

## Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, Oct 27th 2016

Let's get ready for battle against the Evil One. Our reading for today, Ephesians 6:10-20, is a good guide on how to protect ourselves from evil, and is one of my most favorite Bible passages. It is one of those passages where if I close my eyes I can envision what this looks like.

“...So stand fast with your loins girded in TRUTH, clothed with RIGHTEOUSNESS AS A BREASTPLATE, and your feet shod in READINESS FOR THE GOSPEL OF PEACE.. In ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, hold FAITH AS A SHIELD, to quench all the flaming arrows of the Evil One. And take the HELMET OF SALVATION and the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT which is the word of God.”

Okay friends, are we positioned for battle against the devil? Unless we are praying and following our battle instructions above, chances are the evil one will infiltrate our lives, at least he thinks he will. I don't know about any of you, but when I'm in fear and my world is rocked, I pray! But we need more than prayer, which is of course essential. We need to protect ourselves as a soldier who is going into battle.

I ask that we visualize a time when darkness surrounded us. It is such a darkness that we have a very difficult time seeing anything, there's no light available, and it is us in this dark space trembling with fear. There are distractions coming at us in this very dark space, distractions which we can't see, but yet we can feel an evil presence. Then a voice begins to speak untruths at us, and that voice becomes louder and louder, letting us know that we aren't good enough, and there is no hope for us to escape from this darkness. We are stuck, we are lost, and we can't see where we need to go. We pull out a flashlight, the batteries are dead, and we still can't see what's in this space. In our minds, it's a hopeless situation. We begin to believe that we are doomed for the worst outcome and there's no turning back.

But then, we cry out for God and we ask Him to take care of us. We then see a little speck of light, which makes things visible enough so that we can see the doorway which is near. We begin to see that the light is increasing, God guides us to the door so that we can escape from the darkness. He has protected us from the evil presence, and has extended His hand and we grab onto it and begin to walk toward the beam of light. He has surrounded our very being so that no evil can even come near us. He speaks to us in a soft voice letting us know that we can stand firm with Him if we simply hold onto His hand. He begins to speak truths to us in his soft voice, letting us know that He has this, and we will be okay if we simply hold strong to Him and don't let go. We have faith in Him who is protecting us. We walk toward the light and find our safe harbor.

This passage reminds us that we must stand firm against the devil. There is a real battle going on in our world between evil and good, and we must be prepared to fight off the evil one. We need to protect our entire being from head to toe. We must be ready to run this race to share the Gospel of peace with those who do not know God. He has armored us with His truth in His word. We cannot fight off the evils without knowing the word of God.

In our lives as Christians, the devil would surely enjoy if we listened to his untruths. However, when

we fight against him with prayer and supplication, and pray at every opportunity in the Spirit, he is defeated. It's okay to share this good news so that all will come to know the Gospel of God. This is our duty as soldiers in God's army. Remember, the more we stand firm, the harder the evil one will push us to hopefully cause us to stumble and then fall. But as a child of God, we can be sure that salvation is ours, so take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit and fight this good fight.

Remember...God's got this! He will carry us through!

Joan Kowalski-Creighton University's Division of Student Life