

STRONG IN THE LORD

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness

Armour:

Breastplate functioned as the PRIMARY source of defense.

- Without it any stray arrow or spear thrust would be fatal.
- Protected both the front and the back (what the warrior sees and what he doesn't)
- Protected all the vital organs, none as vulnerable or vital as the heart. (if your heart gets hit, you're done)

Defining our term(s): **HEART: Not merely our feelings and emotions but the source of our desires.**

Lit. Greek: – the place from where everything “springs”...

Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.

Proverbs 4:23

The heart” is the source of our strong “inclinations.”

Jonathan Edwards used the word “affections” [Religious Affections] strong, settled “inclinations”

Our defining “loves.” And our defining “hatreds.”

BIG Idea:

Properly understanding righteousness protects your heart.

- Without properly understanding righteous keeps our heart exposed.
- Breastplate protected the MOST vulnerable part of us... so understanding righteousness protects the most vital part of us.

Knowing

- But what righteousness do we mean? Our own?
- If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. ⁷ But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. ⁸ Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. (Philippians 3:4-8)
- NO
- ¹⁶ He saw that there was no man,
and wondered that there was no one to intercede;
then his own arm brought him salvation,
and his righteousness upheld him.
- ¹⁷ He put on righteousness as a breastplate,
and a helmet of salvation on his head (Isaiah 59:16-17)

Imputed: The righteousness of Christ credited to believers because we are joined to him.

- The righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed by faith to sinners who deserve death and judgment for their sins. We understand that by “the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous” (Romans 5:19)
- Martin Luther: “...when the devil throws your sins in your face and declares that you deserve death and hell, tell him this: “I admit that I deserve death and hell, what of it? For I know One who suffered and made satisfaction on my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, Son of God, and where He is there I shall be also!”
-

Imparted: The righteousness believers are able to mature as the Holy Spirit works within us.

- There is a righteousness we are now able to mature and nurture because sin has been defeated in our lives and the Holy Spirit is at work within us...
- Paul has already shown the link between imputed and imparted righteousness in Ephesians 4:22, put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Which does Paul mean? BOTH!

But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. 1 Thess 5:8

- Faith is a gift, love is what we are able to DO (how we are able to love) BECAUSE of that gift...

Doing (How orthodoxy translates into orthopraxy)

a.) Control your feelings.

- Lloyd-Jones called this “biblical psychology” – I believe the inspired writers were given enlightenment by the Holy Spirit to understand man, personality, insight into the mind and emotions...
- Through a proper understanding of imputed and imparted righteousness we can learn (though imperfectly) to control our: emotions, desires, feelings, conscience and moods.
- Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city. (Proverbs 16:32)

b.) Overcome your sin.

For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. ²⁵ Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, ²⁶ for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. (Hebrews 9)

Luke 18: ⁹ He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt: ¹⁰ “Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.’ ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”

-