



THE PRAYER CLOSET

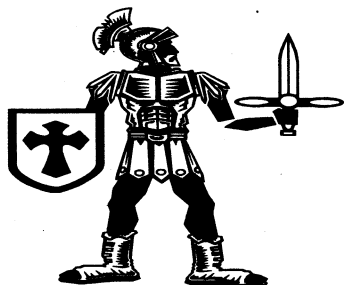
*Transforming Lives Through Intercessory
Prayer And Fasting*

A MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE PRAYER CLOSET MINISTRIES

VOLUME II

JUNE, 1999

ISSUE 5



THE ARMOR OF GOD

You are in a spiritual war. When you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, you automatically became the enemy of Satan and his demons. Satan and his demons hate you and want to destroy you. The Word of God states that believers “wrestle” against the forces of Satan, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12).” The word “wrestle” refers to Greco-Roman or Olympic wrestling. It is a fierce, hand-to-hand, face-to-face struggle. This is a conflict that every believer faces. No believer is exempt from the battle.

In this war, Satan has schemes that he uses to fight against you. The Bible states in **Ephesians 6:11**, “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” The word “wiles” translates the Greek word “methodeia,” from which we get the English word “method.” This word describes a settled plan. Satan follows a prescribed method to deceive, to enslave, and to destroy. Satan is like a roaring lion seeking to devour all that he can (**1 Peter 5:8**). He would love nothing more than to destroy your witness through sin and create guilt, hopelessness,

and despair in your life. He is a murderer and wants to destroy you (**John 8:44**). He has schemes to attack you and destroy you. He knows you and his plans to attack you are those that he feels will be the most effective against you. He knows your weakness and exploits them. He knows your strengths and batters them.

Because Satan wants to wound and destroy you, you are commanded to resist him (**James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9**). The word “resist” in **1 Peter 5:9** is a military term that speaks of taking a firm stand against an enemy. You have to stand firm against the attacks of Satan in your life. You may be thinking, “How can I resist Satan? How can I stand against his attacks in my life?” You can do this by placing the armor of God on yourself and using the weapons that He has given you for this battle. You can resist and be victorious over the attacks of Satan in your life through the armor of God.

Spiritual warfare is a difficult and demanding business. Your enemy is the second-most powerful being in the universe. He is highly intelligent, clever beyond measure, and cannot be outwitted. He is filled with hate and will do whatever is necessary to attack you and destroy you. The most effective weapon that you have to defend yourself from and to fight against this

pernicious, persistent enemy is the armor of God. It is your strength and mighty power in this battle (**Ephesians 6:10**). It is only through the authority of Jesus Christ and your spiritual armor that you can resist your enemy and be victorious over him and his forces.

This issue of *The Prayer Closet* will focus on the believer's spiritual armor. I want you to realize that you are in a war and that you need to wear this armor daily. You also need to grow in your effectiveness in using these weapons. **In writing on spiritual warfare, I do not intend to exalt Satan, but to expose him.** He is your enemy and you must not be ignorant of his schemes. You must learn how to resist him and how to use your armor. It is my hope and prayer that this issue will help you prepare for the daily battle that you face.

Why Do I Need The Spiritual Armor?

You need the spiritual armor described in **Ephesians 6:10-18!** *The most basic reason you need this armor is because you are in a war!* I cannot stress this enough to you. When I teach on the subject of spiritual warfare, I often encounter a spirit of unbelief in my listeners. They simply do not believe that they are in a spiritual war. They do believe in a devil and demons. Yet, they do not feel that this devil and his demons have any influence in their lives. Yet, the Word of God presents a contrary picture. The Bible pictures a spiritual war between the believer and Satan and his demons. The Word of God reveals that this enemy seeks to gain a stronghold in the lives of believers (**2 Corinthians 10:4-5; Ephesians 4:27**).

Maybe this describes you. Perhaps you have never given serious thought to the fact that you are in a spiritual war. Perhaps you have never realized that Satan and his demons do affect your life. You would have to confess that you have never put the armor of God on, or at least, not consistently. You need to realize that you are in a war and that this armor is a necessity.

You may be saying, "Wait a minute! Jesus totally defeated Satan and his demons at the Cross. Now, why do I have to fight? If Jesus has already won the war, why do I still have to fight?" It is true that Jesus Christ has completely defeated Satan and his demons by His death and resurrection (**Colossians 2:13-15**). The Word of God clearly teaches that Jesus Christ has broken Satan's destructive grip on your life (**Colossians 1:13**). The end of World War II illustrates the answer to this question. Even though victory was won and Hitler was defeated, German troops remained in different areas of the nation. Although these troops were defeated and greatly weakened, they still continued to fight. These troops had to be conquered. In the same way, you must maintain and appropriate the victory that was won at Calvary. Satan and his forces are defeated. Yet, they are still fighting. You then must fight so that the victory of Calvary can be a living reality in your life.

The Word of God teaches that you were the slave of Satan in your lost condition (**Ephesians 2:2**). You were held captive by him (**2 Timothy 2:26**). You were under the reign of darkness (**Colossians 1:13**). Yet, when you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, your position changed. Jesus Christ demolished Satan's grip in your life. You were delivered from Satan's kingdom of darkness and placed in Christ's kingdom (**Colossians 1:13**). Christ is now your Lord and Master. You are the purchased possession of Jesus Christ (**1 Corinthians 6:19-20**). Satan has no claim to any part of your life now.

However, Satan is sentimental. He longs for the "good 'ole days" when he controlled your life. He wants to reclaim control in your life. In order to do this, he will tempt you, hurl lies at you, and labor to gain strongholds in your life. He does this to hinder your growth as a Christian and your witness for Christ. If he cannot control you and destroy you, he will attempt to neutralize you. This is the war that you are facing as a believer. This is why God has given you this armor. It will enable you to overcome temptation, destroy his lies, and prevent him from gaining any ground in your life.

If you are not in a spiritual war, why would God give you armor? Why would God give you something if you did not need it? I ask you these questions to show you that God gives you the armor because you are in a war and you need this armor to fight. He has given you weapons so that you can defend yourself and resist the enemy. It would be suicidal to go into a battle without your weapons. You are placing yourself in a dangerous position of great danger if you are not wearing and using your spiritual armor. The war that you are in demands that you use the armor God has given you.

You also need your armor because God calls you to stand firm in this war (Ephesians 6:13). The believer is not to retreat from temptation or the lies of Satan. The believer is to stand against these things, resist them, and overcome them. The only way that you can stand against the evil one and his attacks is through your spiritual armor. It is sufficient to help you stand and be victorious. This armor that God has given you will not fail you if you will put it on and learn how to use it. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, it is mighty and invincible. It will protect you and enable you to be victorious.

The fierceness of your enemy makes using the armor a necessity. Satan is a cruel and vicious enemy. He has no mercy or pity in him. The Lord Jesus Christ declared that he was a murderer and a liar (**John 8:44**). He is not afraid to attack you. He hates you and wants to destroy you because of your relationship to Jesus Christ. There is a tract entitled, "God Loves You And Has A Wonderful Plan For Your Life." Another tract could be written on a similar subject, "Satan Hates You And Has A Terrible Plan For Your Life." Every plan of God is for the good of His people; every plan of Satan is for their destruction. Satan despises you and would love nothing more than to destroy you (**1 Peter 5:8**).

He will attempt to deceive you. He will strive to lead you into sin. He will look for an opportunity to gain an advantage in your life. He is going to be persistent in these things. He is driven to do these things because of his hatred for you. He

is a spiteful enemy who is against you and wants to hurt you. You need the spiritual armor of God to stand against such an enemy. His hatred of you and his plans against you demand that you wear and use your armor.

A final reason that you need the spiritual armor is because you are powerless on your own. Through the spiritual armor and Christ's authority, you are a conqueror; you are invincible (**Romans 8:37**). Without these things, you are powerless and helpless in this war. You did not break Satan's grip in your life by your own strength or wisdom. It was Jesus Christ who did this. You cannot keep yourself free from his evil grip. It is only through Christ and this armor that you will be able to stand and be victorious. This is not a war that you can fight in your own wisdom or strength. You must wear and use the armor that Jesus Christ has given you through your salvation.

What Is The Spiritual Armor?

Your evil enemy and his unholy servants are determined to deceive you and destroy you. In preparing to do battle with this evil enemy and his unholy servants, you must acknowledge and use your spiritual armor. If you are going to be victorious in this battle, you need to know what your weapons are and how to use them. To vividly communicate the spiritual truths necessary for fighting this spiritual war, the apostle Paul uses the imagery of the armor of a Roman soldier. He declares that there are six pieces of armor. If you will wear--believe and use these truths--you can win spiritual battles.



The Belt of Truth

The first piece of armor is the belt of truth (**Ephesians 6:14**). The belt, or girdle, of a Roman soldier in New Testament times was critical. It was

wide and protected the lower torso which is frequently referred to in the Bible as the "loins." This belt also held the sword of the Roman soldier. In biblical times, men did not wear pants, but instead wore robes. While these robes were needed for the parched and scorched Middle Eastern climate, they were impractical and even dangerous for battle. So, before going into battle, a soldier would "gird his loins." This meant that he would pull the hem of his robe up between his legs and tuck it into his belt. By doing this, it would give him greater mobility and enable him to fight.

You are to put on the belt of truth for this war. The Word of God states in **1 Peter 1:13**, "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." This means that you are to be committed to truth and truthfulness. It is having a commitment to know and obey the Word of God. Most interpreters are divided on the interpretation of what the belt of truth is. Some declare that it is objective belief in the Word of God, while others feel that it is referring to truthfulness or personal integrity. I contend that the belt of truth refers to both. Knowing God's truth should lead to a life of personal integrity. A commitment to the truth of God's Word should motivate you to a life of truthfulness.

Putting on the belt of truth requires that you be committed to God's Word as absolute truth. You must believe the Word of God. It also requires you to live a life of personal integrity. You are to live out the truths of God's Word on a daily basis. This must be firmly settled in your mind. Just as a Roman soldier made sure that his belt was firmly fixed on him, you must make sure that you are absolutely committed to the Word of God as truth and to a life of truthfulness. You are not to have anything to do with lies or half-truths.

Why is truth so important in spiritual warfare? Truth and a love for truth are important because Satan is a liar and the father of lies (**John 8:44**). Satan's primary target is your mind. He will twist the truth, conceal the truth, and tell half-truths

which act as lies so that you will believe something that is false (**Genesis 3:1-7**). He desperately wants you to believe his lies. This will give him the opportunity to work in your life. Satan works through lies. His strength rests in the power of lies. You must remember this truth: **Satan has nothing to hurt you with but his lies.** If he can get you to believe his lies, he has an advantage in your life. Any time that you accept and acknowledge a lie, you are giving Satan and his demons an opportunity to work in your life.

For this reason, you must know the truth, be committed to the truth, live the truth, and declare the truth. How do you defeat the lies of Satan? You defeat lies with truth. Truth is the way to victory in the spiritual war. Satan does not want you to put the belt of truth on. He does not want you committed to truth and truthfulness. Have you ever told a lie convincingly and then suddenly the truth came out? Then you were caught in the lie and were totally devastated. That is what truth does to Satan. It devastates and totally defeats him. It exposes his deceptive, lying ways for what they are and breaks his power against you. This is why you must daily commit yourself to the truth of God's Word and to a lifestyle of truthfulness.

How do you put the belt of truth on? The following prayer is a guide for praying on the belt of truth. You can use this one or prepare your own prayer. *"Heavenly Father, by faith, I place the belt of truth on my life. I believe that You are true. I believe that Your Word is true. Enable me to believe Your Word, to trust Your Word, and to live in obedience to Your Word. Give me a love for Your Word and truthfulness. Cause me to hate any lie that I must face. Fill my life with Your truth and deliver me from the lies of Satan. Amen."*

You need to put the belt of truth on every day. However, you cannot stop there. You need to strive to become proficient and effective with this weapon. You need to mature in how to use this weapon against Satan. The following are some suggestions on how to be more effective with this weapon.

(1) *Saturate your life with the Word of God.* Read, study, memorize, meditate on, and obey the Word of God. Labor to have a growing understanding of the Bible. Strive to have a deeper obedience to the Word. The more truth you know, the more powerful you will be in this spiritual war. As you grow in your understanding of and obedience to the Word of God, you will be better able to discern and resist the lies of Satan.

(2) *If you have doubts about the Word of God, cry out to God about this.* Express your doubts to Him and ask Him to give you certainty and conviction about this. You might want to consider reading and studying about the accuracy and trustworthiness of the Bible. Call on God to enable you to get this matter settled in your mind.

(3) *Pursue a life of truthfulness.* Labor with all your strength to resist lies, gossip, and half-truths. Strive to speak the truth with love. Distance yourself from any persons who slander, lie, or gossip. Do not allow any place in your life for any lies. Ask God to give you the grace and power to live a truthful life.



The Breastplate of Righteousness

The next piece of armor that God has given you is the breastplate of righteousness. The breastplate was a metal cast of the human torso. This piece of armor protected the upper part of the body, including the soldier's heart and lungs from the spears and arrows of the enemy. It could always withstand the blows of the sword and the hurling of spears.

The breastplate of righteousness refers to the righteousness that the believer receives in salvation. This righteousness has two aspects. When you surrender to Jesus Christ, trusting in Him as your Savior and Lord, Christ's righteousness is "imputed" to you. This word means that something that belongs to one person (Christ) is put into the

account of another (the believer). God the Father puts the righteousness (the perfect life and obedience) of Jesus into your account. God sees you clothed in Christ's righteousness! He sees your sin as punished in Christ. Because of this, you are forgiven by God, accepted with God, and adopted by God. This takes place when you truly trust in Christ as your Lord and Savior (**Romans 4:4-9, 22-25; Galatians 2:16, 21**).

Satan is an accuser (**Revelation 12:10**). He wants to remind you of past sins. He wants you to focus on your sin and guilt rather than the grace of God and the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Have you ever heard his voice: "How can God love you? How can you expect any help from God? Look at how you have failed. Look at how you have sinned. God will not forgive you. God will never use you." Satan wants to instill fear and doubt in you about your standing with God. He wants you to feel that God cannot love you, that he will not forgive you, bless you, or use you.

Putting on the breastplate of righteousness means that you are daily reminding yourself of and resting in Christ's righteousness. It means remembering that God accepts you, has forgiven you, and loves you completely because of Jesus Christ. There is no stronger protection against Satan's accusations than to keep this truth ever before your mind. **Romans 8:1** must become a conscious, daily certainty in your life. This will powerfully protect you against Satan's accusations.

The other aspect of righteousness that the believer receives in salvation is "imparted" righteousness. This means that God is going to work in your life, enabling you to live a righteous life (**Philippians 2:12-13**). You are to strive to live a life that is conformed to His Word and that is pleasing to Him. When you trusted Christ, God declared you right with Himself--forgiven and accepted. Now, you are to live in obedience to Him out of gratitude for His grace and mercy in forgiving you and accepting you. God desires that your thinking, feeling, speaking, and acting be righteous or conformed to His Word. You are to mold your life to the Word of God. You are to

labor to do those things that are pleasing to God and avoid what is sinful and displeasing to Him.

Striving to live a righteous life is crucial in this spiritual war. Sin that is not confessed and dealt with becomes an opportunity for Satan to work in your life (**Ephesians 4:27**). To fool around with sin makes you vulnerable in this war. To knowingly and willingly tolerate sin in your life is to open a door in your life for Satan to work. He will use this opportunity to gain more ground in your life and to attack others. When you fail to deal with sin and do not strive to obey God, you give Satan and his forces a powerful advantage in your life. This is why you must be diligent to confess your sin and to root it out of your life. By striving to obey God, you protect yourself from the attacks of Satan.

The following is a prayer that you can use to put on the breastplate of righteousness: *"Heavenly Father, I place the breastplate of righteousness on my life by faith. I trust that I am accepted with you because of Your Son, Jesus Christ. I know that You love me and have forgiven me because of my faith in Jesus Christ. Enable me to defeat any fears or doubts about my standing with you through the righteousness and the blood of Jesus Christ. At the same time, enable me to live a righteous life today. Do not let me give any room to Satan in my life through sin. Amen."*

Becoming Effective With This Weapon:

(1) *Memorize verses of Scripture which declare that you have been made right with God through faith in Jesus*

Christ. When Satan attempts to make you fearful and doubtful of your position, recall these verses and trust what God says.

(2) *Meditate on the perfect life of Jesus Christ.* Christ was perfect in all things. He **always** spoke, felt, thought, and acted in a way that was pleasing to God. He never disobeyed God. This is what has been placed into your heavenly account. When God looks at you, He sees this perfect life

and obedience of Jesus. You are loved, accepted, and forgiven because of Jesus Christ.

(3) *Strive to deal quickly and harshly with sin.* Do not allow yourself to become tolerant or complacent toward sin. Confess sin and turn from it. Strive to obey God. Labor to live out the teachings of God's Word.



The Shoes of Peace

Through the apostle Paul, the Holy Spirit describes peace as the shoes of the soldier in warfare. Good shoes are necessary for good footing. A Roman soldier with sword in hand needed to have under him shoes that gave him traction, stability, and sure footing. He could not fight in a battle if his feet were easily knocked out from under him.

In the same way, the spiritual soldier needs good shoes to stand firm. If you do not have the shoes of peace on, you will not be able to stand during battle. You will not be able to endure the pressure and stress of the enemy without these shoes. This piece of armor refers to your peace with God and your experience of the peace of God.

When you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior, you received peace with God (**Romans 5:1**). As a lost person, you were rebellious toward God. Your lifestyle of sin and rebellion made you the enemy of God (**Romans 8:7-8; James 4:4**). Because of your disobedience and rebellion, God's righteous wrath burned against you (**John 3:18, 36**). Yet, when you surrendered to Christ, you were brought into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The war is now over! God has forgiven you and accepts you and there is peace between God and you.

As a child of God, you not only experience peace **with** God, but you also experience the peace **of** God. The peace of God is an inner calm and assurance that will enable you to face anything (**Philippians 4:7**). It is a peace that passes

understanding. When there are no explanations, there is the peace of God. It is more than sufficient to see you through anything that you must face. This peace will give you the calm and strength to stand firm and be faithful to Christ in all circumstances.

When a Roman soldier had these shoes, or boots, on, he could keep going no matter what the terrain. He had sure footing which enabled him to stand. Satan wants to instill fear in you concerning God's care and concern for you. He wants you to doubt God's protection and ability to provide for you. He would love nothing more than to trap you in worry and turmoil. His goal is to create confusion, doubt, frustration, and worry in your life so that you are ineffective and faithless. He wants you to "lose your footing." If he can create these things in your life, he will render you useless and hopeless.

The peace of God however enables you to stand regardless of the circumstances that you face. It empowers you to overcome this attack of Satan. Paul states that the peace of God protects your mind (**Philippians 4:6-7**). This means that the peace of God which passes understanding prevents Satan and his demons from putting confusion, frustration, doubt, and worry into your mind. This peace will enable you to remain faithful to Jesus Christ despite your circumstances. This calm assurance that comes from God will equip you to stand strong and confident in God's love and care.

The following is a prayer for putting on the shoes of peace: *"Heavenly Father, I receive the shoes of peace by faith. I know that I have peace with You through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior. I have been reconciled to You by His blood. I am no longer separated from You but have been brought into a personal relationship with You through Jesus Christ. Enable me to experience Your peace today. Do not allow my circumstances to cause me to doubt You or Your Word. Amen."*

Becoming Effective With This Weapon:

(1) *Daily surrender yourself and your circumstances to Jesus Christ.* Peace comes

through surrender. You need to daily surrender yourself and what you face to your Lord, Jesus Christ. As you do this, remember that this is not your circumstances, but His. Your circumstances are God's opportunity to work in your life.

(2) *Pray as much as you can (Philippians 4:6-7).* There is no solution to a lack of peace as effective as prayer. Whatever fears or concerns you have take them to God through prayer. Have an ongoing conversation throughout your day with God. **A lack of peace is often God's way of calling you to pray.**

(3) *Give thanks to God continually.* Giving thanks to God and experiencing His peace are intimately connected. By giving thanks, you are remembering and focusing on God's blessings and faithfulness. As you remember what God has done, you realize how faithful God is. This will create peace in your life.

(4) *Meditate on the Word (Philippians 4:8-9).* Paul connects the peace of God with thinking on pure and holy things. This is a reference to the Word of God. As you meditate on God's Word, you will experience peace (**Isaiah 26:3**).



The Shield of Faith

The shield of the Roman soldier was a valuable and versatile tool of defense. This shield was large enough for the soldier to crouch behind to protect himself from the arrows of the enemy. The surface of these large shields was either metal or leather-covered wood that could repel flaming arrows. The arrows of the enemy had been soaked in or wrapped with flammable material. They were set on fire and launched at the Roman soldiers. They were doubly lethal.

In the spiritual war, the enemy of your soul launches his flaming missiles or arrows at you. The flaming arrows that Satan shoots at you can be fear, discouragement, depression, despair, troubling or blasphemous thoughts. Basically this refers to the thoughts and feelings which Satan projects into

your mind to get you to doubt God and turn away from Him in disobedience. They can be thoughts or feelings that cause you to trust yourself or to justify your own actions. When Satan shoots one of these into your mind, you end up saying, “**I think . . .**” or “**I feel . . .**” It is Satan and his demons that propel these thoughts into your mind. He has the ability to put thoughts or feelings into your mind (**Matthew 16:22-23; Acts 5:3**).

You can use the shield of faith to protect yourself from these thoughts or feelings that Satan wants to plant in your mind. Your shield is your faith in the Word of God. Your faith in God and His Word will defend you against these deadly arrows of the enemy. By trusting God and His Word, you do not have to yield to any thought or feeling that would lead you to doubt or disobey God. Your faith in God’s Word can quench any thought or feeling that would inflame your mind with evil, troubling, or blasphemous thoughts.

When these thoughts or feelings come, you must trust God’s Word and reject the lie. Satan wants to brainwash you with this thought or feeling. You must say, “No! This is a lie and I will not believe it. I choose to believe God and what He says.” Your shield of faith is strong enough to protect you from any lie of Satan.

Satan does not want you to trust God and His Word. He knows that you are vulnerable when your faith is weak, when you are filled with doubts and fear. This is why Satan wanted to sift the faith out of Peter (**Luke 22:31-32**). He wants to weaken and destroy your faith in God and His Word because it make you vulnerable to him. He can wound you and destroy you when this happens. Paul implies this in **1 Thessalonians 3:5**. Paul’s great concern was that Satan had attacked the faith of these believers and ruined the work that he had began. He does not want you to trust God and His Word. When you do this, it makes him powerless against you.

Peter declared that the believer is to resist Satan steadfast or firm in “faith (**1 Peter 5:9**).” He wants to weaken and destroy your faith because it gives him a great advantage in your life. Yet, when

you trust God and His Word, you can resist and overcome his evil schemes against you.

The following is a prayer that you can use to put on the shield of faith: “*Heavenly Father, I receive the shield of faith by faith. I know that I can trust You and Your Word no matter what. Enable my faith to be focused on You and Your Word today. Cause me to respond to every doubt, fear, evil and troubling thought, and temptation with trust in You and Your Word. Amen.*”

Becoming Effective With This Weapon:

- (1) *Ask God to give you discernment about the lies of Satan.* Plead with God to enable you to know when Satan has placed a lie in your mind. Ask Him to give you a growing sensitivity in this matter.
- (2) *Plead with God to strengthen your faith in Him and His Word.* As your faith matures and grows stronger, you will develop a greater sensitivity to resist the lies of Satan with your faith.
- (3) *Spend much time in the Word of God.* God creates faith in a person through the Word of God (**Romans 10:17**). It is through the Word of God that your faith is going to be strengthened and matured. As you dig into the Word of God, your faith will be deepened.



The Helmet of Salvation

The helmet of a Roman soldier was made of a tough metal, either bronze or iron. This helmet was of vital importance in the battle. A blow to the arm or leg could result in a broken bone. A blow to the head could result in death. The Roman soldier had to have his helmet on in order to fight.

In the same way, you must have on the helmet of salvation in this spiritual war. When you were lost, you were under Satan’s control. He controlled you primarily through your mind (**Colossians 1:21; Romans 8:6-7; Ephesians 2:2**). Yet, when you surrendered to Jesus Christ, this control was broken. Your mind is now under the

control of the Holy Spirit. However, Satan will now try to gain a foothold in your life and attempt to control your life once again. He does this by targeting your mind. He wants to plant his lies and accusations in your mind so that he can work in your life.

When you came to Jesus Christ, the penalty of sin was removed from your life and the grip of Satan in your life was broken. When Jesus Christ comes for you, you will one day be completely delivered from the presence of sin and Satan (1 **John 3:2**). However, there is an "in-between" period between you coming to Christ and Christ coming for you. During this "in-between" period, you are progressively being delivered from the power of sin and Satan. As stated earlier, they have been thoroughly defeated by Christ, but, they are still battling for control of your life. Putting on the helmet of salvation means filling your mind with God's truth so that your being freed from the power of sin and Satan will continue and progress (**Romans 12:1-2**). Your mind (your thinking and feeling) must be transformed by the Word. You need to be delivered from ungodly patterns of thought and feeling. You need to be delivered from the lies and accusations of Satan.

This is crucial because **what you think controls how you act**. This is why Satan targets your mind. If he can get you to believe his lies, he can lead you away from God and into disobedience. He does not want your mind filled with God's truth. He wants your mind filled with his lies and ungodly thoughts and feelings. He does not want you to get rid of sinful thought patterns or ungodly emotions (jealous, envy). He wants you to stay the way that you are so that he has the advantage over you and can work in you and through you. By filling your mind with God's truth and being transformed by this, you are delivered from ungodly thought patterns and emotions and the lies of Satan.

The following is a prayer that you can use to put on the helmet of salvation: *"Heavenly Father, I receive the helmet of salvation by faith. I know that You have saved me and given me eternal life through Your Son Jesus Christ. I know that I am*

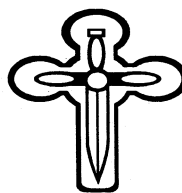
secure in Your power, grace, and love. The devil has no right to any part of my life. I am no longer in bondage to him or to my sin. I have been set free by Jesus Christ. Continue to deliver me from the power of sin and Satan until I am completely conformed to the image of Jesus. Enable me to realize in a fresh way that I belong to You and am secure. Amen."

Becoming Effective With This Weapon:

(1) *Saturate your mind with God's Word (Psalm 1:1-3)*. Read the Word! Meditate on the Word! Memorize the Word! The Word of God is compared to water in **Ephesians 5:26**. Let the water of the Word run through your mind, washing it of evil thoughts and the lies and accusations of Satan.

(2) *Guard what enters your mind (Psalm 101:3; Philippians 4:8-9)*. You must discipline yourself in this area. You must be careful about what you watch, read, and listen to on a daily basis. You cannot allow yourself to be complacent in this matter.

(3) *Deal immediately and harshly with impure, evil thoughts or the lies and accusations of Satan*. Do not give any room in your mind to these things. Do not entertain them or consider them. You must reject these things immediately and harshly. Take a firm, uncompromising stand against these things.



The Sword of The Spirit

The final piece of armor in the believer's arsenal is the sword of the Spirit or the Word of God. This piece of armor is distinct from the five previous pieces. It has both a defensive and offensive capacity. The Roman soldier's sword was short and double-bladed. It was used in desperate and intense hand-to-hand combat. The same is true for your spiritual sword. It can defend you and enable you to attack in desperate and intense battles with the enemy of your soul.

Commitment to the whole Bible is important to spiritual warfare. Yet, this commitment occurs when you put on the belt of truth. Putting on the belt of truth means that you accept and believe the truth of God's Word. It means that you accept the Bible as God's own Word, that it is true, and that it is right in everything it says. When you use the sword of the Spirit, you are taking specific verses from the Word and applying them to specific life situations to fend off the attacks of Satan and to put him to flight.

How do you use the sword of the Spirit? For example, when you are tempted to get angry and explode, it is not sufficient to say, "I believe the whole Bible." Instead you counter the temptation to anger with, "The Word of God says, 'A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man hold them back (**Proverbs 29:11**).' The Word of God also says, 'An angry man stirs up strife, and a furious man abounds in transgression (**Proverbs 29:22**).' Therefore, I will not give in to anger." Another example of using the sword of the Spirit is when Satan attempts to plant the lie in your mind that God is not going to be faithful to you. It is not sufficient to say, "I believe the Bible." You must counter this lie with truth. You must say, "The Word of God says, 'God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord (**1 Corinthians 1:9**).' The Word of God also says, 'For He Himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you (**Hebrews 13:5**).' Therefore, I refuse to believe this lie of the enemy."

By doing this, you are attacking the lie or the temptation that is coming against you. When you get involved in spiritual combat, you do not appeal to the entire Bible. You have to pull your sword out!! You must use specific, relevant passages--specific words of God. You must pull out the sharp, two-edged sword of the Word of God and attack the lies and the temptations that come against you (**Hebrews 4:12**).

The Lord Jesus Christ set the ultimate example for the believer in this matter (**Matthew 4:1-11**). When Satan tempted Jesus, Jesus responded by declaring the truth of God's

Word--specific Scriptures that dealt with Satan's temptation. Each time Satan tempted, He responded with specific verses from God's Word. Satan was defeated in this battle because Jesus used the sword of the Spirit. When you use the sword of the Spirit, you can overcome temptation and the lies and accusations of Satan. When you resist these things in faith with the sword of the Spirit, you can be victorious (**1 Peter 5:8-9**).

The following is a prayer for taking up the sword of the Spirit: *"Heavenly Father, I receive the sword of the Spirit by faith. Your Word is sharper than any two-edged sword. Your Word can enable me to destroy every doubt, every fear, every temptation, and every lie that comes against me. When these things come at me, enable me to overcome them with Your Word. Give me the Scriptures that I need to overcome these things. Grant me a deeper desire for and understanding of Your Word. Amen."*

Becoming Effective With This Weapon:

(1) *You need to have a growing understanding of the Word of God.* No matter how well you know the Bible, you must get to know it better. This is your key offensive weapon in the spiritual war. You must become thoroughly acquainted with the Word in order to be an effective spiritual soldier.

(2) *You need to memorize Scripture.* By memorizing Scripture, you will be able to recall specific Scriptures that you need to counter temptations or the lies and accusations of Satan. When you are tempted or the lie or accusation comes to mind, you will be able to recall the Scripture that you need. This will enable you to be more effective in dealing with these things when they come at you.

(3) *Memorize Scripture that deals with a problem area in your life.* If you have a problem with lying, memorize Scripture that deals with lying. If your problem area is lust, memorize Scripture that deals with lust. Then use these Scriptures to fight against and root out the sinful habit. The Roman soldier made sure that his sword was sharp and ready for battle. You must make sure that your sword (these

specific verses) is fixed in your mind and ready to be used, especially when it is a temptation or lie that you have already yielded to on previous occasions.

(4) *It may take more than one blow of your sword to overcome the temptation or the lie of Satan.* You may have to continually apply the Word of God to the lie or the temptation (**Matthew 4:1-11**). Satan does not give up without a fight. You may have to keep resisting and declaring the truth for some time before you gain victory. This is especially true if you have yielded to the lie or temptation on a previous occasion. If Satan knows that you have yielded to the sin or the lie before and have a weakness concerning this, he will keep coming at you with the lie or the temptation. If he has been effective with the lie or the temptation before, he will continue to come at you with it. Yet, if you will stand firm in faith and use the Word, you can be victorious.

(5) *You need to daily seek the filling of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).* The sword that you are to use in this war is the sword of "the Spirit." It is the Holy Spirit who inspired the Word of God. He is the One who can enable you to effectively use this sword. This is why you must be surrendered to Him on a daily basis, seeking His power and leadership. Daily cry out for Him to control you and enable you to use the sword of the Word of God.

A New Prayer Product

The Prayer Closet Ministries, Inc. is now producing "The Armor of God" prayer rings. This prayer ring deals with placing the armor of God on your life on a daily basis. This prayer ring will give you a daily reminder of the fact that you are in a spiritual war and that you need to put on your armor. The key ring contains prayers that will enable you to place each piece of armor on your life by faith. It is designed to help you use the weapons

that God has given you in this spiritual war. If you would like to receive one or more of these, please contact us at The Prayer Closet Ministries, Inc. by mail, e-mail, or phone. These addresses and our phone number are found on the first page of the newsletter.

News About The Prayer Closet Ministries, Inc.

The Prayer Closet Ministries, Inc. has become a tax-exempt, charitable organization with the Internal Revenue Service. This means that any donations that you make to this ministry are tax-deductible. This ministry is just that--a ministry. It is our goal and hope to encourage and challenge believers in their personal relationship with God. This is our top priority. We do not charge for the newsletter or any of the prayer materials that we produce. God has been faithful to bless and provide. We praise Him for this! This ministry has been built and continues to grow through faith, prayer, and fasting. We want to reach as many people as possible with our materials. We do not want people or churches to be hindered from receiving these products because of a lack of money. However, it does take money to produce the newsletter and the other prayer materials that we offer. This ministry cannot operate without the gracious and sacrificial gifts of God's people. We would ask you to prayerfully consider supporting this ministry financially.

The Beloved Unbeliever Network is a network of intercessors who pray for believers who have spouses that are not Christians. This network of intercessors pray daily for believers who are in this situation. These intercessors have been trained and are committed to praying for believers who find themselves in this type of marriage. If you would like to be added to this prayer list or if you know of someone who is in this situation and would like to place them on this prayer list, please contact Dr. Kevin Meador. Please provide the following information:

Name of the family members
Church affiliation
Any special requests

Any information that is submitted will be kept in strict confidence and the privacy of the individuals will be protected. Name codes will be given to each name submitted. The person sending in the name and myself will be the only ones who know the real name of the person being submitted.



THE PRAYER CLOSET MINISTRIES, INC.
Dr. Kevin Meador
595 Stratton Road
Decatur, MS 39327

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Hickory, MS
Permit #2

Steve & Ann Mayes
1111 Pleasant Valley Road
Decatur, MS 39327