

THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMOUR

Guarding Your Heart

Read - **Ephesians 6:10-13**.

Text - **Ephesians 6:14** '.. put on the breastplate of righteousness.

Being **CENTRAL TO OUR PHYSICAL LIFE**, it is also **CENTRAL TO OUR SPIRITUAL LIFE**.

Proverbs 4:23 'Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life.'

It is **NO SURPRISE THEN** to find that our Enemy wants to **STRIKE AT OUR HEART IF HE CAN**.

WE ARE TOLD HERE THAT THE PROTECTION FOR OUR HEART IS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

UN-RIGHTEOUSNESS makes us **VULNERABLE**, but **RIGHTEOUSNESS PROTECTS US**.

Matthew 15:19 'Out of the **HEART** proceed **EVIL THOUGHTS, MURDERS, ADULTERIES, FORNICATIONS, THEFTS, FALSE WITNESS, BLASPHEMIES**.'

Jeremiah 17:9 'The **HEART** is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; (in-curably sick) Who can know it?'

1) IMITATION RIGHTEOUSNESS

This is another way of saying **SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS**.

One of the ways **SATAN ATTACKS OUR HEART** is to **ENCOURAGE HYPOCRISY**.

IMITATION = Not genuine or real; being an imitation of the genuine article. **PRETENDING** to be something you are not.

LOOK AT THE RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY in the **SCRIBES AND PHARISEES**.

Matthew 23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a **PRETENCE** make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

Mark 12:38 And he said unto them in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and love salutations in the marketplaces,
39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

40 Which devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

It is **AT HOME** that our **REAL (TRUE)** Character is **SEEN**.

APP/ What are we like **AT HOME?**

- This **DEVIL** is not **AFRAID OF HYPOCRISY**.

EXAMPLE Matthew 22:10 And those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all they found, both bad and good, and the wedding hall was filled with guests.

11 But when the king came in to see the wedding guests, he saw a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.

12 And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' But he had nothing to say.

13 Then the king said to his attendants, 'Tie him up hand and foot and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth!'

Our **SPIRITUAL BANK ACCOUNT** is in the **RED**.

Romans 3:16 "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

2) IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

Galatians 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even **we have believed in Jesus Christ**, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Philippians 3:9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

Romans 4:5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

This is what the Bible calls JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

JUSTIFICATION = Greek: dikaios, the act of God declaring people free from guilt and acceptable to Him and counting them righteous (Rom. 3:25; 5:18)

AI/ Justification is a forensic (establishment of facts or evidence in a court of law) legal declaration by God whereby He pronounces a sinner to be righteous and not guilty before the law, based entirely on faith in Jesus Christ rather than personal works or merit.

3) IMPARTED RIGHTEOUSNESS

2 Corinthians 5:17 L.B. 'When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a **BRAND NEW PERSON INSIDE**. He is not the same any more. A new life has begun!'

- **Can I REMIND US THAT SALVATION IS BIGGER THAN JUST BEING FORGIVEN - WE ARE ALSO CHANGED.**

Romans 8:1-4 NLT So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. 2 And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. 3 The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. 4 He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.

We clearly see here **THAT WE HAVE A CHOICE**; we can **LIVE AFTER OUR FLESH OR THE SPIRIT**.

ANOTHER BIBLE WORD, - SANCTIFICATION.

SANCTIFICATION = W. Vine "Sanctification is also used in the New Testament, of the **SEPARATION** of the believer from **EVIL THINGS** and **EVIL WAYS**.

If **JUSTIFICATION** is to do with our **RIGHT STANDING BEFORE GOD**, then **SANCTIFICATION** is to do with **OUR RIGHT WALKING BEFORE GOD**.

Romans 6:15 L.B. 'Does this mean that we can go ahead and sin and **NOT WORRY ABOUT IT?** (For our salvation does not depend on keeping the law, but on receiving God's grace!) Of course not! **v19** 'Just as you used to be slaves to all kinds of sin, so now you must **LET YOURSELVES** be **SLAVES** to **ALL THAT IS RIGHT AND HOLY.**'

UN-RIGHTEOUSNESS EXPOSES OUR HEART TO THE ATTACK OF THE DEVIL

We have to **PROTECT OURSELVES** with **RIGHTEOUSNESS** which **makes us BOLD**.

Proverbs 28:1 'The wicked flee when no one pursues, but the righteous are bold as a lion.'

CONCLUSION

We have a **PROMISE FROM JESUS:-**

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.