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God's Weapons for God's Women

Tuesday, February 1, 2011 | Written by Penny Rose

One of the most important discoveries I've made about being a Christian is that sometimes life is warfare. The Bible reveals that we have spiritual enemies determined to steal our joy, our witness, and deceive us with lies. We may not have encountered terrorists, but we all have war stories:

- The recent economic downturn may have forced you to fight *financial battles* like never before.
- Perhaps you struggle with *emotional battles* such as anxiety or depression.
- Maybe you are in the midst of a *physical battle*: your health isn't good, you are in constant pain, or have had a bad diagnosis.
- Many of us face *relationship battles*: your kids are rebelling, your husband isn't a believer, or your friends aren't acting like friends.
- It could be you are one who endures *persecution battles* because of your faith - your co-workers treat you like you're from another planet. Your parents have never understood this whole religion thing.

The older I get the more I come to understand that part of the Master's plan for believers is to be on the battlefield. Paul the apostle understood this, too. That's why he wrote to the Ephesians,

Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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. 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 (Ephesians 6:10-12).

Be Strong

Though our battles seem earthly, they are supernatural. So often, we look at our circumstances (finances, our health) or people (co-workers, children, our husband) like they're the enemy. They're not. Paul told us our enemy is the devil and he's waging an unseen war against us. He commands the army of

principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, and the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. John MacArthur said, Paul here reminds his readers that the Christians struggle is not only against Satan himself but also against a host of his demon subordinates, a vast array of adversaries who, like the devil, are not flesh and blood. Our greatest enemy is not the world we see, corrupt and wicked as it is, but the world we cannot see.^[1]

Since our battles are not earthly, we can't possibly fight Satan and his minions in our own strength. We don't want to be damsels in distress. We want to find strength in the Lord by putting on the armor of God.

Suit Up

If you're like me, one of the first things you ask when going anywhere is, What should I wear? Paul tells us what to wear: *Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand* (Ephesians 6:13). Christian soldiers can never say, I don't have a thing to wear. Let's examine the Christian armor:

- *Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth* (Ephesians 6:14). The Roman soldier's girdle was a belt to hold the armor together. The belt also gathered the soldier's flowing tunic, enabling him to march without getting tripped up. The truth in your life will keep you from falling apart or falling down.
- *Having put on the breastplate of righteousness* (Ephesians 6:14). A Roman soldier's breastplate was made of metal or leather, protecting his vital organs. The breastplate of righteousness protects our souls - the most vital part of our being - from Satan's attacks. Romans 3:10 tells us, *There is none righteous, no, not one*. But when you place your faith in Jesus Christ, God covers you in His righteousness, protecting your heart and soul.
- *Having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace* (Ephesians 6:15). Paul had in mind the heavy, hobnailed military sandals that protected the soldier's feet from bruises and gave them traction on the battlefield. The fashionable footwear is the gospel of peace - the good news that Jesus saves. Our enemy would have us remain silent. But we should be prepared to witness to others. Like Paul, we should be able to say, *I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes* (Romans 1:16).
- *Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one* (Ephesians 6:16). Roman shields were about 2 ft. wide and 4 feet high, designed to protect the entire body. Psalm 3:3 reminds us, *You, O Lord, are a shield for me, my glory and the One who lifts up my head*. They had interlocking edges to enable soldiers to become a solid wall of defense. God fortifies Christian soldiers who unite their shields as one. When Satan is firing his darts at you, find some soldiers to stand with you against the enemy.
- *And take the helmet of salvation* (Ephesians 6:17). The bronze helmet protected the soldier's head from harm. God's helmet of salvation protects your mind from havoc. The mind controlled by God is safe from Satan's turmoil. Isaiah 26:3 promises, *You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You*.
- *And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God* (Ephesians 6:17). Every part of the armor was mainly designed for defense - for fending off attacks. But the sword is the

piece of armor also used to go on the attack. The sword of the Spirit can be used for both offense and defense. Hebrews 4:12 says, *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.* Metal swords cut the flesh to maim and kill. Your spiritual sword, God's Word, cuts to the heart of the matter to bring wholeness and life.

- *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit* (Ephesians 6:18). Oswald Chambers said, "The armor is for the battle of prayer. Prayer is the battlefield!" Prayer is the secret weapon in any battle. There are three requirements for prayer: 1) In the name of the Son: *If you ask anything in My name, I will do it* (John 14:14); 2) In the will of the Father: *Your will be done.* (Matthew 6:10); 3) In the Spirit's power: *Pray at all times in the power of the Holy Spirit* (Eph. 6:18 NLT).

We're in the army now! Thankfully, we have great Commander in Chief who has provided us with His heavenly weapons of war so that we can have spiritual strength to stand and withstand Satan's attacks.

[1] John MacArthur. *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Ephesians*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1986), p. 340.