

Spiritual Warfare Lesson Two

The Breastplate of Righteousness

Ephesians 6:14b NASB

...and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The traditional way this weapon is presented is that if you live righteously, you will be able to withstand the enemy. The problem with this is none of us lives perfectly righteous. This means we would never have total confidence in standing against the enemy or in believing in God's promises.

I Our righteousness (right-standing with God) comes from God on the basis of faith in Jesus Christ and not by following laws.

A Our righteousness is by God's grace through faith.

Philippians 3:7-9

But whatever things were gain to me (speaking of religious acts and pedigree), those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, ⁹ and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith.

Romans 10:3

For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

Titus 3:4-7

But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, ⁵ He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that being justified (made righteous) by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Romans 10:10

For with the heart one believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

B Righteousness is a gift.

Romans 5:17 *For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.*

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

1 Corinthians 1:30

But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption.

Romans 10:4

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

- C Righteousness is not based on our obedience, but the obedience of Jesus.**

Romans 5:19

For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous.

- 1 Through Adam's disobedience, we were made sinners.**
- 2 Through Christ's obedience, we were made righteous.**

☺ **NOTICE: We are righteous, NOT SINNERS.** ☺

- D Jesus became sin for us, so that we could become His righteousness.**

2 Corinthians 5:21

He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

- E Not only are we made righteous initially, but we are perfected the same way, by grace through faith, not our own religious self-effort (the flesh).**

Galatians 3:3

Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

Philippians 1:6

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

- II Knowing that we are righteous before God APART from our own righteousness is a breastplate for us. When we receive the abundance of His grace and the gift of righteousness, we reign in life. This means we are victorious in life.**

Romans 5:17

For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

- A When we know our righteousness is not based on us, but on Jesus, we have rest. If we think it is based on our own righteousness, we will live either in pride (thinking we make ourselves righteous before God) or condemnation (knowing that we could never live up to His perfection).**
- B When we know our relationship with God is not based on our works of righteousness nor is it diminished when we fall short, we will know that our fellowship with God is never hindered ever. This gives us confidence before Him in prayer.**

C The enemy cannot condemn us or steal our confidence with God. He is defeated before he tries. No one can take our righteousness or our confidence. He will try. Religious “leaders” will try. **HOWEVER**, our breastplate of righteousness will protect us if we stand!

D Righteousness is also our weapon.

2 Corinthians 6:4,7

But in everything commending ourselves as servants of God... by the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and the left,

Romans 10:6-8

But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down), ⁷or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)." ⁸But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART"-- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,

III Our breastplate is also called the breastplate of faith and love.

1 Thessalonians 5:8

But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love.

A *This gives us a clearer picture of our breastplate. There is really no contradiction. We are made righteous by grace (God's love toward us) by faith in Jesus. By faith in Jesus, we are made righteous. Thus, our protection is based on God's love for us demonstrated through Jesus by grace and receive by faith (belief in Him).*

B *This gives a lovely picture. God loves us. We are righteous because of this love through our faith in Him.*

C *The breastplate protects our heart, the place from which we love and are loved. If we know and stand firm in our righteousness before God, we will be free to love and be loved by God and enabled to love each other.*