

FULL ARMOUR

THE LESSON: EPHESIANS 6

Decades into his ministry, the Apostle Paul found himself in prison in Rome, and it is there we believe he wrote his epistle to the Ephesians.

Through this letter, Paul sought to help believers to see their lives and their world through a heavenly lens. He wanted them (and us) to understand that their purpose was far beyond the earthly concerns of daily life. He wanted them to know, too, that God had equipped them to fulfill their purpose both as individuals and as a Church.

In the final chapter of his letter, Paul draws upon battle imagery to illustrate his point. This would have resonated both with those readers who were familiar with the Old Testament, and with those readers who were familiar with the Roman military of that day. He uses this image of full armour (“panoplia” is the Greek word) to describe how God provides us with all of the spiritual tools we need to be victorious in living for him each day.

AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Each morning this week, take five or ten minutes to spend in spontaneous prayer. Close your eyes and have a conversation with God: Tell him whatever is on your mind, whatever your concerns are for the day ahead, and ask him to equip you for whatever you will face.

- AND/OR -

Take some time to pray through this collect, pausing to reflect after each phrase.

Almighty and everlasting God, who art always more ready to hear than we to pray, and art wont to give more than either we desire or deserve: Pour down upon us the abundance of thy mercy; forgiving us those things whereof our conscience is afraid, and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, but through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, thy Son, our Lord. Amen. (COLLECT FOR THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY, BCP

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EPHESIANS 6: **ALL KINDS, ALL TIMES**

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, ¹⁹and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.