

The Good Fight Part 2

The breastplate of righteousness
6/28/09

In his book, Fuzzy Memories, Jack Handley writes, “There used to be this bully who would demand my lunch money everyday. Since I was smaller, I would give it to him. Then I decided to fight back. I started taking karate lessons but the instructor wanted \$5 a lesson. That was a lot of money. I found that it was cheaper to pay the bully, so I gave up karate.”

“Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place...”
Ephesians 6:14

What does the Breastplate of righteousness protect?
My heart

“Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.” Prov 4:23

- My heart is the key to the Christian life.

How's my heart?
Sad, burdened, lonely
Love, joy, peace,
What ever happened to my dreams, passion and vision?

How to protect my heart?

A. Everyday I must acknowledge the Imputed righteousness of Christ inside my heart.

“...just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Romans 5:21

“Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.” Romans 10:4

- Christ has made me righteous. Christ has made my heart good.

B. Everyday I must claim Christ's imparted righteousness to flow into me and through me by my obedience.

“But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness.” Romans 8:10

The believer must not only believe in righteousness, he must put it on as a breastplate - As a way of life. Only as a believer walks in righteousness is he protected.

My heart is all about:

1. Communion: The place where I fellowship with God.
2. Conscience: The place where I become aware of sin.
3. Intuition: The place where Truth is imparted to me by God.

If Satan can strip us of our sense of righteousness then he can wound our hearts by destroying our fellowship with God, Causing our conscience to become callous, and keeping us from hearing God.

Christ wants you to take His righteousness and live it out in the world through obedience to His Word.

“...all our righteous acts are like filthy rags...” Is 64:6

C. Ask God to search my heart.

“I the LORD search the heart...” Jeremiah 17:10

“And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.” Romans 8:27

D. Confess my sin.

“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:”
Ps 66:18

1. If my heart is wounded, ask Christ to repair it.

“But you, O Sovereign LORD, deal well with me for your name's sake; out of the goodness of your love, deliver me.
For I am poor and needy, and my heart is wounded within me.”
Psalm 109: 21-22

At some point, someone or something wounded your heart. It hurt you and it was their fault. They did wrong but the problem is the wound they inflicted onto your heart can become your sin / your problem. Sometime ago, I bumped the top of my head getting into the van. The wound did not heal and in fact the wound became cancerous and had to be removed. Sometimes, wounds that don't heal become cancer.

We have to ask Christ to search our hearts because the wounds that we bare will turn into something entirely different if left untreated.

2. If my heart is diseased, ask Christ to heal it.

“Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life.” Proverbs 12:31

We need to be hoping in Christ and His kingdom and not in our “wish list” of stuff that we want.

3. If my heart is clogged, ask Christ to free it.

“...then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.” Deut 8:14

The apostle Paul informs us that hardness of heart is behind all the addictions and evils of the human race (Rom. 1:21–25).

When the people of Israel fell into a totally external life of ritual and observance, God lamented, “These people . . . honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me” (Isa. 29:13).

“The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:7

“When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart..” Matthew 13:19