



GOD

THE
ARMOUR
OF

PUT ON THE
FULL ARMOUR OF GOD,
SO THAT YOU CAN TAKE
YOUR STAND AGAINST
THE DEVIL'S SCHEMES.

EPHESIANS 6:11

THE ARMOUR OF GOD



HELMET OF SALVATION



BELT OF TRUTH



SHIELD OF FAITH



SWORD OF THE SPIRIT



BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS



BOOTS OF PEACE



INTRODUCTION TO **EPHESIANS**

The aim of this introduction is to give a very brief overview of Ephesians, so that what we cover in 6:10-20 is within the context of the whole book.

Each chapter is overflowing with rich theology, so our aim is to bring together all that richness through three words. This will obviously mean missing out certain things in each chapter, but our aim is clarity and simplicity.

EPHESIANS 1

CHOSEN (1:4-5, 11)

The Father's pre-creation plan is to form a people of his very own, who reflect the character of his Son.

The doctrine of election is taught throughout the whole Bible and when properly understood will lead our young people to praise not pride. The natural reaction of most young people is to think of it as a hard and harsh doctrine.

The doctrine of election highlights two fundamental truths about human beings.

1. Mankind is utterly helpless and hopeless
2. God is our only hope

When election is properly understood it has two positive outcomes for the Christian.

1. You are humbled by God's grace and sovereign choice
2. You know you are utterly secure, because it's down to God's initiative and power

APPLICATION

Our salvation is based upon God's choice not ours. This humbles our pride and gives us great security.

LOVED (1:5-9)

The Nature of The Father's Love

We now move from the act of God choosing to investigate his motive.

1:5 – The Father Pleasure and Will

The Father adopts us, not because he has to, or merely because of our great need. He chooses to adopt us because it causes Him immense pleasure.

1:6 – The Father's Glorious Free Grace

God gives His grace freely, through the one He loves

1:7-8 – The Father's Lavished Grace

God's grace is inexhaustible, as He lavishes it upon us, with all of His wisdom and perfection.

1:9 – The Father's Good Pleasure

We began with the pleasure of God in choosing to love us, and that's where we finish.

APPLICATION

Our salvation is based upon the strength and depth of God's love not ours. He reaches down to hold our hand, and therefore the grip is eternally secure.

ADOPTED (1:5,7)

Many Christians fail to understand the radical truth of what redemption and adoption actually mean. To be adopted and redeemed by God means a complete change of status.

Adopted into Sonship

Brought in and therefore part of God's family forever.

The fact that we are adopted, must signify that we once belonged to someone else. Next session we will learn what our position was before our adoption.

It's a change of status not nature

We have moved from being outside of God's family to being part of it. The change of status is wholly down to God choosing to adopt us, which makes our status eternally secure.

Our redemption is through the death of the Lord Jesus. Our change of status is therefore wholly dependent upon God's redemption and not our effort, wisdom, intelligence, humility, race, social standing or any other factor that we could possibly dream of.

APPLICATION

Our salvation is a change of status, secured by God's choice to adopt and redeem us.

EPHESIANS 2

DEATH (2:1-3)

Our first parents chose to step away from the source of all life, into the realm of the spiritual dead. From now on mankind will be marked by spiritual death *Genesis 3:8, Eph 2:1-3*.

Our nature is now marked by spiritual death. It's not something we do, but something we are. This is our spiritual state, nature, being.

Our lives and behaviour flow from who we are. Our nature is marked by spiritual death; therefore, our behaviour will be marked by disobedience. This disobedience may manifest itself in hedonism or religious behaviour, but both are ways of gratifying our sinful nature.

APPLICATION

- Accept God's diagnosis of who you are.
- Accept that your behaviour is an outworking of who you are.

ALIVE (2:1-10)

2:4-5 – Rich mercy makes us alive

Not only are we content with our spiritual death, but have no desire for change. New life is only possible because God's nature is full of mercy to those who deserve wrath and judgment. His mercy is revealed when He sees our spiritual plight and chooses to give us life.

2:6 – Rich mercy raises us up

The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, raises us also. We are 'in Christ' therefore everything that's true of Him is now true of us.

2:7-9 – Rich grace saves

This is the surest sign we have new life, is that we desire to accept God's undeserved love and grace.

2:10 – Rich grace that recreates

The Spirit recreates us by giving us good deeds, which mould our characters and personalities to reflect the Lord Jesus.

APPLICATION

- Call out to God for spiritual life.
- Realize who you are in Christ and rejoice.
- Accept today God's gift of grace and be thankful.
- The purpose of these good works is to make you more like the Lord Jesus.

NEW (2:19-22)

The cross creates a new humanity, for we are now no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens and members of God's household.

APPLICATION

Our new identity as a child of God supersedes every other identity we have, whether race, class, gender, tribe or nationality.

EPHESIANS 3

MYSTERY (3:1-9)

When Paul uses the world mystery it means a secret that's publicly known, which is different from how we the word, as something hidden and unknown.

The mission God gave Paul, was to take the gospel to those on the outside, 'gentiles' (3:2). Today we have the unbelievable privilege of living in the age of where the gospel secret has been made public. What the Old Testament believer could only dream of, we have as a reality (3:4-6,9).

Those who were on the outside are now...

3:6 = Heirs together with Israel.

3:6 = Members together of one body.

3:6 = Sharing together in the same promises of Christ.

APPLICATION

Realise and rejoice that you live in the gospel age. We are living in the time where God's salvation secret is known and open to all.

CHURCH (3:10-12)

The manifold wisdom of God is seen through God's people the church. As the heavenly beings watch God's gospel breaking down every man-made division they are utterly stunned. His manifold wisdom, is bringing together a people who are united under the Lordship, no matter what class or colour, tribe or tongue (**1:22-23, 3:10-12**).

APPLICATION

When God's people stand united in God's grace, the rulers and heavenly authorities stand amazed.

PRAYER

When we face a situation that tempts us to give up, we must make use our imagination. We must seek to imagine all that God could do through us, whatever the situation is that we face. Paul's prayer finishes in the same place as it began, with the richness of Gods character (**3:17, 20**).

What could God do?

3:20 = He can do immeasurably more that we can ask or even imagine.

3:20 = This is possibly because it's based on his power and not ours.

3:21 = All the power to change our lives comes from God, therefore all the glory for the change belongs to God.

APPLICATION

There is no limit to what God can do, so pray BIG.

EPHESIANS 4

WORTHY (4:1-2)

Even though Paul sits in a Roman jail with chains around his hands and feet, he still sees himself as a prisoner of the Lord not Caesar. He begs his followers of Christ to live a life 'worthy' of the calling they have received.

Humble = To champion others people's needs before your own.

Gentle = Any power you may have, you use for others.

Patient = Loving the unlovely long term.

These are just some of the character traits that the Holy Spirit wants to develop within God's new humanity (**2:10, 15, 3:16-17**).

APPLICATION

- New identity leads to a new lifestyle.
- The Spirit forms this kind of character over many years.

EPHESIANS 5

ONE (4:4-6)

The plan of God is for the whole universe to marvel at his united people (3:9-12).

Why is the unity of God's people so important to God?

Paul's answer is clear and straightforward. The God we serve is a trinity, a united Godhead of Father, Son and Spirit. As God's people we are called to reflect their unity and love.

The theme of 'one' dominates the whole passage:

4:4 – One body, the church.

4:4 – One Spirit, the Holy Spirit.

4:4 – One hope, our salvation accomplished by Christ.

4:5 – One Lord, Jesus.

4:5 – One faith.

4:6 – The Father creates the one family One God and Father of us all.

APPLICATION

A 'worthy' life is when God's people together reflect the unity of the Trinity.

TEACHER (4:20-21)

Paul uses the brilliant phrase '**truth that is in Jesus**' (4:20-21). What marks God's people out from everyone else is that we have one teacher. Whether it be what's true about God, or how we should live, our teacher is the Lord Jesus.

APPLICATION

As God's people we are devoted to our truth teacher, our saviour Jesus.

LOVED (5:1-2)

God's people face the biggest challenge given to mankind to '**follow God's example**' (5:1). The reason we can fulfil this challenge is because we have the Spirit's life and power (3:16), and the greatest example and motivation (5:1-2).

APPLICATION

Let all your actions be dominated by the fact that you are dearly loved by God.

LIGHT (5:8-9, 13)

Paul calls us to recognise what has happened to us, and to live as if that is true. You have been saved from darkness to light, so live a life that reflects that amazing status.

APPLICATION

Be who you are.

REVERENCE (5:21)

Every relationship we have has God's people mut been seen in light of our relationship to Jesus. Whether we are the person with the power or the person under power, we must always respond and relate in a way that pleases our saviour and Lord.

APPLICATION

Every relationship is lived in the light of who Jesus is and what he's done.

EPHESIANS 6:10-20

The Armor of God

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

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STUDY 1

INTRODUCTION: THE ARMOUR OF GOD

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

MIGHTY POWER

The power of the one who chose us (1:4), and raised us (2:5).

FULL ARMOUR OF GOD

The tools God gives us to live a worthy life (4:1).

DEVIL'S SCHEMES

The means by which Satan uses to gain a foothold in our lives (4:27).

RULERS, AUTHORITIES AND POWERS OF THIS DARK WORLD

THE SPIRITUAL FORCES OF EVIL IN THE HEAVENLY REALMS

"A whole range of evil spiritual forces of varying rank, authority and capabilities."
C.E. Arnold

DAY OF EVIL

A time of testing.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. What images, ideas and thoughts come into your mind when you think of the Devil or terms like spiritual warfare?

Think about your friends at school. Do they believe in a spiritual world? If so, what is it like?

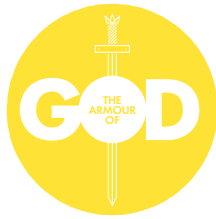
2. Is it hard being a Christian? Why/why not?
3. How does it affect you to know that you are in a spiritual battle with a powerful enemy?

Read Eph 1:16-21. What does Paul pray for the Christians in Ephesus?

4. Read Luke 8:28-32. How does this story reveal and illustrate the reality of Paul's prayer?

What will you face in your spiritual battle ahead?

5. How does Paul's prayer, the story in Luke, and the armour of God give you confidence to face God's enemy?



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STUDY 2

THE FIGHT: YOUR ENEMY & YOUR ARMOUR

PART 1

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

The breast plate represents the complete obedience of the Lord Jesus.

The breastplate of righteousness (justice) is when God's people speak his truth into a fallen and broken world. When we speak God's truth, sin and injustice are exposed. The hope is that conviction of sin will lead to faith in Jesus.

BELT OF TRUTH

Speaking God's truth to each other and the world.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

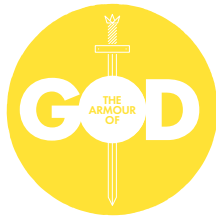
THE BELT OF TRUTH

1. What is the character of the Devil, and how does he use that character to implement his schemes and train his evil spiritual forces?
2. Read 1:13, 4:15, 4:29. What are the three ways the 'belt of truth' is seen and experienced by God's people?
3. What's the connection between God's character...
 - a) and his message (Eph 1:13)?
 - b) and his people (Eph 4:14-16, 29-32)?
4. What would you say were some of the Devil's favourite lies that undermine God's truth today?

What are some of the Devil's lies that you find hardest to reject?
How can the belt of truth help you?

THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

5. When you muck up and sin, how do you usually respond?
6. What is often the Devil's first move? Read Revelation 12:10.
7. What is the breastplate of righteousness? What does that actually mean?
8. Next time the Devil accuses you of sin, what kind of things can you boast to him about?
9. When we boast of Christ, what does the Devil have to do? Read James 4:7.



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STUDY 3

THE FIGHT: YOUR ENEMY & YOUR ARMOUR

PART 2

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

BOOTS OF PEACE

Living peaceful lives, while taking the message of peace to the world.

SHIELD OF FAITH

The truth of God that protects us from Satan's lies.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

READ EPH 6:10-20

THE GOSPEL BOOTS

1. Read Ep 2:14-22. What's the aim and the purpose of the gospel?
2. How are Christians described?
3. What is the foundation of God's people?
4. What are the major divisions within our society?
5. How can All Souls Youth reflect the gospel?

If All Souls Youth reflects 2:14-22, what kind of culture would be created?
What would this really look like? Be as practical as possible.

THE SHIELD OF FAITH

REMIND YOURSELF OF THE DEVIL'S TWO MOST POPULAR LIES:

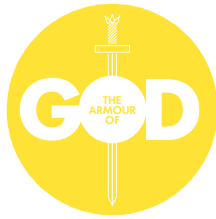
- Gen 3:1 – God's Word can't be trusted.
- Gen 34-5 – God doesn't want your best.

HOLDING UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH MEANS LOOKING BACK IN HISTORY.

1. What do we look back to? Read Eph 2:4-5.
2. How does looking back help Christians face suffering?
3. How does looking back expose the Devil's lies?

HOLDING UP THE SHIELD OF FAITH MEANS LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE.

4. What do we look forward to? Read Eph 1:22-23 & 1 Pet 2:23.
5. How does looking forward help Christians face suffering?
6. How does looking forward expose the Devil's lies?



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STUDY 4

THE FIGHT: YOUR ENEMY & YOUR ARMOUR

PART 3

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

HELMET OF SALVATION

God's salvation gives us the courage to go to evil places to save people from evil beliefs.

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

The word of God that gives us all we need stand firm.



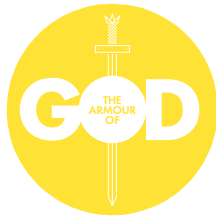
SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

THE HELMET OF SALVATION

1. Read Acts 19:23-28. What impact did God's message have in Ephesus?
2. Why should that not be a surprise? Read Eph 2:1-3.
3. Do you think you need the helmet of salvation?
4. What's the link between people's response and Paul's fear? Read Eph 6:19-20.
5. Can you relate to Paul's fear?
6. How should the helmet of salvation give you courage next time?

THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

7. Read Acts 20:25-32. What does Paul know will happen?
8. How might you face the same situation?
9. What has Paul done to prepare them for it?



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STUDY 5

THE FIGHT: THE AMBASSADOR'S PRAYER

DIFFICULT WORDS EXPLAINED

PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

Allowing the Spirit to remind us of our new identity (1:13-14). Allowing the Spirit to remind us of God's love (3:16-19).

MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL

The open secret of God's gospel.

AMBASSADOR

Representing the God who chose you (1:4) and gave you life (2:5).

UNDYING LOVE

The eternal life God gives means you can love him forever.



SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

READ 6:10-20

1. The mark of a superhero is that they are:

POWERFUL – INDEPENDENT – WINNERS

Which aspects of the culture you live in reflect these three points?

Think about how you approach school, sport, music, celebs you follow.

2. Read again 6:18-20. Paul's approach to life is very different as he admits to being fearful, dependent and worried?

3. What two things in 6:18-20 cause him to feel this way?

4. How does the Spirit help us to be God's ambassador?

5. What is your experience of this?

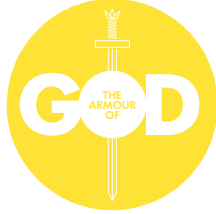
6. What is Paul praying the Spirit will do in your life? Look at 3:14-19.

7. What does prayer show about your relationship with God?

8. How is prayer an acknowledgement of our dependence?

9. Think of different ways that we communicate to each.

10. What would it look like for you, to be "praying all kinds of prayers" for your friends? Look at 6:19-20.



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The power of the one who chose us (1:4), and raised us (2:5).

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THE ARMOUR OF GOD

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