

not to men: (8) Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.” (Ephesians 6:5-8)

At this point, we are likely beginning to see the importance of our preparation for appropriate use of God's Armor.

As Christians, we are all called to be servants of God. Therefore, if we learn to be good servants of our earthly masters, the transition of service to our Heavenly Father will be smoother.

Here are some interesting observations about servanthood from this passage in Ephesians.

- 1) There are four verses directed to servants obeying their masters. In the next section, there is only one verse directed to masters and how they treat their servants.
- 2) Servants are to obey their masters. Serve your earthly masters (i.e. bosses) with a humble attitude.
- 3) Referring to this passage, the will of God is that we obey our earthly masters as if we are directly serving Jesus. All that we do, we do as unto the Lord and this glorifies Him!
- 4) God rewards this type of obedience!

If we are faithful to serve our earthly bosses, whose logic and instructions are somewhat like our own, it will be easier to serve our Heavenly Father, Whose ways and thoughts are not like ours!

**Eph 6:9 - Masters, treat your servants properly.
You too have a Master in Heaven!**

Ephesians 6:9 - “And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.”

Some observations from this passage:

1) It is very interesting that there is only one verse with regards to masters (compared to four verses directed at servants.) Why is that?

Is it possible that most “masters” (i.e. bosses) have proven to be good servants already and therefore, have learned the principles of servanthood? If one reads Proverbs, it becomes clear that normally, diligence, hard work, integrity and faithfulness are blessed by the Lord. In Jesus’ story of the talents, this is also seen. The one who is faithful with little is given more to be steward over.

Thus it seems reasonable that “masters” would have less instructions. But they do need to be reminded that they too have a Master in Heaven!

2) We need to learn how to be good leaders, since most of us will have some level of leadership in our lives. Many will become parents and as such will need to demonstrate godly leadership. God desires us all to mature in the faith, which will place us into positions of leading and guiding others to maturity in Christ.

Therefore, it is absolutely essential, before wearing God's armor, that we learn how to be good leaders. Others will be watching us!

Eph 6:10 - “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”

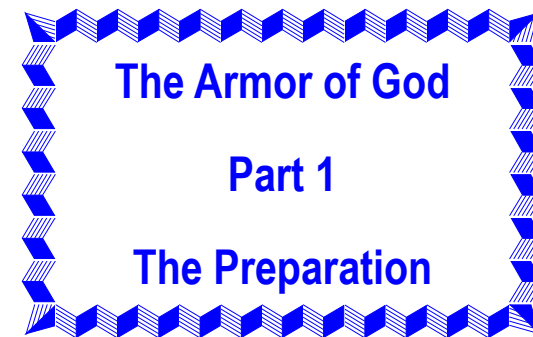
Finally!

We are now ready to start learning about the whole Armor of God...

(... to be studied in the next issue)

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By: Robert Dallmann



Anyone who has been in the military, involved in sports, worked a job, or simply lived a routine life, has needed some type of training or preparation to do what they do. Effective wearing of the Armor of God does not come without preparation either. Once one is prepared for spiritual battle, ongoing practice is also required.

Usually discussions about the Armor of God start with verse 10.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.” (Eph 6:10)

However, since verse 10 begins with “**Finally**”, it mandates that we go back and review the first nine verse to stay in context.

The Greek word translated “finally” is “loipon” (see Strong's Concordance G3063) - it means - “the rest - for the future, henceforth - at last, already”

You may be surprised at what the Scriptures indicate to be necessary training for spiritual warfare.

Preparation: It would be unusual for someone to put armor on a child and send them into battle. First there needs to be a level of maturity accompanied by rigorous training in the strategies of warfare; as well as, diligent practice in the use of the

THE ARMOR OF GOD - THE PREPARATION

battle equipment. Verses 1-9 reflect some of this training... some of the preparation for effective use of the Armor of God.

Eph 6:1-3

Children obey and honor your parents.

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. (2) Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; (3) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.” (Ephesians 6:1-3)

What does a child's obedience have to do with effective employment of God's armor?

1) **Obedience** - is required when in battle! Obedience in warfare, is a matter of life and death. Obedience for children, can be a serious matter (i.e. obeying a parent's command not to play in the street). Learning to obey God and His Word is absolutely essential for maturing to effective levels of spiritual warfare!

2) **Children** - Children who learn to obey their natural parents properly will more easily obey the Captain of the Host of God's army... Jesus Christ. True Christians are spiritual “CHILDREN” of God.

New Christians, who are truly seeking God and trusting Him, can be encouraged by the leadership of “spiritual fathers”. Paul had this type of relationship with a few of his “sons” in the faith.

“Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.”
(1 Timothy 1:2)

3) **Honor** - Again, this applies to all, both young and old. If as children, we are learning to live in a way that honors our natural parents, we as spiritual children are “in training” to bring honor to our Heavenly Father. This means that we cannot live for ourselves; we must live in a way that glorifies God.

“Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:”

(2 Corinthians 6:3)

We have likely all heard of soldiers that have conducted themselves in ways that dishonor their country. Part of our preparation for wearing spiritual armor is to learn how to live honorably.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath: bring them up in a godly manner!

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Eph 6:4)

What does a father's provocation have to do with God's armor? MUCH! If, as natural fathers, we discourage our children, then our spiritual armor will not be effective.

1) This verse gives us insight regarding our Heavenly Father. He does not exacerbate us! He does not stir us up to wrath. Our Heavenly Father lovingly corrects us, chastising us as needed in order to bring us back to the right path.

This part of the training is essential in many ways. Each spiritual warrior either is, or will be, a spiritual leader at some level. All of us have people who are watching us. All Christians are people of influence. Are we impacting others positively or negatively? Are we discouraging others?

Therefore, training in proper “fathering” (i.e. mentoring, discipling, etc.) must not be overlooked by the spiritual armor wearer to still be effective.

2) **Nurture** - This is critical for efficient use of God's armor.

The Greek word translated as “nurture” is the word *paideia* (Strong's Concordance G3809) and it is defined as:

* Relevant to the whole training and education of children (which relates to the cultivation of mind and morals, and employs for this purpose now commands and admonitions, now reproof and punishment). It also includes the training and care of the body.

* Whatever in adults also cultivates the soul, especially by correcting mistakes and curbing passions. - a) instruction which aims at increasing virtue - b) chastisement, chastening,

(of the evils with which God visits men for their amendment)

As we can see from the definitions of the Greek word for “nurture”, it applies to both children and adults, and is necessary in properly applying the Armor of God.

This training pertains to developing children's moral character. It applies to the physical care of children. As spiritual fathers in the faith, we need to exemplify and train newer Christians in these areas. God wants us to help prepare others for spiritual warfare.

Nurturing also applies to all Christians in regards to correcting mistakes, increasing in virtuous living, curbing passions, and chastisement. All of these aspects of nurturing are indispensable for spiritual warfare. We must battle correctly and virtuously. If we do not learn how to be corrected as children, and do not learn how to correct others as fathers in the faith, we will not be prepared to make such corrections in spiritual warfare.

Following our passions while in spiritual battle will bring us to compromise and eventual ruin. Nurturing is critical to skillful armor wearing.

3) **Admonition** - an exhortation.

Fathers should exhort and encourage their children to godly living. Likewise, spiritual fathers and leaders in God's army, should also train others in the ways of God. It is important to learn God's ways and lead others to move beyond just observing His acts. This maturity will go a long way in spiritual warfare.

Eph 6:5-8 - Servants OBEY your masters, as if you were serving Christ!

“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; (6) Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; (7) With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and