

Almost As Easy As 1-2-3



Ephesians 6:12-24 ¹

It's Almost As Easy As 1-2-3

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Detailed Study Notes

This is not the Easy As 1-2-3 Format. It was determined that the Detailed Study Notes would be beneficial to you and are included here in their entirety. If you haven't checked out the Detailed Study Notes before, this will give you an idea of what you've been missing. We hope you enjoy this study.

Ephesians 6:12-24 ²

Verse 12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

12. **We do not fight against people. They may exasperate us by teaching things that are not true. They may persecute us for teaching what is true. But the enemy behind it all is not flesh and blood.**
 - a. **The evil rulers don't show themselves physically to you, but they reveal themselves through bad teaching, unbelief, mental pressure, depression, saying that God isn't concerned with your situation or that you must do more to be right with God or to make the situation right.**

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Thayer defines (struggle) as follows: "a contest between two in which each endeavors to throw the other, and which is decided when the victor is able to press and hold down his prostrate antagonist, namely, hold him down with his hand upon his neck." -Wuest

- b. The idea of “wrestling” (struggling) that Paul uses to describe our warfare brought a vivid picture to the minds of the Ephesians.**

When we consider that the loser in a Greek wrestling contest had his eyes gouged out with resulting blindness for the rest of his days, we can form some conception of the Ephesian Greek's reaction to Paul's illustration. -Wuest

- c. Often, when considering the topic of spiritual warfare, we see ourselves as fighting demonic forces. We need to understand that Satan has been defeated by Jesus. We simply stand in His victory when these forces oppose us. It is foolishness to think that somehow we could defeat even one demon. We couldn't. Thankfully, we don't have to. Jesus has already conquered the devil.**

Colossians 2:13-15

And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

- d. These forces come against us in the form of lies.**
- 1) They challenge who God is—His character and Godly traits.**
 - 2) They challenge what God has said and promised.**
 - 3) They challenge who Satan is—defeated.**
 - 4) They make lying accusations against us so that we do not walk in the freedom from sin we've been given and so that we walk in sin consciousness.**
 - 5) They try to keep us from walking in the truth and power of the gospel.**
 - 6) They seek to deceive and confuse by mixing lies with the truth.**
- e. We do not battle people, nor do we battle as mere human beings.**

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, ⁵casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, ⁶and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.

- 1) Even though we aren't battling people, we are wrestling with beliefs that are opposed to the truth, which normally proceed from the mouths of other human beings.
- 2) For example, when we share the gospel of God's grace with those who oppose it, we are doing spiritual warfare in that we are opposing the FALSE TEACHINGS they are speaking. However, we need to keep in mind constantly that we are not warring against the person who needs to be set free.
 - a. We pray against the demonic forces blinding the eyes.
 - b. We speak the truth.
 - c. God works on that heart and mind.
 - d. The person then chooses to respond or reject.
- 3) In this way, we can continue to walk in love and relationship—by not “making it personal”—at least from our perspective.

Verse 13

Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

13. This verse is often used to put the burden back on ourselves, but nothing could be further from the truth.
 - a. “Therefore” is referring to the previous verse. We don't wrestle humanly, so we need/have spiritual armor, not human armor.
 - b. Take up is analambano: From G303 and G2983; to take up: - receive up, take (in, unto, up).

Take unto you—assume, as provided and prepared for you, the whole armor of God; which armor if you put on and use, you shall be both invulnerable and immortal. -Adam Clarke's Commentary.

- 1) We are to receive God's armor.
MAJOR ERROR: Many believers view God's armor in terms of their behavior. For example, when they see themselves putting on the breastplate of righteousness, they think in terms of their

- own right living. Thus, they are putting their trust in their own righteousness, and not in the fact that they are righteous by faith apart from their own performance.
- 2) This can leave us with a sense of insecurity because we are putting our trust in our own behavior, which we instinctively know could never be perfect enough or strong enough. Only in understanding that our armor is the grace of God received by faith can we confidently be protected and stand with confidence.
 - 3) As we look at each piece of armor, let us reflect upon Christ's completed work, not our own efforts.
 - a. We do not put on and take off our armor. We put it on, keep it on, and stand.

*Thus, the Christian is to take up and put on all the armor of God as **a once-for-all act** and keep that armor on during the entire course of his life.-Wuest*

- 4) We take up the FULL armor of God.
- b. "Having done all" refers to taking up the full armor.

*And having conquered all, stand.
-Adam Clarke's Commentary.*

- 1) The "everything" that we have done is to rest in Him.
 - 2) When we have on His armor, we look just like Him.
- c. "The day" refers to when we are attacked.

Wuest Expanded Translation

On this account, take - to yourself at once and once for all, the complete armor of God in order that you may be able to resist in the day, the pernicious one, and having achieved all things, to stand.-Wuest

- d. **After we have received and put on this armor, we stand firm.**
Webster's defines "steadfast" as "firmly fixed in place; not subject to change, firm in belief, determination, or adherence."
- 1) We show the rulers and authorities the wisdom of God by standing in His victory.
 - 2) We stand in the finished work of Jesus and in the perfection of what God has done.
 - 3) We stand in His truth and Grace, we stand in the truth of who we are in Him and who He is in us.
 - 4) We stand in the great love with which He loves us.
 - 5) We stand in THE Grace which He lavished on us.

Verse 14 a

Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH,

14. **The way we stand firm is the passage that follows—putting on the whole armor of God.**
 - a. **“With our loins girded up with truth” is an indication of our readiness.**

*“We can trace the origin of this phrase from the Semitic tribes of antiquity that roamed and dwelled in the Orient, who wore loose-fitting robes against the heat of the desert. Whenever they **traveled or worked** in the fields, they had to tighten or gird their robes about their loins. Otherwise their loose fitting garments would interfere with their freedom of motion. It was therefore common practice for the early inhabitants of the Orient to wrap their flowing robes around their loins before they went to work - 'girding up their loins'.³*

- 1) **With what do we gird up our loins? With truth.**
 - a) **This is not speaking of how honest we are in our lives. This is a weapon we RECEIVE.**
 - b) **Jesus is the truth.**

John 14:6

Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

- c) **The truth is the gospel.**

Ephesians 1:13

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise

³ <http://mmdelrosario.hubpages.com/hub/gird-up-your-loins-and-other-idioms>

d) Knowing the truth sets us free.

John 8:31

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ⁸ And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

2) Girding up our loins with truth has to do with being armed with Jesus Himself and the truth of the gospel.

a) Many believers today have a warped view of the gospel, seeing it only as something for the lost to obtain salvation; however, the good news of God's grace is also for those who believe. The good news is EVERYTHING Jesus accomplished for us. Here, we see it is also one of our weapons.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the truth of God; unless this be known and conscientiously believed no man can enter the spiritual warfare with any advantage or prospect of success. -Adam Clarke's Commentary.

By this alone we discover who our enemies are, and how they come on to attack us; and by this we know where our strength lies; and, as the truth is great, and must prevail, we are to gird ourselves with this against all false religion, and the various winds of doctrine by which cunning men and insidious devils lie in wait to deceive.

-Adam Clarke's Commentary.

Verse 14b

And HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

b. "Put on" is "enduo", "having clothed yourself with". Notice the past tense.

1) The breastplate covered the vital organs such as the heart, lungs, stomach, etc. Without it, a soldier would be vulnerable to attack. His righteousness PROTECTS US.

2) We RECEIVE this weapon and PUT IT ON. We don't generate it. When we received Christ, we put on His righteousness. This is not referring to our own right living based on laws, but on our faith in Him. We are righteous by faith, not works.

Philippians 3:7-9

*But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ ⁹ **and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith.***

- 3) **The breastplate we wear is the gift of righteousness that is ours in Christ. By this gift, we reign in this life.**

Romans 5:17

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

- 4) **If we think of ourselves as “sinners” and not as “the righteousness of God, we will be defeated continually.**
b) **Either we will think we are righteous in our own doing and fall as a result of pride,**
c) **Or we will be aware of our unrighteousness and feel defeated.**

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**.*

- 5) **The breastplate we wear is the very righteousness of God.**

2 Corinthians 5:21

He made him who knew no sin to be a sin-offering for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

- 6) **In another verse, Paul speaks of the “breastplate of faith and love”. Either this is an additional piece of armor, or faith and love represent our righteousness.**

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 a lovely picture. God loves us. We are righteous because of this love through our faith in Him.
- b) 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.

Verse 15

And having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;

15. “Having our feet shod” means that we have our shoes on, ready to go—another expression of readiness. We are prepared to share the gospel of peace (this is the same as the gospel of the grace of God).

Roman 10:14-15

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written:

“How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace,

Who bring glad tidings of good things!

- a. This “peace” does not refer to our general peace, though certainly Jesus has promised us peace. Rather, it is speaking of the gospel of peace, the peace we have as a result of being made righteous.

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

- b. We need to have God’s perspective when it comes to our feet.

Romans 16:20

And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.

Genesis 3:14

So the Lord God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust all the days of your life.

Verse 16

In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

16. **The Shield of Faith—can we ever understand the power of the faith we put in Jesus? It is not our determination or strength, but our trust in Him that makes us strong. If we are left with only our own power, we will be defeated, but when we take up the shield of faith in Him, we overcome all the enemy throws at us.**
- a. ***Above all (in addition to all), (Επι πασιν, over all the rest of the armor), -Adam Clarke's Commentary.***

The word "shield" used here (thureon) designated the shield of the heavy infantry, a large, oblong one, four by two and one half feet, sometimes curved on the inner side.-Wuest

- b. **Our faith HAS overcome the world.**

1 John 5:4

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

- c. **The word of faith is what we preach—the gospel.**

Romans 10:8

But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach)

- d. **By the hearing of this faith, miracles happen.**

Galatians 3:5

Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Verse 17a

And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION,

17. **The helmet covers your brain. Some think of this armor as that which protects our mind, and this is true. Yet, our brain is the control center for the entire body. When we are SURE of our salvation, everything else "works". When we can rest in the promise of not only our present**

salvation but our future salvation at His coming, we can overcome anything.

- a. **Knowing that this present state of life is not “it”, knowing that this mortal shall put on immortality, we overcome.**

1 Thessalonians 5:8

But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation.

Romans 8:18

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Verse 17b

And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Normally, we instantly think of the Bible. However, it is more likely that Paul meant the gospel.

- b. **The “word of God” is very frequently used to refer to the gospel that people received and were saved. We are to receive the gospel and then speak it forth.**

Acts 8:4-8, 12, 14-15 NASB

*Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began **proclaiming Christ** to them.⁶ The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs which he was performing.⁷ For in the case of many who had unclean spirits, they were coming out of them shouting with a loud voice; and many who had been paralyzed and lame were healed.⁸ So there was much rejoicing in that city.¹² But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.¹⁴ Now when the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent them Peter and John,¹⁵ who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 11:1

Now the apostles and brethren who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God.

Acts 12:24

But the **word of God** grew and multiplied.

Acts 13:5

And when they arrived in Salamis, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews.

1 Peter 1:23

Having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever.

Acts 13:46-48

Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, "It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of **everlasting life**, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.⁴⁷ For so the Lord has commanded us:

'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles,

That you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

⁴⁸ Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

- c. **The preaching of the gospel proclaims God's wisdom even to evil forces.**

Ephesians 3:8-10

To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things,¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

An ability to quote this on proper occasions, and especially in times of temptation and trial, has a wonderful tendency to cut in pieces the snares of the adversary. -Adam Clarke's Commentary.

Verse 18–20

With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, ¹⁹and *pray* on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in *proclaiming* it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

18. We don't always know how to pray for others. Here we get a view of Paul's prayer requests. This is appropriate to pray for anyone laboring in the gospel.
19. That they will have the right words to say and that they will make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel (to the non-believers and to the saved).
20. Paul is in chains for proclaiming the gospel.
 - d. Notice how many references are made to speaking (other than praying): utterance, opening of my mouth, make known with boldness, proclaiming, speak boldly, as I ought to speak.
 - e. He mentions twice that he would proclaim the gospel with boldness.
 - f. "Boldness" speaks of confidence, assurance, and frankness.

"Boldness" is parrēsia, literally, "all speech." The word means "fearless, confident freedom in speaking."-Wuest

Verses 21–22

But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. ²²I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts.

21. Paul calls Tychicus a beloved brother and faithful minister. What a commendation.
22. Paul trusted Tychicus to bring news about himself to the Ephesians for the purpose of comforting them about Paul (since he was in chains).

Verse 23–24

Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible *love*.

23. Paul sends peace and love with faith to the Ephesians, and he does this as if from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
24. It would be easy to misunderstand verse 24 to mean that only those who loved the Lord with incorruptible love were going to receive this grace. He is not qualifying this blessing. Those who “love the Lord with incorruptible love” are believers.
 - a. *Incorruptible love: aphtharsia, incorruptibility; generally unending existence; (figuratively) genuineness: - immortality, incorruption, sincerity.*

1 John 4:19

We love, because He first loved us.

Coming Up Next

In the next lesson on Ephesians, we will look at the topic “Toward a Grace-Based Marriage.” It is located on June 27th. Enjoy!