

The Armor of God Study

by Paul Cook

This study will help you understand and use the whole armor of God. It is intended for those who have placed faith in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and desire to live for him. If you don't know Jesus, please first visit our [Peace with God](#) page.



The Apostle Paul discussed the need for the armor of God in Ephesians 6:10-13 [NKJV](#): "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. "

If we want to live for God, spiritual forces of evil will oppose us in "spiritual warfare." God gives us the whole armor of God for protection and survival. It enables us to reach our maximum endurance on the "spiritual battlefield" without becoming a casualty. We'll need to both wear the armor of God and know how to use it if we hope to be victorious.

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Shield of Faith

The first piece of armor we take up is the shield of faith. The shield of faith quenches or extinguishes all of the fiery darts from the enemy. Consider these scriptures that reference the shield of faith:



"Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." Ephesians 6:16 [NKJV](#)

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade--kept in heaven for you, ⁵who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time." 1 Peter 1:3-5 [NIV](#)

To best understand what "faith" means, let's consider these definitions:

1. The Greek word for faith in the above verses is *Pistis*, which means: "Conviction of the truth of anything, belief; in the NT of a conviction or belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it" (*The NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon* for [Strong's #4102](#))
2. Hebrews 11:1 provides further insight on the meaning of faith: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1 [NKJV](#))

Putting these definitions together in practical terms, faith in God is:

- Trusting in God's word as truth
- Trusting that God will provide for our needs
- Trusting that God will protect us from the evil one
- Believing that God is with us and lives in us, even though we may not see him
- Believing that Christ's sacrifice paid the penalty for our sin, reconciling us to God
- Believing that through faith we have Christ's authority over evil powers

In our human weakness, we may find it difficult to fully trust and believe God in the above ways. Since God is the author, "perfecter" and finisher of our faith

(Hebrews 12:2), we can and should ask him for the completion of our faith. For example, Jesus told the man whose son had an evil spirit:

"Everything is possible for him who believes." ²⁴Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" ²⁵When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the evil spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again." Mark 9:23-25 [NIV](#)

Just as the father asked Jesus for help in overcoming unbelief, we too can ask Jesus to help us overcome our doubt. As a result our shield of faith will operate at its maximum strength.

When we believe in something, our belief gives it power to manifest in our lives. Jesus said, "Everything is possible for him who believes" (Mark 9:23 [NIV](#)). Do you *believe* that? We must take care that we are believing God's word and not the [devil's lies](#). If we believe the devil's lies, we're putting faith into them and opening a door for the devil to influence us. This is "negative faith," and irony of it is that we give it power through our own belief in the lies.

Our faith must be based on the truth of the word of God. Any other source is not reliable nor trustworthy. The devil's primary tactic against our faith is to persuade us to [believe lies](#) so that our faith is not founded on truth. Once we believe lies, our shield of faith is basically deactivated, giving the enemy access to us.

As a former *Star Trek* fan, I love the analogy of a starship's electromagnetic shield and our faith. When the starship's shields were at 100%, the enemy torpedoes were unable to damage the ship. If the ship lost power, the shields failed and the torpedoes were free to wreak havoc on the disabled ship. When we start believing lies, our shield's power source is damaged, allowing the enemy's fiery darts to hit us.

The devil often entices people into sexual sin with the lie that God's plan for sex isn't sufficient and/or isn't worth the wait for marriage. He offers attractive counterfeits through prostitution, pornography, homosexuality, chat rooms, phone sex, fornication, masturbation, etc. in attempt to persuade us to make our own sexual provision instead of trusting God for it. This "shift of faith" away from God weakens our shield of faith. As a result, we open ourselves up for further deception and destruction from the enemy.

How the shield quenches the fiery darts: Here is a possible explanation: The fiery darts (i.e. temptations) seek to inflame our sinful desires (lust of flesh, lust of the eyes, pride of life) by stirring up our thoughts of fulfilling those desires. If our faith is operating effectively, the enemy's temptations will not be able to inflame sinful desires in us, because we don't believe the lies behind them.

Actions to put up an effective shield: There are several things we can do to ensure that the proper operation of our shield of faith. They hinge upon the principle that we believe God and therefore speak what we believe (2 Corinthians 4:13-14). Our spoken words of faith set the shield into place.

- Reaffirm your faith in God each day, as you extend the shield of faith over yourself and your family: This can be a simple statement such as: "Lord God, I believe that you are God and that there is no other God but you. I believe that you are Lord of heaven and earth and the creator of all things. I trust in you for my provision, protection and life today. I take up the shield of faith today and believe that quenches every fiery dart of the enemy."
- Maintain daily intake of God's word in your [quiet time](#)
- Use God's word to destroy the incoming [lies](#) (John 8:31-32) behind the temptations you face
- Ask God to strengthen and perfect your faith in any area that it is weak: "Heavenly Father, I believe that with you nothing is impossible. I believe, Lord, but please help me overcome any unbelief I have, especially in the areas of _____(list as appropriate for you). I receive your perfection of my faith right now, in Jesus' name! Thank you, Father, Amen."

Helmet of Salvation

"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Ephesians 6:17 [NIV](#)



The importance of the mind

Since man's beginning, Satan has focused his attacks on people's minds. Satan cannot force us to sin, but rather, he must persuade us to commit sin. The mind is the control center which decides if we will sin or not. If we sin, we place ourselves under the power of sin and become slaves to it (the degree will vary). Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin" (John 8:34 [NIV](#)). If we choose to live as slaves to sin, we are mastered not only by our evil desires ([Titus 3:3](#)), but also the devil, who temporarily rules the world ([1 John 5:19](#)). The devil seeks to persuade us to sin because it will increase his own power and influence in the world.

Jesus authors our faith, while our minds form it and put into action. Faith based on God's word is the most powerful kind of faith. Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you" (Matthew 17:20 [NIV](#)). When our [shield of faith](#) is rooted in this kind of faith, the devil cannot penetrate our defenses because all of his "flaming arrows" are quenched by the shield (Ephesians 6:16). However, if Satan can corrupt our faith, bringing it away from God's word or tainting it with doubt, our shield will be compromised.

We should be aware that the power of faith can be used for sinful purposes and Satan seeks to harness that power. Jesus' statement in Matthew 17:20 guaranteed the power of faith regardless of the bearer's intentions. Satan therefore wants to persuade us to misuse our faith to further his purposes.

Satan's tactics against the mind

Satan uses a variety of tactics against our minds. These are designed to weaken our faith, ruin our discernment and corrupt our thoughts. If successful, these "spiritual headwounds" will make it easier for Satan to captivate our minds to do

his will (2 Timothy 2:26). Here are some examples of typical tactics Satan uses against our minds:

1. Deceive with false doctrine: False doctrine leads people astray from their devotion to Christ. For example, Paul was worried that false teachers may have led the Corinthians astray from their devotion to Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3). False doctrine ultimately brings us into bondage under lies. Examples:

- Smooth talk and flattery to deceive minds (Romans 16:18)
- Deceitful scheming through the cunning and craftiness (Ephesians 4:14)
- Trivial doctrinal disputes (2 Peter 1:16; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 Timothy 4:7-8)
- Demons teaching false doctrines (1 Timothy 4:1-2)

2. Distract with carnal interests: Satan tempted Eve by appealing to her carnal interests (Genesis 3:4-6) and he continues to tempt people today through combinations of pride, lust of the eyes and lust of the flesh ([1 John 2:15-17](#)). The more we yield to the temptations, the more our minds become set on earthly things instead of godly things.

An earthly mindset weakens our devotion to God and causes us to be unfruitful for God's kingdom. It could even cause us to become hostile toward God. Paul wrote, "Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. ⁶The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; ⁷the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so" (Romans 8:5-7 [NIV](#)).

Examples of carnal distractions:

- Pride (Matthew 16:23; Luke 4:3-13)
- Cares of the world (Philippians 3:19; Colossians 3:1-2; Matthew 13:22)
- Money (Matthew 13:22; 1 Timothy 6:5,10; John 12:2-8; Acts 5:1-11)
- Sexual temptations (Proverbs 6:23-29; Proverbs 7:6-27; 1 Corinthians 5; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; Revelation 2:20-23, 2 Timothy 2:22)

3. Poison the mind/ Blind to the truth: Well-timed or well-placed lies can quickly find a home in our minds if we are not firmly rooted in the truth. We are especially vulnerable when we have issues like unforgiveness and roots of rejection. If we believe what the devil says to us, we are in danger of a partial or total blinding of the truth. As with the false doctrine tactic, believing such lies

places us in bondage because we are unable to receive the truth that would set us free (John 8:31-32). Examples:

- Poison the mind against other Christians (Acts 14:2)
- Blind the minds of non-Christians to the truth (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- Corrupt the mind and conscience (Titus 1:15)
- Sear the conscience via false doctrines (1 Timothy 4:2)

The long term effects of these untreated "spiritual head wounds" can be devastating. Paul described a group of people in [Romans 1:18-32](#) who turned completely away from God. They followed a path of increasing rebellion resulting in total abandonment to evil. Key changes occurred in their minds along the way. Their thinking became "futile" and their "foolish hearts were darkened" (21). They exchanged the truth of God for a lie (25) and committed sexual sin. Eventually God gave them over to a "depraved mind" (28) and they were filled with every form of evil (29-31). (Another example: Ephesians 4:17-19)

How the helmet of salvation protects our minds

Considering the strategic value of our minds, God has given us the helmet of salvation to protect us from the enemy. This helmet functions by the peace of God, which is engaged when our minds are focused on God and trusting in him. Consider these verses that link God's peace to our minds:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6-7 [NIV](#)

³You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You." Isaiah 26:3 [NKJV](#)

The helmet, like the other pieces of armor, is dependent on our faith in God and his promises.

How to put the helmet on:

- Speak it on by faith, believing that you truly have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16): We can stand on God's promise that he has written his laws on our minds. Hebrews 10:16 [NIV](#) says, "This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. I will put my laws in their

hearts, and I will write them on their minds." This can be as simple as saying:

"I put on the helmet of salvation, which protects my mind from the enemy's attacks. I have the mind of Christ."

- Focus our thoughts on God instead of sinful things: Paul wrote in Colossians 3:2 [NIV](#), "**Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.**" This discipline will likely be the most challenging part of walking in purity. The more we do it, the easier it will become. It basically involves redirecting our thoughts toward God and/or Godly things whenever we are being tempted. In my own practice of this I have found that speaking Bible verses, singing praise & worship songs, picturing Jesus on the cross and speaking "the blood of Jesus covers me" are all helpful in shifting my thoughts heavenward.

As we practice this "thought shifting," the Holy Spirit will help us improve our recognition of the times when our thoughts are going awry. It's important that we take action at the moment of recognition to redirect our thoughts heavenward. Any delay could lead to sin.

Our obedience in controlling our thoughts will reflect our love for God. In doing so, we will fulfill Jesus' command in Matthew 22:37 [NIV](#) to "**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.**" For more info about thought control, see our [thoughts](#) page.

- Direct our requests to God through prayer: Situations will come our way that will tempt us to get anxious and take matters into our own hands instead of taking them to God. By taking our requests to God, we enable God's perfect peace to protect our mind and hearts (Philippians 4:6-7). Our prayers should always include thanking God for who he is and what he has done in our lives.

Breastplate of Righteousness

"Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place" Ephesians 6:14 [NIV](#)

The Greek word for righteousness in this scripture is *dikaiosune* ([Strong's #1343](#)). Crosswalk's online lexicon gives these definitions for this word:

1. In a broad sense: state of him who is as he ought to be, righteousness, the condition acceptable to God
 - a. the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God
 - b. integrity, virtue, purity of life, rightness, correctness of thinking, feeling, and acting
2. In a narrower sense, justice or the virtue which gives each his due

The part of the definition I'd like to emphasize is the "condition acceptable to God." We can only reach this condition through faith in Jesus Christ. In exchange for our faith, God counts us as righteous, i.e. being acceptable in his sight ([Philippians 3:8-9](#)). The breastplate of righteousness is forged by a combination of this perfect righteousness God imparts to us and our obedience to his commands for living. Our obedience is essential because it proves that our hearts are in agreement with God and that our faith is genuine.

How the breastplate works:

Our faith is the power link that connects our breastplate with God's infinite power. By believing in Jesus, we receive all the power and benefits of being righteous in God's sight (see examples at end of this section). If we don't believe that we have God's righteousness, then our breastplate will be ineffective.

Our sin has an associated "spiritual nakedness" with it that repels God from us. When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost their covering of purity and became spiritually and physically naked. Their sin and nakedness separated them from fellowship with God. Since the wages of sin are death (Romans 6:23), God mercifully slaughtered an animal (s) and made clothes of skin to cover Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21).

God's actions foreshadowed the lasting sacrifice he would make by sending Jesus to die on the cross for mankind. The blood of Christ provides atonement for our sin and clothes us with a righteousness (symbolized by a breastplate) that covers

our spiritual nakedness. We can now boldly approach God's throne without fear of punishment (Romans 5:1; Hebrews 4:16).

Another important function of the breastplate of righteousness is revealed by the action of Christ's blood on our conscience. The blood of Jesus spiritually washes us clean from our sin (Hebrews 9:14; Hebrews 10:22). This cleansing action removes potential "footholds" that would have caused us to be vulnerable to the devil's attacks. With the breastplate of righteousness covering us through Christ's blood, the devil has nothing in us to exploit (John 14:30).

How to put on the breastplate: We put the breastplate on through faith by speaking it. Here is a way to do this:

"I put on the breastplate of righteousness. I believe in Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I am clothed with God's righteousness, which protects my heart from the enemy. All footholds that the devil had in me have been washed away by the blood of Jesus. I am no longer clothed with filthy garments, but rather with rich robes of righteousness ([Zechariah 3](#)). The righteousness of God covers me and protects me from the enemy."

How to maintain the breastplate: Just as with conventional weapons of war, regular maintenance of our spiritual armor is critical to its operation in battle.

1. **Obey God's commands for living:** We are obligated to obey God's commands, out of loving appreciation for what Jesus did for us. This is a way of exercising our faith which keeps us plugged in to God's power supply. Paul wrote, "**Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness**" (Romans 6:19 [NIV](#)). God gives us power to live obediently through the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:11,13).
2. **Live in Love:** Love is the key activity by which we live for righteousness. Jesus explained that all of the commandments are summed up by love your neighbor as yourself ([Galatians 5:14](#)). Paul wrote: "**12Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. 13Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. 14And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity**" (Colossians 3:12-14 [NIV](#)). By showing God's love to others, we will grow in righteousness toward holiness. When we combine our faith with living in love, our breastplate is strong, like an alloy of two metals.

Benefits of living for righteousness: A great benefit of living for righteousness is that our breastplate will function at maximum efficiency. Here are some other benefits that we will also enjoy:

- **Protection:**
The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, But the unfaithful will be caught by their lust. (Proverbs 11:6 [NKJV](#))
- **Prosperity and honor:**
He who pursues righteousness and love finds life, prosperity and honor. (Proverbs 21:21 [NIV](#))
- **Filling with God's Spirit:**
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. (Matthew 5:6 [NIV](#))
- **Quietness and confidence forever:**
The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. (Isaiah 32:17 [NIV](#))
- **Reflection of God:**
You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:22-24 [NIV](#))

The Belt of Truth

"Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth..." Ephesians 6:14 [NKJV](#)

A Christian's survival in the world requires a firm grounding in the absolute truth of the Bible. The power of truth is that it sets us free by breaking the power of the devil's [lies](#) and the deception they create (John 8:31-32). Just as with Eve in Eden, the devil downplays the consequences of sin and promotes its pleasures. Firmly rooted in the truth, we are best equipped to recognize the lies, resist the devil and do God's will.

Paul mentioned that the "belt of truth" is part of the whole armor of God in Ephesians 6:14. Soldiers in Paul's day wore belts to secure their clothing and hold weapons. The belt of truth has similar but expanded functions for spiritual warfare that include:

- **Sanctification:** The belt of truth sets us apart from people who don't follow God. Jesus prayed that God would sanctify us by the truth (the

- word): "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth" (John 17:17 [NIV](#)). To sanctify means to set apart for a special purpose and to purify. The truth helps us stay on mission for God and avoid falling back into sin's corruption.
- **Guidance:** The Holy Spirit uses the truth to guide us in whatever circumstances we're in. John wrote, "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come" (John 16:13 [NIV](#)). Just as communications are crucial on the physical battlefield, so is the Holy Spirit's guidance via truth on the spiritual battlefield.
 - **Intelligence & Discernment:** Intelligence data and its interpretation (i.e. discernment) can play a critical role in the outcome of military conflicts. God's word reveals truth that helps us decisively recognize the devil's lies in spiritual conflicts. Hebrews 4:12 [NIV](#) explains how the word reveals truth: "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." Armed with the truth of the word, we'll recognize the devil's lies for what they are.
 - **Battle readiness:** Belts were used in Bible times to secure loose garments so that a person could run and/or fight effectively (1 Kings 18:46, 2 Kings 4:29). The belts also provided a place to attach weapons (2 Samuel 20:8). When the enemy attacks us we may have to move quickly and use our spiritual weapons (Praise, Prayer, Sword of the Spirit, etc.) "on the run." The belt of truth enables us to move quickly and confidently without tripping into lies or losing our weapons.

Putting on the belt each day: There are some key actions we can take to put on our belt of truth securely each day. These include:

- **Speak it:** When we say we are putting on the belt of truth and believe it, the belt's function is maximized. Example words to speak:

"I put on the Belt of Truth. I believe that God's word is truth and I fill my mind with God's word. I have the Holy Spirit living in me, who will guide me in truth. The truth enables me to discern the devil's lies and avoid being taken captive to do his will."

- **Study the word:** Daily Bible study will help keep truth in the forefront of our minds (John 17:17). This is done by studying the Bible (see [quiet time](#)), memorizing scriptures and speaking verses applicable to the situations we face each day. Jesus said, "If you abide in My word, you are

My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32 [NKJV](#)). There is no substitute for Bible study during our quiet time with God. It's essential if we hope to grow closer to God and maintain victory over our old sinful habits.

- **Ask God to remind you of the truth:** The Holy Spirit, the "Spirit of Truth," will remind us of the truth and guide us in truth as we walk with God (John 14:17,26). In order for the Spirit to "remind" us of God's word, we have to have already read it or heard it. If we've done our part in abiding in God's word, we'll have maximum sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. A simple invitational prayer we can pray is:

"Heavenly Father, please remind me of your word today and guide me in truth by the Holy Spirit. Please help me hear, know and obey your voice in every situation. Please strengthen my ability to retain and recall your word as it applies to the situations I face. Thank you, Heavenly Father. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen."

Maintaining the Belt

To keep our belt of truth in great shape, we must keep our hearts pliable and obedient to God by clinging to his word. Our belt can become corrupted by the sin we commit and tolerate in our lives. For example, Joab's belt was stained by his murders of Abner and Amasa in 1 Kings 2:5.

When we give sin a protected place in our lives, we embrace the lies that the sin is based on. These lies are what corrupt our belt of truth. If we sin, we must return to God in repentance and the blood of Jesus will wash away the stains from our sins (1 John 1:7).

Battle Shoes

"And your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace" Ephesians 6:15 [NIV](#)

I chose to use the term "Battle Shoes" to identify the "readiness" that comes from the gospel of peace. It's important for us to understand exactly what Paul was talking about, so we can fully engage our faith when putting the battle shoes on. The Amplified translation of Ephesians 6:15 is helpful:

"And having shod your feet in preparation [to face the enemy with the firm-footed stability, the promptness, and the readiness produced by the good news] of the Gospel of peace" Ephesians 6:15 [AMP](#)

Let's explore the footwear analogy. When going to work, play, exercise or relax we usually put something on our feet that is appropriate. Each type of shoe provides a unique combination of benefits for the activity we're intending to do. Specifically, footwear provides:

- Protection
- Support
- Traction
- Performance
- Comfort



Footwear also bolsters our stamina to perform the activity we're going to do. For example, if you are going running on a hot day, you're likely to last only a few minutes on the hot asphalt without shoes. With shoes on, you can run on that asphalt much longer!

The spiritual footwear that comes from the "Gospel of Peace" gives us the firm-footed stability, promptness and readiness we'll need to face our agile adversaries. The term "Gospel of Peace" refers to the peace we have with God through Jesus: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1-2 [NIV](#)). (Other verses on our peace with God through Christ: [Isaiah 53:5](#), [Colossians 1:20](#), [Ephesians 2:13-22](#))

Since we have gained access to God through this peace, we can use his resources to fight the spiritual battles we face. Therefore, the gospel of peace extends our "battlefield endurance" by connecting us with God's protection, support, guidance and comfort at all times through the Holy Spirit.

Putting on the Battle Shoes

- **Speak It:** Even though our faith in Jesus secures our peace with God, we often don't feel that peace. It may even seem like God is not with us. In such times it is helpful to remember that we put the whole armor of God on *by faith*. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of

things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). We can't see our peace with God, but we believe we have it because God's word says we have it. When we confess that we are putting on the battle shoes (and the rest of the armor), we are *speaking them on* in faith. Here is an example prayer/declaration to do so:

"I shod my feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. I have peace with God through my faith in Jesus and have access to God. I have his resources at my disposal for the battles I may face today. Father, please guide my footsteps and secure me on your path of righteousness today. Thank you, Father!"

- **Learn God's word:** The Bible is the reference book for the Gospel of Peace. By studying the Bible and even memorizing key scripture passages, you will establish a foundation in the Gospel of Peace. You will be less likely to slip off God's path of truth. You will be firmly standing in good shoes! The psalmist declared in Psalm 119:165 [NKJV](#), "**Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.**"
- **Don't be anxious about anything. Take all your needs and concerns to God in prayer:** The devil will try to steal our peace, using the cares of the world, the desire for riches, fear and any other tool to get our minds off of God. If we give in and begin to worry and get anxious about things, we'll lose the protection that comes with God's peace. Paul wrote:

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7 [NIV](#))

The Sword of the Spirit

"Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." Ephesians 6:17 [NKJV](#)

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The Sword of the Spirit is a powerful weapon of spiritual warfare. The sword is formed by speaking God's word. When we use the sword properly, God's power and resources are available to us. In discussing the Sword of the Spirit, it is helpful to first examine the meaning of the Greek words *Logos* and *Rhema*, which are often used for the "word" of God.

Logos - the word of God (see [Strong's #3056](#)): *Logos* is often used to identify the written scriptures in the Bible, which were given to people under the inspiration of God (Timothy 3:16, 1 Peter 1:10-11). Collectively, the Bible, as God's "word," is the written, divine expression or revelation of God to humanity. Jesus completed this expression as the literal embodiment of God's word, *logos* ([John 1:1-5,14](#)).

Rhema - the word of God ([Strong's #4487](#)): *Rhema* is the spoken word of God. Strong's concordance says that *rhema* is "that which is or has been uttered by the living voice." *Rhema* carries a spiritual connotation that differentiates it from *logos*. It also bears application to the specific context of our lives. For example, we may be wrestling with an issue in our life and during our quiet time we read a verse that "speaks" directly to the situation we are dealing with. That portion of the scripture becomes a "*Rhema* word" from God for us regarding our situation. We can then stand in faith on the *Rhema* God has given us and confess it whenever the devil tries to attack us.

Another way of using the *Rhema* is to apply specific scriptures (*logos*) to the situations we are facing. This is perhaps the most common of way of diffusing temptations. While we may not have a special or emergent *Rhema* revelation from God regarding a temptation, we will likely have plenty of scriptures that we can speak that apply.

The Sword of the Spirit: *Rhema* is the Greek word used in the Sword of the Spirit passage (Ephesians 6:17 - "**..the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**"). Therefore, we use the Sword of the Spirit by:

1) Standing in faith on the word God has given us for our particular situation and confessing it in the face of the enemy's attacks

and/or

2) Speaking or singing scriptures (*logos*) that apply to the situation we are facing

As with the other pieces of the armor of God, the Sword of the Spirit relies on faith for its foundation. When our faith is based on the promises of God's word, our sword's "spiritual power link" to God is engaged. Jesus said, "**If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes**" (Mark 9:23 [NKJV](#)). Spoken in faith, the Sword of the Spirit is the truth that sets people free from the lies that hold them captive ([John 8:31-32](#), [Psalm 119:160](#), [John 17:17](#)).

From the very beginning, God has spoken words that have powerfully influenced everything that exists. For example, God created the heavens and

earth by speaking them into existence! The Bible says, "By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the *word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible" (Hebrews 11:3 [NASB](#), **rhema*). Since God created us in his likeness, we too have the ability to release power through speech. For example, our words can bring life and death (Proverbs 18:21). They can build people up or tear them down (James 3).

Jesus used the Sword of the Spirit in resisting Satan in the wilderness ([Luke 4](#)). Jesus responded to each of the temptations by quoting scripture. The scripture he chose revealed and destroyed the lies of each temptation. In the same way, we can use scripture to destroy the lies that tempt us. (see [lies page](#) for examples)

Other Sword of the Spirit examples:

- Praying the word (Acts 4:24-31): A group of believers prayed the word and the result was that the place was shaken, they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly
- Preaching the word (Acts 13:38-43)
- Answering questions with the word (Acts 13:46-48)
- Singing the word (Acts 16:25-34)

Basic Training: When using the Sword of the Spirit, we need to ensure that we are using the scripture in the proper context from where it was taken. In order to understand the context, we'll need to learn the Bible. Bible study not only familiarizes us with the word, but also builds our faith up (Romans 10:17) and sharpens our discernment skills for spiritual warfare (Hebrews 4:12).

- **Have daily quiet times:** The best method for learning the Bible is to study it each day in a quiet time with God (see [Quiet Time](#)). Specifically, you'll want to learn about God's promises to you, your identity in Jesus Christ and the guidelines for holy living.
- **Memorize key verses:** As you study the Bible, you'll also want to pick out verses to memorize. Scripture memory helps improve your swordsmanship in rejecting temptations. It usually requires persistence and effort, but it is well worth it.

NavPress offers a great product called the [Topical Memory System](#) that is very good for scripture memory. You can also devise your own system. For example, I write down verses that I notice during my quiet time readings on 3 X 5 note cards. On the card I include the reference and the topic. I review the cards throughout the day as often as possible. After I have mastered twelve cards, I

start a new group. The key is to keep the scripture in front of you as much as possible each day. You are basically programming your mind with God's word.

- **Practice:** As you face temptations each day, try to recall the verses you have learned that apply to the temptation. You can ask the Holy Spirit to help you remember them. One of the Holy Spirit's functions is to remind you of the word (John 14:26). The more you have memorized, the more verses the Spirit has to help you with! The more you speak the scriptures that come to mind, the more you reinforce them in your memory.

We've collected and categorized verses to help you get started in using the Sword of the Spirit effectively. Please use the following pagelinks to our website for:

- [Verses for comfort](#)
- [Verses on Giving](#)
- [Verses for Healing](#)
- [Verses for Hope](#)
- [Verses for Faith](#)
- [Verses for Fighting Fear](#)
- [Verses on Rebuking](#)
- [Verses for Temptation](#)
- [Verses for Spiritual Warfare - Defensive](#)
- [Verses for Spiritual Warfare - Offensive](#)

Prayer in the Spirit

Prayer in the Spirit is an important, ongoing activity of spiritual warfare. Paul included it in his discussion of the whole armor of God in Ephesians 6:18 and Jude mentioned it in his epistle:

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints" Ephesians 6:18 [NKJV](#)

"But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. ²¹Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life" Jude 20-21 [NIV](#)

Our Role: There are two participants involved with prayer in the Spirit - the Holy Spirit and us. Our part is to pray "always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit" and "to be watchful with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints." This does not mean that we have to be on our knees all day and night with eyes closed in prayer. Prayer in the Spirit is an inner activity of the mind and spirit where we maintain a type of open dialogue with God through the Holy Spirit. Outward actions such as bowing the head and closing the eyes may help us focus better on God, but it's the inner communication with God that matters most.

In order to always be in prayer, we'll need to be in control of our thoughts. When our thoughts are stuck on sinful fantasies, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to be in prayer. This is one of the reasons why we are to use the spiritual weapons God gives us to continually be "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:5 KJV). (see [control thoughts](#))

The definition of supplication is "asking for humbly or earnestly, as by praying" (*American Heritage Dictionary*). Prayer is an acknowledgement that we are not in control and need God to intervene. This attitude opens the door for communication with God, who can direct and apply our prayers in ways far beyond our understanding. Therefore, when we pray to God, we should do so earnestly in humility, inviting the Holy Spirit to work in the situation as God wills. It is really that simple.

The Spirit's Role: Once we've prayed, the Spirit intercedes for us and pleads in our behalf according to God's will. Paul described how the Spirit intercedes in Romans 8:26-27:

"²⁶So too the [Holy] Spirit comes to our aid and bears us up in our weakness; for we do not know what prayer to offer nor how to offer it worthily as we ought, but the Spirit Himself goes to meet our supplication and pleads in our behalf with unspeakable yearnings and groanings too deep for utterance.

²⁷And He Who searches the hearts of men knows what is in the mind of the [Holy] Spirit [what His intent is], because the Spirit intercedes and pleads [before God] in behalf of the saints according to and in harmony with God's will."

Romans 8:26-27 [AMP](#)

Leaving prayer concerns in God's hands can be challenging for us if we're prone to being in control and thinking we know what God should do. Too often prayer becomes us telling God what to do, i.e. praying *our* will instead of *his* will be done (Matthew 6:10). In situations where God's will is unclear, we should take care not to presume his will. Praying in the Spirit doesn't require that we speak intelligible words, but simply that we lift up the situation to God, and trust that the Holy Spirit will intercede perfectly for us.

Speaking in tongues is often used in prayer in the Spirit. Tongues is a vehicle by which our spirit prays, while our mind may or may not understand what we are praying. Paul described this in 1 Corinthians 14:14-15 [NIV](#): "For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. ¹⁵So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind." Some people refer to tongues as a special "prayer language." Paul mentioned that he frequently spoke in tongues and wished that other believers would do the same ([1 Corinthians 14:5,18](#)). (see [tongues](#) page for more info)

What prayer in the Spirit accomplishes: There are some important things that happen when we pray in the Spirit. Specifically, prayer in the Spirit:

- Perfects our prayer (Romans 8:26)
- Takes our case directly before God (Romans 8:27)
- Increases effectiveness of prayer for others (intercessory prayer) (Romans 8:27)
- Aligns our prayer with God's will (Romans 8:26-27)

Wrap-up

Now that you have studied each piece of the armor, you may find this summary prayer helpful for putting on the whole armor each day:

"Heavenly Father, I praise and worship you because you are God. I am honored to be your servant and I take my stand today against the devil and his schemes against me, my family and my ministry. Father, as I take up each piece of the armor, please secure it in place on me.

I take up the [shield of faith](#) and extend it over myself. It extinguishes all the fiery darts of the evil one.

I put on the [helmet of salvation](#), which protects my mind from the enemy's attacks. I have the mind of Christ."

I put on the [breastplate of righteousness](#), which covers my body with the righteousness of God. In Christ, every foothold of evil has been washed away and I am clothed in righteousness!

I gird my loins with the [belt of truth](#). Your word, O God, is truth. Father, sanctify me according to your word and remind me through the Holy Spirit of the truth that destroys the lies of sin.

I [shod my feet](#) with the preparation of the Gospel of peace. I have peace with God through the blood of Jesus. I have favor with God and with man. I walk in my inheritance as an adopted son of God and have authority over evil in Jesus' name.

I will use the [Sword of the Spirit](#) by speaking the Word of God as it applies to whatever situation I may face today. Father, please remind me of your Word via the Holy Spirit.

I will continue to [pray in the Spirit](#) throughout the day, and intercede for all Christians as the Holy Spirit prompts me. I believe that the Holy Spirit is interceding on my behalf according to my prayers.

Thank you, Father, for the whole armor of God. Please surround me with your hedge of protection as I move forward on the spiritual battlefield today. I praise and worship you now and forever, Amen."