



- Difficulties prepare us to follow Jesus long term.

2 My friends, be glad, even if you have a lot of trouble. 3 You know that you learn to endure by having your faith tested. 4 But you must learn to endure everything, so that you will be completely mature and not lacking in anything. James 1:2-4 (CEV)

- Difficulties can develop us.

11 ...we won't be taken advantage of by Satan, because we are well aware of his schemes. 2 Corinthians 2:11(CEB)

10 ...Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. 12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.13 Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. Ephesians 6:10-13 (NLT)

- God equips you to engage in the battle, not run from it.

Two things to remember about the battle:

- Our strength for the battle comes from God.

10 ...Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

Ephesians 6:10 (NLT)

13...put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy...

Ephesians 6:13 (NLT)

- God's Spirit in us is greater than the enemy we face.

4 God's Spirit is in you and is more powerful than the one who is in the world. 1 John 4:4 (CEV)

- God gives the protection you need for the battle.

13 For this reason, take up all the armor that God supplies. Then you will be able to take a stand during these evil days. Once you have overcome all obstacles, you will be able to stand your ground. Ephesians 6:13 (GWT)

14 Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God's righteousness. 15 For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared. 16 In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil. 17 Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 18 Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. Ephesians 6:14-18 (NLT)

We have been given:

- A bullet proof vest that protects your heart.
- A helmet that protects your thoughts.
- Boots that give you stable footing.
- A shield that is maneuverable.
- An assault weapon to eliminate the enemy.

The Armor:

- The Belt of Truth.

44... there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44 (NIV)

17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. John 17:17 (NIV)

Application Step:

- Factcheck your feelings through God's Word.

- Flak-jacket of Righteousness.

Righteousness: Being right with God.

Righteous is about your standing with God.

21 God made him (*Jesus*) who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him (*Jesus*) we might become the righteousness of God. 2 Corinthians 5:21(NIV)

21 God had Christ, who was sinless, take our sin so that we might receive God's approval through him. 2 Corinthians 5:21(GWT)

Application Step:

- Everyday I embrace God's acceptance of me.

- Boots of the Gospel of Peace.

Gospel = Good News.

The Gospel of Peace:

- We have peace with God.

1 ...since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Romans 5:1 (NLT)

- We have peace of God.

27 I give you peace, the kind of peace only I can give. It isn't like the peace this world can give. So don't be worried or afraid. John 14:27 (CEV)

Application Step:

- When you get anxious, pray.

6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

Put on Christ.

And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. Galatians 3:27 (NLT)