

Colossians 3:16

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another
in all wisdom,
singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*



The Whole Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-20 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For 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. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying 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, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

The Sword of the Spirit

The last weapon the apostle mentions as belonging to the whole armor of God, the sword of the Spirit, amplifies his instruction of just how the believer can “stand against the schemes of the devil” (v. 11). This militaristic language applies not to a physical sword, but, rather, to a sword belonging to the domain of the Spirit. “For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds” (2 Cor. 10:3-4). The fact that the Lord has been pleased to give us a sword with which to battle our enemy assumes that we will need it. This should inform our understanding of the character of the Christian life. Until we have gone on to our reward with the rest of the church triumphant, we should be prepared to engage in spiritual warfare here alongside other members of the church militant—this is an inescapable reality in this age. It wasn’t without purpose that the same apostle told the church that “through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). But thanks be to God, our great King, who does not leave us, His loyal subjects, defenseless. “His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Pet. 1:3-4). Our Lord Himself models the supreme usefulness of the “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” during His encounter with Satan in the wilderness (Matt. 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13). Three times He combats the satanic deception with the Old Testament Scripture, resulting in the devil’s departure. If the Son of God saw this piece of armament as essential for His encounter with Satan, how much more should we, adopted sons and daughters of God, do the same in our spiritual battles? Similarly, if it is inconceivable that a soldier would enter into fierce battle without their weapon, especially when they have free access to that weapon, then why would we allow ourselves to be at such a disadvantage in our temptations and trials? William Gurnall (1616-1679) says, “A pilot without his chart, a scholar without his book, and a soldier without his sword, are alike ridiculous.” This week, may God illumine our hearts and minds to see our need to take up, not just the sword of the Spirit, but the whole armor of God!