

makes you free, you

Therefore if the Son



shall be free indeed.

Voice of Freedom

A Ministry of Cedar Valley Community Church

Prison Ministry Good News Letter

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ABOVE ALL, STAND

by Roger

May the Peace and Grace of God be with you all. Be assured of His love for you. God formed each one of us in our mother's womb. He knows our strengths and weaknesses to the n'th degree. Do you know your strengths and weaknesses? Would you rather do evil things that seem fun or would you prefer to follow Jesus in the joy of walking a straight line according to His truth? He said it well in John 3:19, "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men LOVED darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." I confess, at one time I loved to walk in the darkness of sexual sins, money, alcohol, lies, and you name it rather than walk the good, straight line. In my mind was the question, "How could I have fun and enjoy life so much if I did not walk in the darkness?" I walked in deep darkness and ended up in prison where I asked myself, "If I had walked in the light of Christ Jesus, would I now be sitting on my bunk with razor wire surrounding my limited world?" **God sees us living in sin and knows that our weakness for sin is a major stumbling block. This is why He gives us offense armor - the way to shield us from evil** as we charge forward in Christ's name, conquering evils aimed at us from satan and this world. By God's grace He gave us six armors and a seventh element to hold them together. The seventh element is the glue of prayer. We must put on His armor to overcome our desire to fight evil by our own might. On our own we will fail.

Apostle Paul laid out the way for us to walk a straight line in the light and power of Christ Jesus. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For 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. 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. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying

always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all preservation and supplication for all the Saints—" Paul repeats the phrase, "Put on the WHOLE armor of God." If part of the armor is missing, it leaves a vulnerable hole where satan can whack us. Paul tells us to be strong, not strong in ourselves but in the Lord, for it is by His power over death and over satan that we can be strong. Next Paul tells us how satan will attack us, so that we do not spend time looking for which way he is going to come after us. Paul says it is by the wiles of satan, in other words by shrewd, devious, distorted schemes. Satan can take what is wrong and twist it in our minds so that we think it is truth. Satan takes the world of darkness over which he is the ruler, lays it at our feet and tells us it is all ours . . . so enjoy life; and then satan repeats his first lie told to humans, "You will not surely die." (Genesis 3: 4b)

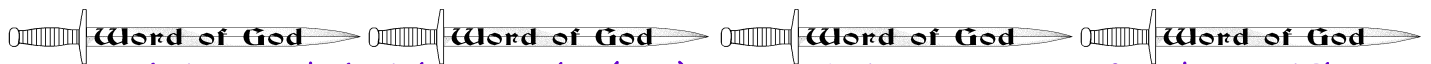


In Genesis we read that God created the light where darkness once ruled. God separated it. There are opposites of all things. Examples are Light/darkness, good/evil, right/wrong, love/hate, and compassion/iniquity. I believe this is why Paul told us we fight against what we do not see. We do not fight against flesh but the craftiness of sinful living that satan implants in our minds to commit. We choose to walk in light or choose to walk in darkness, do what is good or we do what is evil. You cannot choose to practice both. Perfect

living is not the goal, but the perfect choice is of repeatedly choosing to pursue Jesus, the light. Paul tells us that evil has great power, rules over the earth, and fills the air around us. Satan's power is the second greatest power in the world. **I can with great joy tell you that the first and greatest power is the power of Christ Jesus. Christ declared His truth to all the earth, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world!" (John 16:33)**

This leads us into the first part of our armor, the truth. Jesus told us the truth right up front — we will have troubles, trials, and tribulations. Satan lies and says, "Follow me! Life will be clear sailing, and you will have the time of your life, for you surely will not die." Jesus is Truth, and He says, "Follow Me and I will give you life eternal with Me in unbelievable peace and joy. Or you may choose to follow satan and die a horrible death lasting for eternity." We must gird ourselves with Jesus' truth so that we will know the outcome of the battle before we fight it.

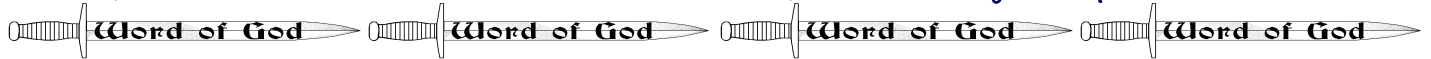
Truth is mightier than eloquence; the spirit stronger than genius; faith greater than learning. — Martin Luther



ICIW Ladies: may the Lord bless you until we (CVCC) meet again Friday evening, October 23 in the Sacred Place.

Mt. Pleasant Men: Worship with Heart Surrender Ministry Wednesday September 16 and 30, 6 p.m. in the Chapel.

Everyone: Remember to invite friends and new inmates to your Christ Living Worship Services and Events.



We must put on the breastplate of righteousness. Righteousness is holiness, and when we cover our heart with holiness, then the rotting stench of wickedness cannot surround it.

We must plant our feet in the gospel of peace. Peace happens when we are not under God's wrath for our sins. Jesus took care of that on the cross. If God's wrath is gone, we are at peace with God; and if we are at peace with God, then we can proudly stand firm in the knowledge that God is on our side. **It is with God's truth that we are not alone in our battle.** Remember Paul's words: "Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might!"



Paul said "above all" take the shield of faith with you. It is by the shield of faith, that we know Jesus is the beloved, begotten Son of God. God reveals Himself through Jesus and reveals that Jesus died for our sins, shedding His blood in the battle with satan for the remission of our sins. After three days, Jesus overcame the power of death that satan thought he would be able to hold over us. Jesus blew death away, rose up from the grave, and triumphantly ascended to His throne in Heaven. Know that satan will keep at us until the day we go live with the Lord. Satan's fiery darts are adsorbed by Christ Jesus, who did not die. His shield of faith is essential for protecting us from all sorts of temptation darts that evil will shoot our way. It is by the shield of faith in Christ Jesus that He gives us His strength to overcome temptations. The strength of Jesus is in our faith, believing that He walked on earth as a man, withstood every conceivable temptation known to man, did not ever sin, and overcame death. I want to learn from Him and try my very best to follow so that I may not sin. Faith is our Hope of things not seen in the power of the cross, in the power of the risen Lord of life, and in the power of complete freedom from any more temptations when the time comes for us to live with Jesus for all eternity.

We need the helmet of salvation, and we must never take it off, even when we sleep. The

moment we let our guard down and believe we have won the battle, satan will strike and can cause a mortal blow to our head. Satan has been defeated; he has no power over Christ Jesus, for Jesus won the battle and secured our salvation. When satan sees our helmet of salvation, he is reminded once again that he is finished, defeated; and death to him and all who follow will come as surely as the sun rises from the East.

Our sword is the very WORD of God. God's word will slay satan's schemes and temptations. Have you read about when Jesus faced the temptations of satan and satan tried to spew lies and twisted deceit into Jesus' mind? Jesus pierced satan's heart with the words of His Father, God. Jesus quoted the truth of God's word to satan and disarmed him by the power of the Spirit of God. When you see satan's fiery dart of temptation aimed your way, face it and repeat the words of Jesus to satan. I suggest arming yourself with verses like 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15, Colossians 1:19-22; 2:13-15. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you to Bible verses that strengthen your armor, comfort you, and lead you away from temptation.

Finally, Paul tells us about the glue that holds the armor together, prayer. Pray and pray and pray, not only for yourself but for all who are under attack from satan. **Pray for wisdom to know the difference between the twisted lies of satan and the truth of God our loving Father. Pray for strength to stand strong in the conviction that old friends without Christ Jesus will do you no good, that a joint will give you no peace of mind, and that the lusts of this world will lead to destruction.**

Remember, "Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as Jesus is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil." (1 John 3:7-8)

- Roger -

If you are not on our mailing list and would like to be, or if for any reason you would like to be taken off, please send a note to: Voice of Freedom, Cedar Valley Community Church, 3520 Ansborough Av., Waterloo, IA 50701. (Also available in Spanish)

