



Armed & Dangerous

a women's devotional study on the armour of God

by
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Introduction

Several years ago, our friend Chummy challenged a small group of us to memorize a passage of Scripture that we were studying together. It's composed of nine verses and, in my Bible, falls under a heading called "The Armour of God." Chummy didn't know it at the time, but I was wading through some pretty dark and difficult stuff right about then, and God, in His infinite goodness, was dropping me a lifeline. I grabbed hold of it and over the process of the next few weeks, memorized Ephesians 6:10-18. At first, it was merely an intellectual exercise; something I knew would be good for me, since everyone knows that we should memorize Bible verses! As time passed, however, I found myself speaking this passage aloud every morning. I began to envision myself "suited up" for the battles of the day, and I truly sensed God's presence as He strengthened my heart and my mind. Later on, as the words became increasingly familiar to me, I found that parts of my morning prayer time revolved around these verses.

"The Armour of God" has become very precious to me over the past couple of years! I hope the devotional studies in this booklet will whet your appetite enough that you want to commit this wonderful passage to memory as well. There is one day of study devoted to each piece of the armour. At the top of every day's lesson, I ask you to read the "armour" passage in its entirety, and then to write out a "key verse" found elsewhere in the Bible that speaks to that day's piece of armour but from a different angle (eg. on the Belt of Truth day, the key verse would talk about truth...). I know, I know, I KNOW that it will be tempting to gloss over the daily reading of Ephesians 6:10-18! Please let me give you a friendly kick in the hoo-hoo right now, before you even get to that point. I have found that the more familiar I am with the Word of God, the more it comes alive in my spirit. Do the hard work! Take the time! You won't regret a single minute you've spent reading or studying the Bible. And one day, when you least expect it, those words will come rushing to your mind and your lips at the very moment you need them. If you choose to actually memorize the passage, take it one verse at a time. I find that writing out the verses as I memorize them, just a little at a time, really helps me visualize it in my mind. For you, it might be reading and repeating it out loud. Recite what you've memorized to a friend or family member, then move on to memorize the next bit. You can do it!

At the end of the devotionals, I have given you a "sample prayer," an example of how the "Armour" passage has become part of my prayer life. This is absolutely not a rote prayer for you to copy or memorize. God's Word is alive and active and His Spirit will come upon each of us as we pray His Word in a personal way. I just know that it really helped me to read some examples of how to pray God's Word when I first tried to apply this to my prayer life. (See Beth Moore's *Praying God's Word*.)

Alright, enough already! Let's dig in!

Day One: The Belt of Truth

Read: Ephesians 6: 10-18

Write out today's key verse: John 8:32

When Paul talks about buckling the belt of truth firmly around our waists, I picture my 5-year-old son Benji racing through the house with his pants dropped halfway to his knees. It's the running family joke that he is our "bumless" child and more than a few pictures have been snapped of his precious little behind. Without a belt, Ben's entire fashion statement unravels pretty quickly!

I know from personal experience that if my mind is not soaked in and meditating upon God's truth, my spiritual life can drop almost as quickly as my son's drawers. Time and again, God has made it clear to me that a life characterized by freedom and rich living is always rooted in the truth.

So what does this look like? How do these lofty, spiritual-sounding ideas translate into daily life?

Let's Buckle UP!

Lately, God has been teaching me the importance of "buckling up" in the following four areas:

1) *Know the truth* – In today's key verse, Jesus promises that His disciples will know the truth and that the truth will set them free. In order to be His disciples, though, we must "hold to [His] teaching" (see verse 31). I must ask myself, how can I hold to a teaching I do not know? How can Christ set me free from my bondage to sin (whether it's selfishness, fear, addictions, dishonesty...) if I don't even know the truth about my heart or His perfect remedy? The fact is that there is no substitute for regular time in His Word.



2) *Think the truth* – This is the toughest one for me. Sitting on my couch with a mug of steaming peppermint tea and an open Bible, I find that truthful thoughts abound! I'm focused (usually!) and regular life has been put on hold for a while. Once I pack it in and take on my day, however, my thought life can take a sharp nosedive. Philippians 4:8 tells us to think about things that are true, noble and right. I am learning to ask daily for God's help in training my mind to think about situations, relationships, problems, even blessings in a godly, truthful way. I want to "take each thought captive to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5).

- 3) *Speak the truth* – Have you ever been shocked at how easily a lie can slip from your lips? I know I have! My stomach has turned as I've listened to myself fabricate a "little white lie," sometimes for almost no apparent reason. Where did that come from?! I want to speak truthful words and I know this must begin with a truthful heart for the heart is the "wellspring of life" (Proverbs 4:23).
- 4) *Live the truth* – Who am I, really? Am I living honestly, allowing others to know the person God created me to be? At times I am strong and confident, but just as often I feel insecure and awkward. Don't we all? God has given me (and you!) something to offer this world. It may seem boring or insignificant to us, but that's not ours to decide. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow once said, "Give what you have, for you never know – to someone else it may be better than you can even dare to think." God is teaching me to be truthful about who I am and what I have to offer. I can trust Him for the results.

For you, which of these four areas poses the greatest challenge when it comes to buckling up with God's truth? _____

Write down an example from your own life where you have experienced difficulty in this area. *(An example might be: I find it difficult to think godly, truthful thoughts about my job situation. I worry about it constantly.)*

Now, **please** take the time to do this. Using the concordance at the back of your Bible, look up a key word from the problem you've just described (e.g. from my example it might be "worry" or "money/riches") then locate two or three of the Scriptures listed under that key word. Keep searching until you find God's truth about your struggle! (Remember, we need to know the truth in order to be free.) Once you've read a verse that seems to fit your situation, take a minute to read the passage in which it is found. It's important to keep the context of everything we read in God's Word. Now write down the verse and, if possible, memorize it! God will bring His Word to our minds at the most opportune times if we will just hide His truth in our hearts.

Your verse: _____

*There. We've tightened our belts a few notches today!
May God bless you as you seek after His truth in your life.*

Day Two: The Breastplate of Righteousness

Read: Ephesians 6: 10-18

Write out today's key verse: Philippians 3:9

True confession: I'm a "people pleaser" from way back. Just ask my Mom. I spent a lot of my childhood years hoping the adults in my life would smile approvingly in my direction. And most of the time they did! Strong student, well-behaved, responsible and good. I'd have bent over backward to make sure my ducks were in a row! Sure, I loved Jesus and really did want to live for Him, but looking back, I can see that I had the "righteousness" thing all wrong.

Now that I'm older (and hopefully a little wiser), I am learning that the righteousness God speaks of in the Bible has a lot more to do with His power than it does mine.

Please reread today's key verse. What does the Bible tell us about the source of true righteousness?

My human efforts only took me so far before I inevitably hit a wall. Trying to be perfect can put a lot of pressure on a girl! He met me at that wall and, oh, how grateful I am that He rescued me from myself! God spoke tenderly to me in the midst of several dark seasons of anxiety and depression ... He spoke to me through His Word, through the writings of many wonderful believers and through the love of my family and friends. I truly believe that one of the greatest treasures He gave me during those grueling months of "refining" was this truth: That I must surrender myself to Him and His work in my life if I am ever to begin to be righteous. I was never going to cut it on my own.



The beauty of true righteousness is that God actually did all the work when Christ became sin for us on the cross (2 Corinthians 5:21). If we accept what He did on our behalf, we are "in Him" and "[can] become the righteousness of God." That means that if I belong to Jesus, God looks at me and sees Christ's righteousness. THIS righteousness I can wear as a breastplate, for it protects the very core of who I am.

Sound too abstract to meet you where you live? Let's simplify. I like to think about righteousness in two ways. First, as we've already discussed, we receive God's righteousness when we accept Christ by faith. We are covered by Him and are in good standing with God. But there's more to the story. We not only receive His righteousness as a gift, but are also called to actively pursue it through a lifetime of practical training and righteous living. Paul urges Timothy to "pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace" (2 Timothy 2:22). He goes on to remind his young student that Scripture should be used for "training in righteousness" (3:16). Sounds like the more diligently we pursue God's righteousness, the snuggler that breastplate is going to be!

What does the Bible teach about righteousness or righteous living in the following Scriptures? Try to record your answers in practical, everyday terms that you could apply to your own life! Place a star beside the one you want to focus on today.

e.g. Hebrews 10:38

A righteous person will live by faith and persevere until God's purpose is accomplished. It pleases God when I press on and don't shrink back.

1. Romans 4:3 _____

2. Psalm 25:21 _____

3. Hebrews 3:12 _____

4. Philippians 2:13 _____

5. Matthew 6:33 _____

Can we agree that only God is able to make us truly righteous?

Let's relax in His love and let Him change us, one day at a time. As long as we are pursuing Him and staying plugged into His power, we can be confident that He's working away at us, like a potter at the wheel. I know He'll do a much better job of me than I ever could; of you, too.

Have a great day!

Day Three: The Shoes of Peace

Read: Ephesians 6:10-18

Write out today's key verse: Philippians 4:7

Spring has officially sprung. Sure, it's still a little chilly, but something fresh is in the air! Along with the tulips, crocuses and other signs of new life, spring also ushers in that most wonderful time of year ... garage sale season!

If you're anything like my husband, John, you can hardly stand to drive by those Saturday morning treasure troves without at least stopping for a look. I like them, too, but my enthusiasm is always dampened by the fact that I am seriously deficient in the "haggling" skills department. I just can't do it. I have the hardest time asking someone to lower the price of a vase from 50 cents to 25! I mean, give me a break, we'll probably go straight from the garage sale to Tim Horton's and pay \$2.50 for a cappuccino.

No, I'm not much of a wheeler and dealer. When it comes to bargains, though, I discovered a pretty sweet one recently during my prayer time. I was talking to the Lord about peace and asking Him to bless my day with it, when today's key verse came to mind. He reminded me that His peace would guard my heart and my mind (how wonderful is that?!) and that He gives the kind of peace we can't even comprehend. When I asked Him exactly what I had to do to experience that kind of peace, He took me to the previous verse (Philippians 4:6). Have a look at it with me, why don't you?

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." (Phil. 4:6)

If God's part of the deal is to give us perfect, incomprehensible peace, what do we have to give Him first?

If you said something like our prayers, requests and thankfulness, you're on the right track! I might have majored in English, but this is a math formula that even I can put down on paper:

My Anxieties + My Requests + My Thankfulness = God's Mind Boggling Peace

I give my Father the things that are troubling me and then give Him my thanks. He gives me His peace. The wording of the next verse assures us that if we fulfill our part of the bargain, He will most definitely fulfill His: "AND the peace of God...WILL guard your hearts and minds...."

So, what do you think?

Have you been holding up your end of the deal? If you're anything like me, you probably have a tougher time thanking Him than asking for His help, especially in the midst of a trial or difficulty. My good friend and mentor, Aunt Bet, told me recently that God taught her the value of thankfulness during her husband's battle with cancer. She learned to say, "Lord, this is where I am. My husband has cancer and I don't like it. But I thank You that You're in this with me and that You will help me walk through each day."

Will I thank Him like that in the midst of a power struggle with a strong willed child? When the phone rings with tragic news of someone I love? If the pay check runs out before the month does – again? Will you? The amazing truth is that once we thank Him, He really will give us a peace that passes all understanding.

Why do you think Paul associates God's peace with wearing the proper shoes for battle? (Ephesians 6:15)

Match the Scripture reference with the proper description of God's peace:

Romans 8:6	Peace is a result of loving God's Word
Psalms 4:8	Peace is a fruit that the Holy Spirit grows in us
Psalms 119:165	Perfect peace comes from a steadfast, trusting mind
Galatians 5:22	Holy Spirit controlled thoughts equals peace
Isaiah 26:3	Trusting in God's protection helps us sleep peacefully!

I love the depth of God's Word! As a person who has tossed and turned through many anxious nights, I can't tell you how precious some of these verses have become to me. Does one of them jump out and grab you today? If so, write it on a recipe card and put it somewhere visible – the more we soak our minds in the truth (see Day One!) the more peaceful our hearts and minds will be. Lace up those shoes - we've got places to go!

Lord, I want Your peace in my life. It is so sweet and beyond anything this world has to offer. Teach me to bring all my worries and requests to Your feet and then to THANK YOU for Your faithfulness to me. Thank You for the sweetest deal ever!

Day Four: The Shield of Faith

Read: Ephesians 6:10-18

Write out today's key verse: Hebrews 11:6

My first roller-coaster experience was a disaster. Our family was at Disney-World when my parents stumbled across a ride called "Space Mountain." Hmm...sounded harmless enough. They herded us all into line and we mindlessly inched our way towards the black, yawning mouth of a cave. The screams that echoed from within that mountain should have been my parents' first red flag. But somehow, in the midst of watching over three sweaty, whining kids, Mom and Dad missed all the warning signs that "Space Mountain" was going to be more than this little Canadian family had bargained for! By the time they realized that it was a *roller-coaster* with a big fat capital **R**, we were at the front of the line and had to think fast. At eight, I was the oldest, and seeing as there were two to a car, you can easily picture the seating arrangements, can't you? Right. Yours truly was plopped into her "very own seat," while Mom and Dad snuggled in with the little ones. I won't go into the gory details, but let's just say that I spent a lot of years on kiddie rides before I got over the trauma of "Space Mountain!"

I did eventually fall in love with roller-coasters. You know the feeling you get in the pit of your stomach just as the ride crests the top of a hill and starts to hurtle downwards? Like you're free falling and in dire need of a couple more seat-belts? Sometimes that's how I feel when God asks me to trust Him in the middle of a real-life "loop-dee-loop." My circumstances are suddenly altered and I find myself free falling, frantically searching for something to cling to... "Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see" (Hebrews 11:1). Faith has been hard for me. In my natural self, I am a fearful person who likes security. It doesn't take much to shake my world! To be honest, I used to look at that verse and not know what to make of it. How could I be *sure* and *certain* when I so often had no idea what God was up to? What did real faith even look like? I hated the idea of pasting a smile on my face and drumming up some kind of "don't-worry-be-happy" optimism based entirely on positive thinking.

The Lord has taught me a few things about real-life faith, one of the most liberating being that He KNOWS how hard faith is for us sometimes! And it's okay to talk to Him about it! In Mark 9:24, a sick boy's father says to Jesus, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" I like that kind of honesty. He is teaching me that faith means believing He really does work things together for good, even when they're extremely tough to live through (Romans 8:28).

Faith is sometimes just holding onto Jesus with everything I've got, whether or not I understand my circumstances (Proverbs 3:5-6). Finally, I am beginning to understand that faith has little to do with me and everything to do with Him. Beth Moore puts it this way:

"Faith is not believing in my own unshakable belief. Faith is believing an unshakable God when everything in me trembles and quakes."

Today's key verse tells us it's impossible to please God without faith. Oh, how I want to please Him. Don't you? I want to make Him smile when He looks my way! He loves us so much, and the thing He treasures most is our trust in Him, our belief in His goodness and perfect plan. One of the things I love about God is the fact that He helps us do His will! When He asks us to have faith in Him, He doesn't then hang us out to dry because we can't muster it up on our own. Never!

What do the following verses teach us about God's role in the building up of our faith?

Galatians 5:22 The _____ grows faith in our lives

Romans 10:17 Faith is a result of hearing the _____ of God's _____

Mark 9:24 We can ask Jesus to _____ our unbelief

Luke 17:5 We can ask Jesus to _____ our faith

What an amazing God!

He says we need a shield of faith to fend off our enemy's attacks, and then offers us His own power in developing that faith! Let's come to Him daily, exposing our hearts to the message of His Word and asking Him to grow us up in our faith. From what I've seen so far, it can be a wild, heart stopping ride, but now I know Who I'm holding onto!

Day Five: The Helmet of Salvation

Read: Ephesians 6:10-18

Write out today's key verse: Philippians 4:8

Today we study the second last piece of armour, which is the helmet of salvation. Let's talk about what goes on inside these heads of ours. Most of us spend plenty of time keeping them up on the outside, but what about the stuff that's swirling around beneath our sleek and stylish "do's?" I hope you can relate when I tell you that, as unmanageable as my hair can be sometimes (can you say "cowlick?"), it's still much easier to control than my thoughts are! God's Word has much to say about the importance of guarding our thoughts and thinking with the mind of Christ. If we're going to "take [our] stand against the devil's schemes," we must learn to protect our minds by thinking the way God wants us to.

My Uncle Helmut - (Can you believe the name?! I did NOT make it up so he would fit into today's lesson!) – he went to be with Jesus about a year ago now. Uncle Helmut was always on the quiet side and I don't remember having more than a handful of conversations with him at our various family "get-togethers" But I realized after his death that, if there was one thing I would remember about him, it would be that he loved Jesus. It just kind of radiated from him in a way that's hard to describe in words. My Mom told me a while ago that Uncle Helmut had boiled life down to a pretty straightforward paradigm. It went like this:

"God is good all the time. Satan is bad all the time. I am the problem all the time. Jesus is the answer all the time."

Some of us aren't comfortable with black and white statements like, that, but it worked for him! Uncle Helmut knew his Bible, believe me. It might have had more writing in the white spaces *around* the text than in all the inspired Scriptures put together! He had soaked his mind in God's revealed truth and come up with this kind of "filter" through which to process the experiences of his life.

So what's the big deal? Why is God nosing around in my thought life, anyway? I'm happy to tell you that God is on our side and knows us infinitely better than we know ourselves. He fully understands our sinfulness and sees the destructive situations our thoughts can lead us into (see Psalm 94:11). If we could step outside the hardness of our own heads and see the potential for

disaster in there, I suspect we'd fall on our knees in gratitude that God is bothering to nose around in that muck at all!

Think about your thoughts for a minute. (Does that sound weird?) Can you see how they affect your heart and your relationship with God? Were you feeling peaceful and at rest with the Lord on Sunday morning until you went to church and started comparing yourself to another more "saintly" saint? (Been there.) Have you ever worked yourself into a near-frenzy over your child's well-being, imagining the future troubles he might encounter in life, the teenage rebellion you know you won't be able to handle, the friends you probably won't like? (Done that.) Has someone ever offended you and, over time, the offense grew exponentially in your mind, the longer you dwelled on it? (Guilty.)

In my own life, I have found the battlefield of the mind to be hotly contested. We have an enemy, Satan himself, who hates us and the One we love. His lies can be pretty convincing, so God calls us to "prepare our minds for action" (1 Peter 1:13). Part of suiting up for the battles of life is to be sure our thoughts are focused on God and His truth. Back we go to our belt of truth – is it tightly buckled?

Our key verse is tightly packed with adjectives describing the kinds of thoughts God wants us to dwell upon. Please note that the very first one is "true."



From Philippians 4:8, list at least four other things that should be true of our thoughts:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

As with all the other pieces of God's armour, we can't do this on our own. We need His help to think the way He wants us to! In Romans 8:5-8, Paul talks about the power of the Holy Spirit in controlling our minds. Would you be willing to ask Him to come and take over your thought life?

In which area of your life do your thoughts tend to lead you into sin? For me, it almost always has something to do with fear or insecurity. Other examples might include jealousy, anger, unforgiveness, discontentment and pride.

Please think about where these thoughts have historically led you and record it below. As uncomfortable as this exercise might be, it helps a lot to be able to look at our sinful patterns on paper. Ouch!

Now take a moment and talk to God about this. Jesus came to set us free, so He is keenly interested in discussing this with you! Ask Him to show you where your thoughts begin to go astray and pray for His power in controlling them.

Helmet...in place.

Day Six: The Sword of the Spirit

Read: Ephesians 6:10-18

Write out today's key verse: Psalm 119:165

Typically, it's the guys who are into the swords. I know John has wanted to buy one for years, just to hang on the wall and, well, I don't know...drool over? What else would he do with it? We women can fight a good tussle, though, too, can't we? I'd swing a sword, a frying pan or whatever I could get my hands on, if I or my loved ones were ever in heavy duty trouble. I'm sure you feel the same way.

As we take up the last piece of our armour, the mighty Word of God, notice with me that the sword is our only offensive weapon. And we need one, for as we discussed yesterday, we have a heavy duty enemy. I once heard a preacher say that we should use the sword of the Spirit to "charge the gates of

hell.” How exactly does that work? How do we take the offensive when it comes to the spiritual battles in our lives? Consider the following:

- 1) *Know God's Word* – For me, this means taking the time to read the Bible and prayerfully think about it throughout the course of the day. Ask someone you trust to show you a “readable” version that meets you where you’re at. Take part in a ladies’ Bible study, if at all possible, praying that God would lead you to the right one. Memorizing verses and passages of Scripture is the most powerful tool I have found for hiding His Word in my heart (Psalm 119:11). In James 1:25 it talks about looking “intently” into God’s perfect law. To me this suggests a regular and focused study of the Bible. Will we be perfectly consistent and disciplined? Absolutely not! But Scripture is clear about the results of time spent in God’s Word: blessing (James 1:25) and protection from our own sinful tendencies (Psalm 119:11).
- 2) *Speak God's Word out loud* – Beth Moore’s “Believing God” study really brings this to the forefront. A close friend recently told me that, as much as she loves to meditate on certain portions of the Bible, when she’s in a real bind she locks herself in the bathroom to speak them out loud until she’s on solid spiritual ground again. There is power in those words because they are not our words! It might feel funny for a while, but give it a try. It will build up your faith, and, as Beth says, although it sounds like your voice to you, to the enemy it sounds like God Himself.
- 3) *Apply God's Word to your life* - It’s one thing to stuff our heads full of Scriptural truth, but quite another to weave those principles into the fabric of our lives. How many of us have grown up running through the church halls and under its pews, but haven’t taken God’s teaching past the lobby doors? James says it loud and clear: “Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. *Do what it says*” (James 1:22). We become formidable foes when we are obeying God’s truth rather than just listening to it!
- 4) *Love God's Word* - Today’s key verse is wonderful, don’t you think? “Great peace have they who love your law, and nothing can make them stumble.” I’ve always been a klutz, so stumbling around is second nature to me. Add to that the fact that I’ve inherited my Dad’s wimpy ankles, and we’re looking at a whole lot of tensor bandages, my friends! I love the picture the psalmist paints for us here. I desperately want God’s peace and sure footing for the battles of life. If those things are a result of loving God’s Word, I’m interested. Have you ever asked God to give you a love for the Bible? I started to pray for that very thing a few years ago, and would encourage you to do the same. If you get the same answer I did (and I’m sure you will!), you’ll be hard pressed to go without the daily bread of God’s Word.

Please choose three verses/passages that have impacted you recently (either while doing this study or elsewhere) and write them below. Would you commit to memorizing them within the next three months? You may have chosen to memorize Ephesians 6:10-18 and, if so, will want to come back to this at a later time!

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Are you convinced yet?

God's Word is a mighty, mighty weapon, a powerful sword at our side. Don't forget that Jesus Himself resisted the devil's attacks by speaking Scripture aloud to him (Luke 4:1-13). If Christ swung the sword of the Spirit, who are we to think that we could enter the battle without it firmly in hand?

We're suited up!

Do you feel armed and dangerous? I don't always *feel* like I am either...but we can trust our Commanding Officer when He says that His armour *is* enough to keep us standing when our enemy attacks.

*May He bless you and make you strong in His mighty power!
Thanks for coming along!*

Praying the Armour of God

As promised in the Introduction, here is an idea of how God has led me to work this passage into my prayer life. Obviously, I don't pray the same thing every day; it all depends on what is happening in my life at the time and what is on my heart. At the risk of giving too much information (!), I thought it might be helpful to share that, right from the beginning, I decided to "pray the armour" during my morning shower because I knew I wouldn't be interrupted, plus I would remember to do it every day if I just made it my morning practice. It's been a really good system, although the other day I was so engrossed in my prayer time that I didn't notice a huge centipede sharing the shower with me until I leaned down to turn off the water! Yikes! I'm not sure which piece of the armour I would have used to fend him off if he'd gotten too close, but thankfully he fit nicely down the drain hole. OK, here goes.... (Put *your* name in the first blank.)

"Finally, Steph, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

(Lord, I know that I'm weak on my own. Thank You for offering me your strength and I ask for it now.)

Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

(Father, You tell us in Your Word to be aware of the devil's schemes. Please make me aware of any inroads he might be making in my life today. Open my eyes, Lord.)

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore, put on the full armour of God so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground and, after having done everything, to stand.

(I want to stand strong in You today, God, no matter what happens.)

Stand firm, then, with the belt of truth buckled firmly around your waist (Teach me Your truth, Lord, and help me to live a truthful life today. May my words be truthful ones, spoken in love),

with the breastplate of righteousness in place

(I've tried so many times to be good on my own, but thank You for showing me that only You can make me righteous. Help me today, God, to seek Your Kingdom and righteousness first and to trust You for everything else),

and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

(Lord, I want Your peace to rule in my heart. I give you my worries – lay them out to God – and now I thank You that I can trust You with my life. I pray for peace in my marriage and in my home today.)

In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

(Overcome my unbelief, I pray. Grow my faith today, God, and help me to believe You for Your promises. Thank You for Your faithfulness to me even when I have wandered from You.)

Take the helmet of salvation

(Today I want to think with the mind of Christ! Holy Spirit, please help me to control my thoughts and to think about things that are true, noble and excellent)

and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

(Dear Lord, thank You so much for Your Word and for helping me to love it. Give me the strength today to wield it as a mighty weapon, in a way that pleases You. Please bring Your Word to my mind and to my lips today, at the very moment I need it.)

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.

(Holy Spirit, I open up my heart to You and invite You to come in. Please fill me up today and take over in my life. I want to walk, talk, pray and worship in the Spirit. Grow Your fruit in my life today and help me to mind Your promptings.)

With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints."

(This is a great time to pray for loved ones and those you know are in need!)

My prayer...