

Worship on May 24, 2020

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Announcements:

. This recording is for the worship of Sunday, May 24 2020. God may protect you and provide what you need.

. Curbside Office Hour – I named so because I would like to be available for you who need to meet me in person. But, it's not considered safe, so like we pick up food in restaurants, I thought I would be great if we could meet and chat outside of our church building by the hall, outside the side doors, there are benches. If we can arrange the time between 12-2 on Tuesdays and Fridays, we will meet in person. Please wear facemask and let us try to keep the safe distance. To meet me, please email me or phone me to make the appointment. revsoonghuh@hotmail.com / 647-208-5381.

. Thank you for the offerings dropped off at the office door and through Pre-Authorized Remittance. We can still collect your giving to the Lord through different ways.

. This is the 4th sermon of the series called The Armour of God. With the Breastplate of the Righteousness in the Armour of God, let us continue to stand strong in the Lord

Let us worship God with singing!

SONG – BOP 570 - I have decided to follow Jesus

Prayer for worship

Gracious God, our Heavenly Father, we come to you at this moment of worship with our sincere hearts. Open our hearts, so that we can experience your presence and love for us through this precious hour.

We come to you with adoration with thankfulness and gladness. You thank you for your unending, unfathomable, indescribable love for us. How could you give everything for us? You poured out your life. You didn't spare your most precious, One and Only Son, Jesus Christ, for us. We are speechless in your lavishing love poured upon us. Thank you. We praise you and lift you up.

But Lord, although we received your great love for us, we don't always live in that love. Because of our weaknesses and our sinful desires, we were ignorant of you calling our names. We were ignorant of your love. We come before you with our honest confession. Take our weak and small love for you and strengthen us and discipline us, so that we can turn back from our selfishness and sins. Please hear us when we call out to you. As we worship you today, please be glorified and please stir our hearts and change our lives. Guide us with your Holy Spirit. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

13 Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

14 Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness.

15 As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace.

16 With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

17 Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.

This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.

Sermon : The Breastplate of Righteousness

Last week, we talked about the importance of taking the truth of God as our own truth. Today, we are going to take a look at the second piece of the armour of God, which is the Breastplate of righteousness. This is how we can live out our lives with the truth of God in our hearts.

First of all, what does the breastplate do for the soldiers? It is usually made up of thick leather and shaped just like a person's torso. It protects from shoulder to upper thigh level. The main purpose of it is to protect the vital organs such as heart, lungs, and liver. If a soldier didn't wear the breastplate, one attack on the torso would leave a fatal wound. So, going to a battle without this breastplate means no protection for one's life. It is a very important piece.

The truth we talked about last week is like our core muscle. It's the main support of our whole body. **Once we have the core muscle, what can we do? This is today's main question.** **With the truth in our hearts, then how do we carry on our lives? How do we live out what we believe?** Once we have our core muscle, we can exercise. We can build other muscles, tone our body, we can run, bike, swim, and work on our daily tasks. We might not notice the existence of the core muscle all the time, but it's there to help us to do the things we are doing. In the same way, the truth in us affects in our every activity whether we notice or not. All activities reveal our values and our priorities. When we make decisions in families, in works, in studies and when we build our relationships, and when we spend our money. All these are influenced by our

foundation, the core muscle, the truth of God. The Breastplate of Righteousness is about how we live our lives with the truth of God.

Proverb 11:4 says this. *“Wealth is worthless in the days of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death.”* Righteousness delivers from death in the day of wrath. What we do with our money, the plenty money we saved for all our lives, cannot save us from the wrath of God, but what we do with the truth of God can save us from the judgment.

These are what the Bible says about Righteousness. Psalm 119:172, *“May my tongue sing of your word, for all your commands are righteous.”* 1 John 3:4, *“everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness.”* To be righteous is to do what is right in God's eyes. God's commandments are righteous. So, in contrast, lawlessness is sin, and sin is the opposite to righteousness. So, to be righteous is to obey God's laws, God's wills, and God's calling. And 1 Corinthians 15:34, *“Awake to righteousness, and do not sin; for some do not have knowledge of God. I speak this to your shame.”* The value system of today in our society is rich and poor, back then, it was honour and shame. So, to be put to shame was the worst thing they could ever experience. So, what Paul says is this. It's CEB (Contemporary English Bible), *“Sober up by acting like you should and don't sin. Some of you are ignorant about God – I say this because you should be ashamed of yourselves!”* In addition, Prophet Isaiah warns about endless sinning of people through Isaiah 59:1-2, *“Listen! The Lord's arm is not too weak to save you, nor is his ear too deaf to hear you call. It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.”*

Even before protecting ourselves from devil's attack, we are to protect ourselves first from sinning. When we put the breastplate of righteousness, we are putting God's values on us,

God's priorities on us, and God's heart on us. Isaiah 64:6, "*We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind.*" This is the confession of Isaiah about our human righteous deeds.

Galatians 3:26-27, "*So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*" The breastplate is somewhat like clothing. We are wearing it like our shirts. It's covering the similar areas. Also, the functions of the breastplate and our clothing could be similar. When a soldier put the breastplate, it makes the person stand upright. The posture becomes different. He or she cannot bend their bodies and cannot be completely relaxed. When I was a student, I served a Korean church. There was Wednesday evening service. I was expected to dress formal suit. But, sometimes, I had a class on Wednesday afternoon. Then, I had to wear suit when I go to the class. If it happened, it was a little different than wearing jeans and T-shirts. I was more aware of my posture, concerning about how I act. Also, when I ordered a coffee, I said more "thank you" and "please". One of my friends told me that there was a survey when people dressed up formally, the work efficiency was increased. When they had a test, their marks were higher. I didn't research to prove this, but we all know the different feelings when we dress better. So, when we dress up with the breastplate of righteousness, we are more likely to live out the truth we have in our hearts.

Thinking about this, I thought of my son. Some occasions, we dress our son with dress shirts and dark pants such as friends' wedding, or some special days. But, his attitude is the same. No change whether he dresses formal or causal or swimming pants, or diaper. Is this a problem for him, when he was 3 years old? I don't think so. He's still too young to behave differently in

accordance of what he wears. It's the matter of maturity. But, if I act the same whether I dress up with suit or bathing suit, then that is a question. If we want to carry out the truth we have, we need to be mature. Romans 13:14 says, *"Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh."* When feeding an infant, I have at home, the little baby Benjamin, I prepare the bottle and hold him in the position of feeding. Then baby Benjamin opens his mouth. I usually say "Ah, open your mouth, I am going to feed you." Sometimes I feel like he understands what I am saying. But, most likely, he does not. He's just too faithful to his hunger, his fleshly desire. All he needs these days is to gratify his own fleshly desires because he's an infant. But, if 8-year-old boy or 5-year-old boy do the same thing, that is a problem. Not only they need to be satisfied with their basic fleshly desires, hunger, but also, they need to learn table manner. They are not mature enough right now, but they need to grow to put the armour of God upon them.

What about us? If we were able to choose our own truth and decide to follow God, this means we have some maturity and if we are able to understand to clothe with Christ, then we are able to live out the truth of God. Paul said that putting on the Righteousness and holiness is like putting on the new self. Ephesians 4:22-24, *"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness."* We are taking off the breastplate of our own righteousness because as Isaiah confessed, *"We are all infected and impure with sin. When we display our righteous deeds, they are nothing but filthy rags. Like autumn leaves, we wither and fall, and our sins sweep us away like the wind,"* Our own righteousness cannot stand firm. That's why, we are taking off our own breastplate but putting on the breastplate of God's righteousness. Now, it's

not our own will to live holy, but it's God's will and God's commandment for us to live holy and in godly ways.

However, in Ezekiel 33:13 says this. *"If I tell a righteous person that they will surely live, (because of his or her righteousness) but then they trust in their righteousness and do evil, none of the righteous things that person has done will be remembered; they will die for the evil they have done."* This warns us that putting on the breastplate of righteousness is not a one-time event. It's on-going choices of our lives. We need to show what we have in our hearts through our deeds. Therefore, God wants us to live like a person who has Christ in our heart, who has truth in our heart! As Proverb 11:4 says, *Righteousness delivers from death*. I hope and pray that all of us can remember to putting on the new self and remember that we are *created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness*.

Today's message might be too challenging. So, I will add something that can comfort you. I believe this Bible is the promise of God and everything in it is for us. And I believe all things in the Bible will come true not by our own deeds, power, or righteousness, but God's. We have the promise of God and we have right to claim God's promise for us. So, putting on the armour of God is the commandment in one sense, but it's also the promise of God for us. So, let us stand before God claiming his promise for us. Ask of him the power we need, ask of him to change our hearts, ask of him anything we need so that his promise can come true in our lives. I believe that God will be so glad when we ask of him the things we need, to be like him, to be holy, and to be righteous before God's own eyes. **God will cheer for us when we try!** And I will keep all of you in my prayer as well.

Let us pray.

God of promise, we come to you boldly proclaiming your promise. Putting on the armour of God is your commandment, but at the same time, it's your promise for us. Lord, we want all of the promises from the Bible come true in our lives. Prepare our lives. Especially, today, we talked about our righteous lives. We know what you want from us. We know the values and priorities that you want us to sustain. Yet, it's not always easy. And most of the time, our own desires come before our faith. But, we know how we should live. We ask of you for your help today. Help us to take off our own righteousness and put on yours. Help us to remember the truth we have in our hearts and help us to live out accordingly. Help us to prove our faith through our lives. We are weak, Lord. Hold our hands and walk with us. We want to be with you. Be with us with your guidance.

Continue to pray for the Prayer of the people

Heavenly Father, we are praying for the re-opening our economy. We see that there are more cars and more people on the street and we see more stores. Also, we see many people are acting like the Pandemic is ended. We are worried of the second wave of the coronavirus. We need your help in keeping everyone safe. Help know how weak we are and help us practice what we are told. It is good to work again and be active and make money, but the safety should be the first. Help all the people who are opening their stores and going to their works, and going to shopping, let us keep the safe distance and be aware of the disease we are fighting against.

Give wisdom to the people who are running this country. Let them be humble and ask of you for the wisdom and for your help. And pour out your wisdom and insight upon the scientists trying to make the vaccine. Let this be used for the good of the humankind, not for their business means.

We pray for your churches. You purchased your churches with your precious blood. Although all the church buildings are closed, we are still here to be your church. Through this difficulty, let the church rise with your truth and your grace and your love. Let us display who you truly are and let us re-think of our true identity. We are the church. You broke your body for us and you shed your blood for you.

We pray for our congregation. I started the curbside in-person meeting. First of all, keep us safe when we meet even though it's outside the building. We love to have personal meeting, but the safety of ourselves and our families should come before it. Lord, give us wisdom so we can protect ourselves wisely. And use this time to comfort your people, to give strength to your people, and to experience your presence through our conversations and prayers. Be among us with your presence. Also, we pray for the people who are ill. Place your healing hands upon them and heal them with your power. Listen to our prayers. Fill their hearts with peace and with your love. Comfort their families. Help them have strong faith in you and lay down all their hearts before you. And we pray for the session today. Give them wisdom so when we minister your church, let your will be done through what we are doing. Although we cannot meet in person, knit our hearts together in your love. Help us have one voice when we make decisions for you and for your church. Through all the things we are doing, we want to praise your name.

It's going to be new when the stores reopen and some of us are going back to work. Protect us from coronavirus and the fear of it. Help us stand strong with your truth. Let your truth be our foundation and guidance. In Jesus' precious and powerful name, we pray. Amen.

Song – **In Christ Alone**

Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be with us all, now and always. Amen.

Ponder Upon Questions:

1. What is my old habit of breastplate that I have to take off today?
2. What would be the biggest change if I put on the Breastplate of Righteousness of God?
3. What would be the way to continue to live out my life in truth?