

1 John 5:19 "We know that we are from God."

John us again who's children we are God's children—our source is in Him. Because we are His, He takes care of us. Why? Out of love 1st John 3:1 **See how great a love the Father has given us, that we would be called children of God; and in fact we are. For this reason the world does not know us: because it did not know Him.** It's because of His love for us, what He's done for us in sending Jesus to the cross so that we could be saved from our sins and have a relationship with Him that we KNOW we are His children.

1 John gives us ways that we can know we are God's children.

First, The inner witness of the Holy Spirit. 1st John 3:24 **"And the one who keeps his commandments resides in him, and he in him. And by this we know that he abides in us: by the Spirit whom he has given to us."** Second is grounded in the foundation of faith in Christ. 1st John 5:1 **"Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God"** Also, 1st John 4:2 **2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God;** which of course also leans on our understanding that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth.

And the third is the fact that we are obedient to his commands. 1st John 2:3-6 **3 By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.** We must walk as Jesus Walked, in obedience to the Father.

and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

We are protected, and are no longer under the control of the evil one because Jesus keeps us safe so that the evil one cannot harm us in any permanent sense. We must be wary of the enemy and his traps, but just as Jesus resisted temptation, we through the power of the Holy Spirit can resist. 1 Cor 10:13 **No temptation has overtaken you except something common to mankind; and God is faithful, so He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.** We shouldn't be surprised that we encounter spiritual warfare, since Jesus' ministry began with a battle against Satan that lasted forty days (Luke 4:2). 1 Peter 4:12-13 **12 Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though something strange were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that at the revelation of His glory you may also rejoice and be overjoyed.**

Prepare: Strength in the Lord--The preparation for Spiritual warfare is to be strong in our Faith in Jesus. The strength of the Christian life is depending on God—on being **"strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might"** (v. 10). The word translated "Be Strong" here, actually means "be strengthened". In other words, to be strong in the Lord does not involve building up your own strength. We must be empowered or be strengthened, and when we are weak, then we are strong. In other words, it's about complete dependance on God. Paul said, **"I can do all things through Him who strengthens me"** (Phil 4:13). It is not the amount of strength we have that's important—only its source.

The next key to understanding what it means to be strong in the Lord is the apostle's use of "in the Lord," rather than "by the Lord" or "of the Lord." Only when our lives are positioned in the Lord, in union with Him, do we possess the appropriate power to overcome the enemy. Jesus said, **"Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing"** (John 15:4-5).

The Provision: The Armor of God--The Greek word translated "put on" (enduo) carries the idea of permanence. The full armor of God is not something to be put on and taken off occasionally but is something to be put on permanently. The verb tense also indicates that we are responsible for putting on the full armor. God gives us the strength and power, but expects us to appropriate that power. God provides the armor, but He expects us to put it on! YOU put on the armor in order that YOU are able to stand firm. This Greek word translated "stand firm" (histemi) refers to holding a critical position while

under attack. When we stand, we are not pushed around but firmly holds our position in Christ—we do not compromise, and we do not buckle or give way under pressure.

The Victory: Standing Firm

Ephesians 6:13 says, "**Take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.**" God gives no deferments or exemptions. His people are at war and will continue to be at war until He returns and takes charge of the earth. But even the most willing and eager soldier of Christ is helpless without God's provision. We have His provision in being His children, in having His Word, in possessing His indwelling Holy Spirit, and of having every resource that our heavenly Father possesses. God is our strength, but His strength is appropriated only through obedience. In the great spiritual warfare in which we do battle, we are called only to resist and stand firm. James said, "**Resist the devil and he will flee from you**" (James 4:7). Peter counseled us to "**be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith**" (1 Peter 5:8-9).

The Believer's Armor

The Belt of Truth--Ephesians 6:14 says, "**Stand firm there-fore, having girded your loins with truth.**"

The Greek word translated "truth" (aletheia) basically refers to the content of that which is true.

Knowing the content of God's truth is absolutely essential for the believer if he is to battle successfully against the schemes of Satan. Without knowing basic biblical teaching, he is subject to being "**carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming**"

(Ephesians 4:14). But aletheia is also the quality of truthfulness. To be girded with truth reveals an attitude sincerity and commitment to truthfulness in our walk, forsaking hypocrisy.

The Breastplate of Righteousness--The purpose of the breastplate is to protect one's heart, lungs, intestines, and other vital organs. The mind and the emotions are the two areas where Satan most fiercely attacks believers. He wants to cloud our minds with false doctrine, false principles, and false information to mislead and confuse us. He also wants to confuse our emotions our affection—what we love, what we spend our time doing, our morals—what we believe is right, our loyalties, goals, and commitments.

The Shoes of the Gospel of Peace

If our feet are not properly shod, we are going to stumble, fall, and suffer many defeats. The Greek word translated "preparation" (hetoimasia) generally refers to readiness. The gospel of peace is the marvelous truth that in Christ we are now at peace with God and are one with Him. Therefore, we stand in the confidence of God's love for us, His union with us, and His commitment to fight for us. If we're standing in God's power; we do not need to fear any enemy. So we stand firm!

The Shield of Faith--Ephesians 6:16 says, "**In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.**" The faith Paul refers to here is faith in God. Christian faith is infinitely powerful and because the object of faith is Jesus Christ, it is the infinite God. Satan continually bombards God's children with the flaming arrows of immorality, hatred, anger, covetousness, pride, doubt, fear, despair, distrust, and other temptations. Every temptation, either directly or indirectly, tries to get us to doubt or distrust God.

The Helmet of Salvation--The fifth piece of God's armor is the helmet. Satan's blows are directed at the believer's security and assurance in Christ. The two dangerous edges of Satan's spiritual attack are discouragement and doubt. To discourage us, he points to our failures, our sins, our unresolved problems, our poor health, or to whatever else seems negative in our lives. He wants us to lose confidence in the love and care of our heavenly Father. Doubt is what often brings about discouragement. Doubts about the truths of God, including doubt about one's salvation, are the worst sort of discouragements for a believer. If a believer doubts God's goodness or dependability, or if his relation to God seems uncertain, he has no ground for hope and therefore no protection from

discouragement. The person who thinks he has nothing worthwhile to look forward to has no reason to fight, work, or live responsibly.

The Sword of the Spirit--The sword carried by Roman foot soldiers and was the principal weapon in hand-to-hand combat. The Greek phrase translated "of the Spirit" (tou pneumatos) can also be translated "by the Spirit" or "spiritual," referring to the nature of the sword rather than its source--a spiritual weapon, to be used in our struggle against spiritual enemies. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. As such it is first of all a defensive weapon, capable of deflecting the blows of an opponent. The sword of the Spirit is also an offensive weapon, capable of inflicting blows. Scripture is **"living and active and sharper than any two--edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do"** (Hebrews 4:12-13). The Word of God is so powerful that it transforms men and women from the realm of falsehood to that of truth, from the realm of darkness to that of light, and from the realm of sin and death to that of righteousness and life. Let us demonstrate that we are Children of God by appropriating His Power, living In Him, and put on the full armor of God, for the glory of God and the furthering of His kingdom.