

Protecting Our Riches in Christ

Feb 14/15, 2009

Flaming Missiles: The schemes, temptations, lies, deceptions and attacks aimed at God's people to get us to shift our trust to something or someone other than God. Includes blasphemous thoughts, doubts, a burning desire to sin, unexplainable conflict with others, and/or waves of discouragement or depression.

5) Helmet of Salvation: Belief in God's very present power to save us from every powerful temptation to sin as we obey what He tells us to do.

I Cor. 10:13-14 - *The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. So, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols.* **I Timothy 6:9-12**

6) Sword of the Spirit: Using the specific portions of the Word of God given to us by the Holy Spirit to combat the lies and attacks of Satan.

Rev 12:11 NKJV - *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.*

Mt. 4:3-4 - *During that time the devil came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread." But Jesus told him, "No! The Scriptures say, 'People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"*

James 4:7 - *So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

Discussion Questions:

1. How has obeying God's commands about parent-child relationships proven to be a blessing in your life? What questions do you wrestle with about parents and child relationships?
2. Share a time you needed God's help to be a good employee or employer. How has heeding Paul's words about work helped you succeed at work?
3. Do you see Satan as a thief who wants to steal your riches in Christ? What has he stolen from you – joy, peace, identity, purpose, relationships? Review the four ways Paul tells us to resist Satan and help each other get your riches back.

It's Valentines weekend where we celebrate our love for one another, but nobody, but nobody loves us like Jesus Christ.

I John 4:19

He loves us by blessing us now with the riches of every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm the moment we believe in Him as our personal Savior! *Ephesians 1:3*

Our riches include critical truths about how to have blessed parent-child relationships, the kind we all deeply long for.

Ephesians 6:1-5 - *Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. "Honor your father and mother." This is the first of the Ten Commandments that ends with a promise. And this is the promise: If you honor your father and mother, "you will live a long life, full of blessing." And now a word to you fathers. Don't make your children angry by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction approved by the Lord.*

Child's Part

Obedience

Honor

Parent's Part

Understanding

Consistency

Our riches in Christ also include wisdom for work! Christ knows we all want to succeed and be blessed in our work.

Ephesians 6:5-9 - *Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. Work hard, but not just to please your masters when they are watching. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free. And in the same way, you masters must treat your slaves right. Don't threaten them; remember, you both have the same Master in heaven, and he has no favorites.*

Employees: Work for God at work and God will reward your work fairly even if your boss doesn't.

Employers: Treat your employees fairly and with love because you too will give an account for how you treated them.

Paul ends this masterful letter by telling us we have to protect our riches from someone who wants to steal them from us. But once again God has provided all we need to stand firm against this thief and keep all our glorious riches.

God's Spiritual Armor

Ephesians 6:10-18 - A final word: Be strong with the Lord's mighty power. Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies and tricks of the Devil. For we are not fighting against people made of flesh and blood, but against the evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against those mighty powers of darkness who rule this world, and against wicked spirits in the heavenly realms. Use every piece of God's armor to resist the enemy in the time of evil, so that after the battle you will still be standing firm. Stand your ground, putting on the sturdy belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News, so that you will be fully prepared. In every battle you will need faith as your shield to stop the fiery arrows aimed at you by Satan. Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere.

- 1. Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power** "Allow yourself to be continually strengthened by the power already made available to you in your new position and relationship with Christ." **Ephesians 3:16**
- 2. Put on every piece of God's armor** "Repeatedly and continually put on the spiritual protection God has provided for you"
See description of that armor on bonus pages!
- 3. Stand firm against all the strategies of the devil**
"As believers in Christ, we do not fight for victory. We fight from victory. In Christ's power we are invincible" **James 4:7, 1 John 4:4**

Satan's strategies include:

- deceiving people
- destroying lives
- persecuting believers
- preventing believers from serving Christ
- promoting division
- planting doubt and fear
- provoking and enticing people to sin

4. Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion.

"Praying consistently and at times intensely the Word of God over your life and the lives those the Spirit leads you to pray for." **2 Corinthians 10:3-4**

In Christ you can live rich lives right now. He is ready to lavish His love, forgiveness and blessing on you right now! Don't let Satan steal from you the blessed life Christ died for you to have now!

Ephesians 1:7 He is so rich in kindness that he purchased our freedom through the blood of his Son, and our sins are forgiven.

1) **Belt of Truth: Knowing God's absolute truth while being absolutely truthful with Him about everything.**

John 8: 31b-32 (Jesus) - "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." **Psalm 139: 23-24**

2) **Breastplate of Righteousness: Protecting your heart with the blood bought righteousness of Christ against all the accusations of the Devil and giving no grounds for accusation by living righteously.**

2 Cor. 5:21 - For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

Romans 8:1 - So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. **James 4:17**

3) **Feet with Gospel of Peace: Knowing the security of the Gospel inside and out and being ready to share it.**

John 3:16 - For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. **John 14:7; 1 John 5:11-13**

Romans 8:38-39 - And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4) **Shield of Faith: Resolute confidence in God, His proven character, His promises, His power and His plan.**

Ps. 84:11-12 - For the Lord God is our sun and our shield. He gives us grace and glory. The Lord will withhold no good thing from those who do what is right. O Lord of Heaven's Armies, what joy for those who trust in you.

Numbers 23:19 - God is not a man, so he does not lie. He is not human, so he does not change his mind. Has he ever spoken and failed to act? Has he ever promised and not carried it through? **Romans 8:32**

Jer. 29:11 - "For I know the plans I have for you," says the Lord. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope."