

# God Gave us Armor Part 6: Word of God

## — God at War, Week 17 —

*Ephesians 6:10-18 (NIV)*

### I. God's \_\_\_\_\_ is for \_\_\_\_\_

- <sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.
- <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God,  
so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.
- <sup>12</sup> 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.
- <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God,  
so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground,  
and after you have done everything,  
to stand.
- <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then,  
with the belt of truth buckled around your waist,  
with the breastplate of righteousness in place,
- <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.
- <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith,  
with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.
- <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation  
**and the sword of the Spirit,  
which is the word of God.**
- <sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests.  
With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

### II. The Sword of the Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

- This is the only piece of equipment specifically for offensive use. Paul does not use the term here for a large broadsword (like is used in Luke 2:35) but the term for a short sword or dagger. This corresponds to the Roman *gladius hispaniensis* (Spanish sword), the short sword commonly wielded by Roman legionaries. The blade was about 2 inches wide and about 24 inches long, and the short length was ideal for cutting and stabbing up close in conjunction with the shield.
- The modifier “of the Spirit” probably is telling us that this sword comes from the Holy Spirit, or is empowered by the Holy Spirit in some sense.
- Paul helpfully explains to us what he means by the “sword of the Spirit,” it is the “word of God.” Yet this is still a bit vague. What precisely does Paul intend? What is our offensive weapon in situations of spiritual attack?

### III. The Sword of the Spirit is the \_\_\_\_\_

- In our current Christian language, the phrase “the word of God” is mostly used as a synonym for the Bible. This is not wrong, but this usage might obscure the emphasis Paul has when he speaks of “the word of God.”
- Paul most often uses the phrase “the word of God” to refer to the gospel of Jesus, the message of good news about what God has done and is doing through Jesus to bring salvation. Consider: 1 Cor 14:36; Col 1:25-26; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Tim 2:8-9. Consider also other Christian usage: Acts 6:7; 8:14; 11:1.
- Here in Ephesians 6:17 Paul does not use his most common term for “word,” but a different term that also means “word” but emphasizes particularly what is *spoken*. We see Paul using this term and referring to the gospel of Jesus in Romans 10:8, 17. So the difference is probably one of emphasis, not so much on content. Paul probably means largely the same thing here by “word of God” as he does elsewhere, just with an emphasis on it being *spoken* by us.
- First, then, the “sword of the Spirit” refers to the proclamation of the gospel itself.** As we advance the message of the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom advances, people are saved, and evil powers are defeated.
- Despite Paul likely meaning the gospel when he says “word of God,” the phrase is broad enough to also include any message, teaching, or command of God (for examples of this usage, see: Matt 15:6; Luke 3:2). For us, the teaching and commands of God are contained in the Bible. So we see that our common Christian usage of “word of God” to mean the Bible is not incorrect.
- Second, then, the sword of the Spirit refers to the proclamation of any Scriptural truth that applies to our current situation.** We see a clear example of Jesus wielding “the sword of the Spirit” in this way in his temptation by Satan in the wilderness (Matt 4:1-11//Luke 4:1-13).

### The Bottom Line

Use the \_\_\_\_\_ of God in \_\_\_\_\_

- Get your sword** \_\_\_\_\_ by enlisting in Christ's army—accept the word of God itself and pledge your loyalty to Jesus!
- Use your sword** \_\_\_\_\_ by speaking out loud the gospel of Jesus to others. Satan is defeated as people are rescued from him
- Use your sword to** \_\_\_\_\_ by verbally speaking out loud Scriptural passages that apply to your situation of temptation or oppression.
- Keep your sword** \_\_\_\_\_ by spending time studying and preparing both the gospel message and specific passages of Scripture. If you intend to fight you had better spend time practicing your swordwork!