

Pastor Richard Allen Farmer

Crossroads Church

5587 Redan Rd.

Stone Mountain, GA 30088

770.469.9069

Series: Wholly Armed, Part 6

Ephesians 6:17b

Obviously, we are working with metaphors in this series. There is not an actual belt of truth that we put on. There is no actual breastplate called righteousness that we are to don.

Likewise, we are not, in this verse, admonished to brandish actual swords. The Word of God is

compared to a sword (Hebrews 4:12). It cuts and pricks us (Acts 2:37).

What shall we say of this sword?

1. It is *of the Spirit*. This text speaks of the *origin* of the Word. When we wield the sword, it is a spiritual activity. This sword comes from the Spirit of God. Warren Wiersbe writes:

Comment [1]:

A material sword pierces the body, but the Word of God pierces the heart. The more you use a physical sword, the duller it becomes; but using God's Word only makes it sharper in our lives. A physical sword requires the hand of a soldier, but the sword of the

Spirit has its own power, for it is “living and powerful”(Heb. 4:12). The Spirit wrote the Word, and the Spirit wields the Word as we take it by faith and use it.

Illus.

The British theologian, David Ford writes of Jesus as One who experienced multiple overwhelmings. He was immersed in the River Jordan, driven by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He announced the kingdom of God, prayed in Gethsemane, was betrayed, deserted, tortured and seemingly forsaken by His Father. Ford says, “Then came the resurrection, the most disorienting and transformative overwhelming of all.”(The Shape of

Living: Spiritual Directions for EverydayLife. p. 46).

As you and I rehearse the biblical narrative of Jesus and wield this sword, we might well be overwhelmed. However, It's a *good* overwhelming!

2. It is substantive.

Comment [2]:

The word for *word* here is *rhema*, which means utterance, discourse, matter, message. This refers to the substantive nature of that which we proclaim. We are not those who build our messages on cliches. Rather, we have an utterance, a discourse, a matter, a message.

During His temptation in the wilderness, our Savior said to Satan,

*Man (humanity) shall not live by bread alone, but by every **rhema** that proceeds from the mouth of God.*

We can't cut and effectively do battle with a dull sword. We wield a *rhema*.

Comment [3]:

Closing

A sword must be handled responsibly. One must not go around swinging wildly and cutting folks.

I want to issue a warning about irresponsible sword-swinging.

John 18:10-11

10 *Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.*

11 *So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”*

This piece of armor could damage people. Handle it carefully!

That’s Paul’s admonition to his spiritual son, Timothy, in 2 Timothy 2:15:

NKJV:

15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

NIV:

15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Illus.

Sam Arbesman has written a book titled, The Half-Life of Facts.

The premise is that for every domain, silo, discipline, and school of knowledge, the facts contained within are slowly being overturned, augmented, replaced, and refined — and in medicine, for example, the rate of that overturning is high enough that you never really complete your

education. Medical school, in other words, never ends.

... For instance, in physics, about half of all research findings will be disconfirmed within 13 years. In psychology, it's every seven. In other words, if you graduated with a degree in psychology seven years ago, half of the information in all your textbook is now inaccurate.

In contrast, God's Word, our sword, will not change.

The grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of our God endures forever. (Isaiah 40:8)

It is possible, in this season, to swing the sword of the
Word- and completely miss Jesus! May it not be so.

Amen