When you find the right practice, the things that work, we should adhere to what works. Someone once defined insanity as doing something the same way and expecting a different result. In life think about sinning and expecting a different result. I won't enumerate the sins here but Paul also said put aside in Hebrews 12:1 things...Sin is a weight, it slows you down it retards your growth. The only way to combat it affect is consistent living.

Controlled Righteousness

**"Watch your thoughts, for they become words.
Watch your words, for they become actions.
Watch your actions, for they become habits.
Watch your habits, for they become character.
Watch your character, for it becomes your destiny."**

Not only consistent but controlled righteousness is important. Consistence is righteousness in practice, whereas controlled is monitoring your consistency. In controlled righteousness you are bringing every thought under subjection. When A though comes to mind, it should bounce off the helmet of salvation but not

ricochet into your heart. The breastplate of righteousness should make it bounce off to none affect. Q

Read Quote on page 53.

Similar to the quote about watching, one must always strive to break and not develop habits which will bring shame upon Christ. One of a Christians biggest challenges in this area in our conversation. Now don't hide me as your facebook friend because I do see some of your conversations...Controlled Righteousness can be viewed as a control room. The central location of control. Can I be real and bring this home...If your lights have ever been cut off, the utility worker does not come into your house, turn off every lamp switch, unplug your TV, refrigerator and microwave, no what he does is he either comes into your yard and removes your meter or nowadays they can cut it off from a place that you don't even know the location. In like manner your heart is the control point for your blood...Keeping the blood flow regulated move important germ fighting antibodies into places to fight sicknesses. In the spiritual sense your control room is your spirit. With the Spirit being in control it filters things for you. Your righteousness is controlled by the constant connection you must maintain with the Holy Spirit.

Romans 3

⁹What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin;

¹⁰As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

¹¹There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God

Romans 3:9-11

This verse bears out the fact that some think that they by their own heritage are better than others. No not when it says that no one is better than the other. Within you is no ability to get salvation or to render salvation to anyone else. In plain terms you have no heaven nor hell to place anyone to include your self in.

You must first get your righteousness through Christ and maintain it in Christ. While he is making intercession before the father for you.

Apart from Christ you have no defense against the enemy. The enemy can and does lie to those apart from Christ. Your righteousness is found one place, not in your good looks, not in your intelligence but it is found in Christ.

Prayer

Having put on the breastplate of righteousness

Thank you Lord for Your breastplate of righteousness. I put it on and it will protect me throughout the day. I remove any robes of self-righteousness or works of the law that would glory myself and distract me from the finished work of Jesus at the cross. I now put on Your righteousness. With Your breastplate, I will protect my heart, for out of it flows the issues of life. Help me to keep my heart clean and pure before you and to use the breastplate of righteousness to resist sin and self-indulgence.