



What Is the Armor of God?

Part 2

“How we thank God, who gives us victory over sin and death through Jesus Christ our Lord!” (1 Corinthians 15:57, NLT)

Now that you are all dressed in your battle gear, alert and ready, what offensive weapon has God provided to defeat Satan – guns, bombs or missiles? Those will not work, of course, on invisible enemies. God has provided a much more powerful spiritual weapon, the sword of the Spirit (the Word of God)! When God allowed Satan to tempt Jesus in the wilderness, Jesus modeled how to fight with this sword. By defeating Satan’s temptations, he proved he was sinless and could be the perfect sacrifice for your sins. By winning, he demonstrated to you that in him, you can be more than a conqueror!

The only offensive weapon

This sword is quite different from the metal sword of the Roman soldier. Paul describes the weapon: *“Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”* (Ephesians 6: 17b, NIV) The “word of God” here refers to a specific portion or verse of Scripture. When Satan attacked Jesus in the wilderness, Jesus spoke a specific verse from the Old Testament (which is all he had). He won the victory, not by just saying the verse, but by believing and obeying the Word. *“For the Word of God is full of living power.”* (Hebrews 4:12a, NLT) Follow his example carefully and learn how to use the “sword” effectively.

The first temptation of Jesus

Interestingly, God planned Jesus’ temptations. God also tests us and allows us to be tempted so that we can learn to be a conqueror. The Bible says the Holy Spirit led Jesus into the desert like wilderness where he fasted forty days. (Read Matthew 4:1-11) Can you imagine how terribly lonely, weak and hungry he felt? Think about how you feel after missing one meal! Satan often tempts you when you are most vulnerable. Can you think of a time when he has tempted you?

The tempter said, *“If [Since] you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”* (Matthew 4:3, NIV) In other words, “Act like God.” However, Jesus knew that obeying his Father is more important than meeting a physical need. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 8:3: *“It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”* (Matthew 4:4, NIV) When Jesus said “man”, he was saying, “I’m

not defeating Satan as God, but as a human being. Just as Jesus was victorious, in him you can have victory. What physical need does the enemy use to tempt you?

The second temptation

The Devil then took Jesus to Jerusalem to stand on the highest point of the Temple where he could see Jerusalem and the surrounding area. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: ‘He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.’” (Matthew 4:6, NIV) Did you know that Satan can quote Scripture? He just doesn’t obey it! Can you think of a truth you know that you are not obeying?

Jesus fought back with Deuteronomy 6:16, “*It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’*” (Matthew 4:7, NIV) Satan was asking Jesus to prove God’s faithfulness. Jesus’ relationship with his Father as a human being rested on faith. He did not have to manipulate his Father for a sign or put him to a foolish test. He totally trusted his Father.

The third temptation

For the third temptation, Satan took Jesus on a high mountain and showed him all the splendor and kingdoms of the world. He offered to give all the kingdoms of the world to Jesus if he would bow down and worship him. (Matthew 4:8) Jesus quickly replied from Deuteronomy 6:13, “*Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.’*” (Matthew 4:10, NIV) He would not serve Satan! He had a deeper call in life than to be a political ruler. God would give him the kingdoms of the world but it would be costly. He would suffer on the cross, die as Savior of the world and bring those who believe in him a peace with God and give them eternal life. Did you know that God has a plan for your life? How has Satan tempted you to take the easy way out instead of obeying him and following his plan for you?

Exhortation to pray

Although Paul does not have prayer listed as a piece of armor, he closes his teaching on the armor by saying, “*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.*” (Ephesians 6:18, NLT) All through Scripture, prayers have defeated the enemy.

This is a great example. When King Herod arrested the apostle Peter and put him in prison, the church prayed earnestly for him. The night before he was to go on trial, he was sleeping between two soldiers and bound with two chains. Sentries guarded the entrance.. Suddenly, there was a bright light. His chains fell off and an angel of the Lord appeared. The angel told Peter to get dressed, put on his sandals, coat and follow him. Peter thought it was a vision until the angel left him. Then he realized he was walking down the street. He finally understood the Lord had sent an angel and saved him from

death. He went to the home where people were praying. Even though they were praying for his release, when Rhoda the servant girl answered the door and told the others Peter was there, they said, “You are out of your mind!” They were amazed! (Acts 12:1-19, NLT) Prayer defeated the enemy! Using your armor and prayer, you can, too.

Attitude Check:

- What attitude would you need to become an equipped soldier for the Lord?

Explore:

- Read “Resist the Devil” (James 4:7-6) and “Put on God’s Armor” (Romans 13:11-14).
- Look in the Topical Index in the back of your New Testament to find verses to memorize to counterattack your particular temptation.
- Memorize the pieces of the armor.

Talking with God:

- Father, help me to remember to put my armor on each day and to live to please you. Keep me alert that I might recognize when the enemy tries to deceive me.