

Ephesians 6:11—Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Put on the full armor of God, (6:11a)

Paul, a Roman citizen (Acts 22:27-28), had to be considering the Roman soldier as this God-inspired passage was penned. The apostle understood that no soldier entered battle without proper “armor” (that is, if he desired to see another day). “Put on” can actually be interpreted “to envelop in,” meaning that God’s “armor” encases the believer. Thus, the saint is safe. “Put on” (in the Greek) also communicates that God’s “armor” is never to be removed. Once the “whole” is in place, both offensive and defensive (helmet, breastplate, shield, sword, etc., as is described in verses 14-17), it remains. This “armor of light” (Romans 13:12) will be discussed in depth shortly.

that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.(6:11b)

In military terms, “stand firm” meant “to hold your ground while under attack” as opposed to cowardly fleeing in a state of fright. Paul realized that the properly equipped saint could stand firm while facing “the schemes of the devil.” “Schemes” is from the Greek *methodeia*, meaning “wiles (KJV), craftiness, trickery, cunning, or deception.” Therefore, Satan, having mapped out his strategy, stalks believers as a lion stalks his prey, waiting for the proper moment to attack and “devour” (1Peter 5:8). Even Jesus was attacked by Satan at “opportune” times (Luke 4:13).

How good is Satan at his game? Very good! He has for centuries convinced lost mankind that God is something He isn’t—a tyrant rather than a God of “love” (1John 4:8, 16). Satan has also persuaded believers to settle for much less than what Christ did for the saints the moment they were saved. As a result, deceived believers expend vast amounts of energy hoping to obtain what they already possess—a righteousness granted to them the moment they repented and believed while depraved (2Corinthians 5:21). God saved us to enjoy Him—not to work for Him. We were made “holy and blameless” (Ephesians 1:4) “saints” (1Corinthians 1:2), the apple of God’s eye in fact, the instant we repented and believed. No need exists to work for what is already ours.

Salvation is neither obtained nor maintained through good works (Romans 3:20; Romans 5:20; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 7:25), for we were “saved” (Ephesians 2:8-9) by grace and are being “kept” (Jude 1) by grace. God’s grace in offering His Son did it all, having saved us from our condemned state through Jesus’ death (once we repented and believed) while saving us daily from the power of sin as we yield to His indwelling “life” (Romans 5:10; Colossians 3:4). Such knowledge should motivate us to (1) pursue holiness in all areas of our behavior (1Peter 1:16) (2) make our “bodies a living and holy sacrifice” (Romans 12:1) (3) understand fully that faith is to work “by love” (2Corinthians 5:14-15; Galatians 5:6) (4) realize that every good thing done for the cause of Christ is done by God as He sovereignly works through our personal choices (Philippians 2:13). In other words, He never needs our help!

The devil reels when a New Testament believer embraces his true identity in Christ. Only those equipped in God’s armor, through basking in His truth, know how to war against such a devious foe. Paul speaks of this armor in more detail in verses 13-17.