

265.1: God Training (D&C Gospel Doctrine Lesson 43, Updated)

"Take upon You My Whole Armor"

Outline

1. Framing
2. New Resources
3. Productive Sunday Schooling
 - a. Armor vs *Training*
 - b. Components of the armor: Truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation, spirit
 - c. Discussion: What elements or training enable us to access our better selves?
4. Full episode

Framing

I know the "armor of God" is one of the most exciting metaphors in the Bible (my chaplain supervisor told me he brought in a full sized claymore as an object lesson once), but I think we get so excited about the "armor" part that we miss the "God" part.

Yes, we do face external challenges, and occasionally we will need to "do battle", but I believe the war metaphor can be unproductive is over or misapplied.

Armor of God protecting/facilitating our better selves

"Training of God" rather than "Armor of God"

New Resources

Productive Sunday Schooling

Armor vs *Training*

Components of the armor: Truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation, spirit

Discussion: What elements or training enable us to access our better selves?

Full episode

Full episode: The battle for freedom and agency, to act rather than be acted upon. (This is one of those times when I look back on the episode and I'm pleased with how I taught it 😊)

- The components of the Armor of God
- The core issue of agency
- Factors that limit our agency
- How we can overcome or take into account our limitations and weakness

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(Look at the Greek behind each of these)

Ephesians 6:10-18

Belt	Truth	aletheia	What is true and right, real, accurate
Breastplate	Righteousness	dikaiousunes	Just, fair, rightness (alignment with how things should be)
Shoes	Gospel of peace	Euangellion tes eirenes	Good news (of peace, harmony, well-being, right relationship)
Shield	Faith	pistis	Fidelity, commitment, trust, confidence
Helmet	Salvation	soteria	Deliverance, being saved (from danger)
Sword	Spirit	pneuma	Moving air, that which animates and gives life, God's influencing presence

Belt of **truth** (): I think this is the foundation. If we aren't living truth, nothing else can ever add up correctly. We will never know how to act or resolve problems, because we won't have an accurate understanding of the state of things.

Breastplate of **righteousness** (): Righteousness is one of those words that we throw around without knowing what it really means. Righteousness means that our behavior aligns with what it should be. We live in congruence with proper principles. Doing so certainly protects our heart, our reputation, our character, and our being!

Shoes of the **gospel of peace** (): "Gospel" means "good news", so these are the shoes of the "good news of well-being", which I can enthusiastically get behind! The Greek word for "peace" means being in harmony with your environment. I love the translation "well-being".

Shield of **faith**: One of my favorite insights from studying Greek is that the word for "faith" primarily means faithfulness. It is not about belief, but character. We not only trust, but are trustworthy. We are faithful in our actions and relationships. Like the breastplate, a fitting shield.

Helmet of **salvation**: Salvation is one of the harder to define words in our gospel lexicon. We are delivered, but from what? I find the “natural human is an enemy to God” framing helpful here. We are delivered from our baser inclinations and tendencies, our laziness, selfishness, craving for comfort, avoidance, and above all, our willingness to use others, to treat them as objects rather than people as a means of getting what we want. We are delivered from these baser impulses as we become more like our Heavenly Parents. My personal definition of salvation is the maximization of Love, Joy, Freedom, Peace, and Growth.

Sword of the spirit (which is the “word of God”) The Spirit is both God’s influence within us and in the world, and that which gives life. There is a wildness to life. Life is made of energy and chaos that can both create and destroy, and does so in a cycle. It makes sense spirit is a sword that cuts and challenges.

Discussion: What is our “armor”?

Our daily habits, rituals, practices. Especially ones that hold us accountable and nurture our better selves.

Our relationships.

Proper understanding of how things work, how to live, etc.

[Lesson 43: “Take upon You My Whole Armor”](#)

- [“Preparation of Joseph F. Smith: I Am Clean”](#): This two-minute video shares the story of a dream Joseph F. Smith had about moral cleanliness. I often remark that hygiene is one of my favorite features of the modern world. This video touches on the powerful insight Moroni teaches us in Mormon 9... Judgment is not about God assigning us arbitrarily, but we judge ourselves by how we live, how we prepare ourselves, what we become. We end up where we ourselves are most comfortable, where we are ready to thrive.