

Lesson 3 – The Breastplate of Righteousness, Ephesians 6:14

Introduction

This lesson will study the command to put on the breastplate of righteousness. In the first century the breastplate covered the front and back of the soldier, from the neck to the thigh. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, “Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier,” in 2 Timothy 2:3, 4.

1. As you open your time in the word, **ask** God to help you see what entangles you so that you are kept from being a righteous servant, who is ready for active duty. Begin with these **observation questions**.

- To understand righteousness, we must look at the Lord God. God’s righteousness is revealed through His attributes and His actions. Please read Isaiah 59:1-21 and notice the reference to “armor” and righteousness in verse 17. Who is involved and what does this say about righteousness?

- Now turn to Isaiah 61 and read verses 10 and 11. What does this say about righteousness?

- What did Jesus say about our responsibility as His followers in Matthew 6:33?

- In Romans 5 Paul presented an important contrast between Adam and Jesus Christ. What do verses 18 and 19 say about your position as one who follows Christ?

2. Please examine these word studies for some of the **key words** in this passage.

Strong’s # and Transliteration:	Definition from Strong’s Concordance unless written in <i>italics</i> :	Use of the word in other Scriptures:
6666 tsedaqah ts ^a daaqaah Isaiah 59:17	Righteousness , rightness, subjectively rectitude, objectively, justice, morally virtue, figuratively prosperity: moderately, right (eous) (act, -ly, -ness)	Isaiah 61:10, 11
2382 thorax thoraka Ephesians 6:14	Breastplate , the chest, by implication a corset	1 Thessalonians 5:8
1343 dikaiosune diakaiosynes Ephesians 6:14	Righteousness , equity of character or act, justification; <i>conformity to God’s standard, uprightness</i>	Ephesians 4:24

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3. Now look at some of the Old Testament teaching on today's topic. What do these verses say about the righteous?

a. Psalm 11:5

b. Psalm 146:8

c. Proverbs 11:28

4. The righteousness of God is revealed in Paul's letter to the church in Rome. In this book Paul explains that God is just in all of His ways. Read Romans 3:10-30 and then explain how it is possible for you to be righteous before God.

5. Look at what Paul wrote about armor and/or weapons in these passages. What did Paul say to believers about their responsibility?

a. Romans 13:12-14

b. 1 Thessalonians 5:4-8

6. Now read Paul's teaching in 1 Corinthians 7:5 to see what he said about Satan. What are believers to do about this scheme according to the context of this verse?

7. Some people believe that contentment is a quality that reveals one's character. Accepting God's sovereignty contributes to living a life of contentment. In Matthew 5:6 Jesus said that those who hunger and thirst for righteousness will be satisfied. To be satisfied is to be contented. Many people battle with craving what the world offers rather than having a hunger and thirst for righteousness. Close by reading Psalm 103 and allow

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these words to minister to your spirit. Notice the promises of God in this Psalm and write out these promises found in Psalm 103:5a, 17-19. Claim these verses as your own.

a. Psalm 103:5a

b. Psalm 103:17

c. Psalm 103:18

d. Psalm 103:19

What are the enemy's schemes that keep you from wearing the breastplate of righteousness?

What would God have you do as a reminder to put on the breastplate of righteousness?

Our standard for righteousness is the Lord. The hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy" proclaims the nature of God and calls us to worship Him. Close by singing or reading these words as an act of worship before the Lord.

"Holy, Holy, Holy"

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty! Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee; Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore Thee, casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea; cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee, which wert and art, and evermore shalt be.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Though the darkness hide Thee, though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see; only Thou art Holy - there is none beside Thee, perfect in pow'r, in love and purity.

Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty! All Thy works shall praise Thy name, in earth, and sky, and sea; Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty! God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

By Reginald Heber and John B. Dykes

