

## PREPARING FOR WAR

*Now here is the part you may be "tempted" to skip. I have made it a habit of putting on the armor of God every morning before I get out of bed. Right over my pajamas! Remember, this is a spiritual armor. Therefore, it must be put on by faith. Paul understood that spiritual warfare was somewhat of a difficult concept to grasp, so he gave us an illustration through his description of the Roman soldier. Using that mental image as a guide, we can properly prepare ourselves for the battle. But it is done by faith, not by sight. The best way to explain this is to simply walk you through the routine I follow every morning. You do not have to do it just like I do. Paul did not leave us directions as to how to put it on by faith. There is no right or wrong way. He simply said, "Put it on." Each morning when I first awaken I say something like this:*

Good morning, Lord. Thank you for assuring me of victory today if I will but follow your battle plan. So by faith I claim victory over (     ). (I normally list some things I know will be faced with that day.)

To prepare myself for the battle ahead, by faith I put on the belt of truth. The Truth about You, Lord - that You are a sovereign God Who knows everything about me, both my strengths and weaknesses. Lord, You know my breaking point and have promised not to allow me to be tempted beyond what I am able to bear. The truth about me, Lord, is that I am a new creature in Christ and have been set free from the power of sin. I am indwelt with the Holy Spirit Who will guide me and warn me when danger is near. I am Your child, and nothing can separate me from Your love. The truth is that You have a purpose for me this day - someone to encourage, someone to share with, someone to love.

Next Lord, I want to, by faith, put on the breastplate of righteousness. Through this I guard my heart and emotions. I will not allow my emotions to rule my decisions. I will set them on what is right and good and just. I will live today by what is true, not by what I feel.

Lord, this morning I put on the sandals of the Gospel of peace. I am available to you, Lord. Send me where you will. Guide me to those who need encouragement or physical help of some kind. Use me to solve conflicts wherever they may arise. Make me a calming presence in every circumstance in which You place me. I will not be hurried or rushed, for my schedule is in Your hands. I will not leave a trail of tension or apprehension. I will leave tracks of peace and stability everywhere I go.

I now take up the shield of faith, Lord. My faith is in You and You alone. Apart from You, I can do nothing. With You, I do all things. No temptation that comes my way can penetrate Your protecting hand. I will not be afraid, for You are going with me throughout this day. When I am tempted, I will claim my victory to those who walk in obedience to Your Word. So by faith I claim victory even now because I know there are fiery darts headed my way even as I pray. Lord, You already know what they are and have already provided the way of escape.

Lord, by faith I am putting on the helmet of salvation. You know how Satan bombards my mind day and night with evil thoughts, doubt, and fear. I put on this helmet that will protect my mind. I may feel the impact of his attacks, but nothing can penetrate this helmet. I choose to stop every impure and negative thought at the door of my mind. And, with the helmet of salvation, those thoughts will get no further. I elect to take every thought captive; I will dwell on nothing but what is good and right and pleasing to You.

Lord, I take up the sword of the Spirit, which is Your Word. Thank You for the precious gift of Your Word. It is strong and powerful and able to defeat even the strongest of Satan's onslaughts. Your Word says that I am not under obligation to the flesh to obey its lusts. Your Word says that I am free from the power of sin. Your Word says that He that is in me is greater than he that is in the world. So by faith, I take up the strong and powerful sword of the Spirit, which is able to defend me in time of attack, comfort me in time of sorrow, teach me in time of meditation, and prevail against the power of the enemy on behalf of others who need the truth to set them free.

So Lord, I go now rejoicing that You have chosen me to represent You to this lost and dying world. May others see Jesus in me, and may Satan and his hosts shudder as Your power is made manifest in me. In Jesus' name I pray. AMEN