

# GROWING IN GRACE

“...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10 (NIV)

## GUARDED BY GRACE

*Series: Dressings for Success: Standing Strong in an Evil Day (Part 3)*

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**Ephesians 6:10-14 (NIV)** 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 12 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. 13 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. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,

- A. The phrase “be strong” in the Greek is in the plural imperative and carries the idea of standing both individually and collectively strong.
1. We need to take personal responsibility for our stand against evil.
  2. We need to stand with others in our stand against evil.
- B. Our armor is designed to accomplish 3 specific things in our lives:
1. Our armor is designed to protect us.

**Ephesians 6:13 (NIV)** 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.

2. Our armor is designed to advance God’s purposes.
  3. Our armor is designed to take us to people that need peace with God.
- C. The focus today is on verse 14 that notes we are to include the “breastplate of righteousness” in our lives, which specifically stands for 2 qualities:

**Ephesians 6:14 (NIV)** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place

1. The breastplate of righteousness stands for the righteousness of Christ (imputed righteousness) that every believer is given when he accepts Christ as Savior.
2. The breastplate of righteousness also stands for integrity (practical righteousness) that every believer is expected to embrace.

## **I. WE MUST EMBRACE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT ONLY COMES THROUGH CHRIST**

**Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)** 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

- A. Many people live a works oriented life, and never find rest and security in what Christ has done for them.
- B. Every believer must learn to rest assured of God's grace that has given to them His righteousness.

**Ephesians 1:4-6 (KJV)** 4According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

## **II. WE MUST EMBRACE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT IS DEMONSTRATED BY INTEGRITY**

**Ephesians 2:8-10 (NIV)** 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- A. God has planned 2 distinct purposes for His righteousness at work in our lives:
  1. We are created to do good works.
  2. We are created to be on display for God.

### **APPLICATION:**

- A. As a believer, your breastplate of righteousness stands for 2 things:
  1. Righteousness given to you by Christ.
  2. Righteousness that is on display through your integrity.
- B. I can step out and trust Him because of the work he has done in me.