

Ephesians 6:13–16

“Christ Strengthens Us by Arming Us Together as One in Public Worship”

What the apostle describes here as "taking up the armor of God" is the use of that corporate worship that He has been describing throughout the epistle. This does not surprise us, because throughout the letter, the apostle has been teaching us that this is how Christ imparts His own strength to us.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via tinysa.com/hopewellarp)

Ephesians chapter 6, our portion is verses 13 through 16, that's pray.

Oh Lord we have no strength. But we thank you for your son our Lord Jesus of whom we have sung even this afternoon. That he is the son of man whom you made strong for yourself. We thank you that you have given him as the captain of our salvation.

The author and finisher of our faith. The one who has passed through the heavens. Who is our anchor beyond the veil. We thank you that he is the king of kings and he is the Lord of lords. And all his enemies are being made of footstool under his feet.

That you have even promised that he will soon cross Satan under our feet. And so we pray that these words of his which are spirit and life. Might be blessed now by your Holy Spirit to us. That they would be explained proclaimed properly. And that we might hear with faith.

So grant that we ask in Jesus name. Amen.

Fusion six verses 13 through 16. 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. 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 clench all. The fiery darts. Of the wicked one.

So far the reading of gods inspired and inerrant work.

We want the Lord Jesus to be our strength we've been commanded in verse 10 to have the Lord Jesus as our strength we strong in the Lord. And in the power of his might. And as we look to him to be our strength, he has given us instructions about things that we are to do.

Not because they are done by our strength at all that's exactly the opposite of what he's saying here, but because he who is our strength is the one who has given us these things to do by which he works his strength in us. And so we have these. Active or reflexive which is an action upon yourself verb verbs.

Take up the armor of God stand. Guard or having girded your waist with truth having put on the breastplate of righteousness having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of feel of faith, sorry of peace taking the shield of faith, these are action words, they're things were supposed to do.

If we're not doing them, then we're not trusting in the Lord Jesus. If we're not doing them, then we're not looking to him to be our strength. That's helpful for us to hear. Because these are corporate words. About corporate worship. In other words be strong in the Lord in the strength of his might as we hear these parts of his armor of our armor that he has given us in which to have him as our strength is actually a command to attend biblical corporate worship.

And attend well upon it. First they're all plural verbs. And that doesn't surprise us because one of the great themes of the letter has been how he has taken those whom he's reconciled to God and reconciled us to one another. And how the ministry of the word that we receive as a ministry so that we can.

Speak to one another the truth. In love. And so he takes these corporate commands these commands that we are to do together which really fits the military nature of the illustration, doesn't it? Because it doesn't work well to have a unit in which they're not intentionally trying to do things in sync and together.

And that's really going to be true when we get to this shield at the end of our text. And the first thing he mentions is the truth, which is as a belt which girds you this is a couple of different reasons. One if you have kind of a flowing robe kind of garment and you are neat going to need to be flexible and nimble.

Agile for battle one of the first things you need to do is tie that all up so it's not getting in your way as you move around or offering the enemy a chance to grab you. When you think about it being confirmed in the truth is exactly that isn't it?

It's holding all these things together. It is making it so that your enemy does not have his opportunity and as your different implements of war are connected to it what you want needs to be where it ought to be when you reach for it. You guys are accustomed to seeing me dress one way.

I used to where all kinds of well. I used to look like I meant. And every pocket had its thing in it that had its proper place and if I forgot something weighing out and my dear wife or one of my dear children took the implement that whatever it was and it could be anything from a pen to a knife to a four burner porch.

And they put it in the wrong one of the pockets. It was so lost to me that I might order a new one online before I found it and they incorrect pocket. The belt of truth holds it all together. And the belt of truth is something we gird ourselves with together.

He who is our captain and you remember that military language that he was using in chapter four this isn't the first place it appears in the letter is it? He ascended on high victorious and he gave gifts among men. Apostles and prophets and evangelists through whom the word comes and Pastor teachers buy him the word is proclaimed and applied.

Why? So that they can be the only ones who speak the truth. No. So that we all when we are speaking the truth in loved one another are all on the same page. We're not tossed to and fro, we're not blown about we're not thinking a bunch of different things about all of the doctrine.

But we are agreed in one doctrine. Everything is in its proper place and in its proper relation and it's all holding together and we are doing that with one another and there is a special place. In the worship of God in which each of us speaks the truth to what another.

Who knows what that is? We might have just finished doing it for an hour having we? God puts. His word in our mouth and we admonish one another with it and that's especially the way by which he makes it to dwell richly in our art school. Colossians 3, that's how he fills us with his spirit who will be the subject of verses 17 through 20 in large part.

So you see how this connects back to that? So having guarded your waist with truth having put on the breastplate of righteousness. Now. That's not your personal righteous act. I know there's some questions among the. Commentators. But this is a breastplate. In which we are strong in the Lord and the strength of his might and it needs to be impenetrable.

Praise God, he genuinely transforms Christians and we do things in union with Christ that are genuinely good. But they are not impenetrable. You don't want them covering your most vital. But it is the breastplate of the righteousness of Christ that we put on together. As we come each week through the Lord Jesus.

If you can stand safely in the presence of God in Jesus' righteousness. Then there is nothing that can threaten you. When you stand in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. This two is something and especially when we talk about the shield of faith in a moment we'll. We'll be thinking about how this is something we raise together or we put on together.

Often in the course of your week and you're daily doing as you are trying and you do because he has given you that heart that loves him and that loves his law and you want to obey him. And you and I we get we get consumed with what we're supposed to do.

And the accusations come or the discouragements come or the failures come. When suddenly we're not. Hoping in Christ's righteousness, we're finding ours rather flimsy. But does he not when we come together? It's really when you're with someone else that you're mortified to hope in your own righteousness. Even if you are kind of thinking that way in your heart.

If you start to say it out loud, you don't want to look like. An arrogant self-righteous self-trusting self-dependent person. And so, he actually uses your brothers and sisters in the gathering to which we're called. And then especially the holi assembly of the worship. To kind of compell us to put on Christ alone as our righteousness.

Praise God. And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace. This is one of those places where I'm grateful that even though we didn't have it as a theological principle one of the popular contemporary songs that we sang growing up in my church quoted almost word for word.

Isaiah 52:7. And that's what the apostle here is referring to.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news who proclaims peace. Who brings glad tidings that's

the gospel. Gospel is gliding of good things. Who proclaims salvation who says to Zion you're God reigns. Putting on the shoes of gospel, peace peace is something we do with one another in the corporate worship especially.

Yes, there are those preachers him he sins with that gospel and we are to receive and own for ourselves that good news that is announced. He makes that application of Isaiah 52:7 in Romans chapter 10. But here he's talking about something that we all do together. And we announced to one another the peace that God has made with us.

So something he's been talking about really since second half of chapter two he talks about peace with God and peace with one another something that God in his Providence brought us through right in time for the whole racial reconciliation thing conversation that happened in our nation. But we announced the piece to one another.

Every Lord's day a few times and the worship assembly especially and then also for about an hour this in the afternoon you all have beautiful feet. They are shod with the gospel of peace and they proclaim good news that God reigns. Think about the Psalms that we sing. What the vast majority of them have as their primary content your God reigns.

Praise him for his reigning. Call upon him to exhibit that reign against those who have wronged you and those who resist him. And so on and so forth. So we put those gospel shoes on together. And finally, the last corporate component here is above all taking the shield of faith.

Now, the Romans had different shields. The word that's used for this one is the whole body size shield and it was designed so that a unit in formation together when the commander gives the command to take up the shield they would all and you know, it would look to us like turn into a turtle.

That the the gaps would close down and there would be this force field made out of these shields. And if you were in your phalanx and you took up that shield and you took it up that way not a single arrow or spear would get through. You can't obey verse 16 by yourself.

I mean, you can hold on to what God has said about him and his salvation. But the picture is one of when you're together all the gaps get closed off. This is what we do in the worship. This is what we do, especially at the Lord's table. We show forth the Lord's death until we come.

When remembrance of him we eat and remembrance of him we drink we all lift the shield of faith together. And you think about the way the fiery darts of the evil one come at you. How do they come? They come primarily in temptations doubts accusations and discouragements. He is the accuser.

He is constantly saying has God really said. He wants you more than anything to sin against Jesus. He doesn't hate you for your own sake so much as he hates you for the sake of Christ and your belonging to him and you're being made in his image. And he loves discouragement and broken relationship.

Many other things but when you come together at the table. And you take up the shield of faith together. You're showing forth his death, you're remembering that Christ is your righteousness. You're remembering that Christ is your life you're confirming God's covenant promises to you. You know, there's a. Him that says temptations lose their power when thou art near.

Well, he's always near. But he tells us Ephesians, six verse 17. Temptations lose their power when you take up the shield of faith together. In the corporate worship together. So, We all want to fight the spiritual battle. We all want to be strong in the Lord. Even as he's commanded us.

Do we all want? To read the words of the apostles prophets evangelists. Receive the proclamation and application from the pastor teachers. Pray together. Take the supper together. Address one another with the good news that our God reigns and that he has made peace between us and him through the blood of Christ.

Because he's saying that's how he has designed. For us to have history. So when I'm weak if I come and I say okay, how does Jesus say? He makes me strong. He says you go to corporate worship. You do what I have said to do in that worship. You do it with your brothers and sisters you attend well upon it.

You understand it the way I have described it to you because I have designed it not only for my glory, but the Lord Jesus has designed it for us to have his strength in us. That we may fight our everyday in our marriage every day and the parent child relationships every day in the workplace battles.

Out of what he does for us and in us and to us corporately on the Lord's Day together, especially in the holi assembly. Let's pray.

Lord Jesus we pray. We thank you. For giving us your truth, we pray that you would grow us up into maturity and stabilize us.

That we would not be wishy-washy and too and fro and all over the place. We had speak the truth and lost to one another. We thank you and praise you for your perfect righteousness and we ask that you would keep us resting in your righteousness alone and not in our own that you would indeed produce in us righteous works that can come only because you have made us right with you by grace through faith.

We pray Lord that you would. Make us to rejoice especially in addressing one another with the good news of peace with you and the fact that you reign that you our God have died and risen again that you became a man to do so. And that you now sit and your enemies are being made of footstool under your feet.

So we pray that you had blessed to us the singing and the Lord's Day assemblies in that way we ask. That you would grant unto us to keep raising the shield of faith together. That the gaps that we feel so sorely throughout the week is we raise the shield by ourselves would be closed lords day by the Lord's Day.

And that you would protect us from all the fiery darts of the evil one. For you asked these things in your name. Amen.