

Mother's Day 2020 - Stand Firm!!

Intro:

Honor mom's - thank you for being awesome!!!

Funny story....showing up unprepared or dressed wrong....day at the park....needed a change of clothes, different shoes, towels, wipes, snacks, drinks, band aids, neosporin....was NOT prepared for the occasion!

Went home **put together a preparedness box**...change of clothes, underwear/pull ups, wipes, water bottles, juice boxes, snacks, band aids, neosporin, bee sting stick, sunscreen, old towels...I was determined to not be unprepared again!

I have since had several times in my parenting journey or in my life, when I felt unprepared for what we being thrown at me...a situation, a relationship, an attitude, a diagnosis or season or parenting!

This is exactly how I felt in late March....when the Covid-19 outbreak began to escalate into a full blown thing right here in our area....I had that awful feeling that I didn't have what I needed? I wasn't prepared...literally and mentally, emotionally...even spiritually!

God....what do I DO in this season?

STAND FIRM

(greek for stand firm...rooted, established, firmly standing!!!)

READ: As moms, we must become expert at standing firm because we are discipling at all times....because our children are leaning on us, looking to us, believing with us, following us as we lead them into what it looks like to be a disciple of Christ!

THE GOOD NEWS IS....**God has already purchased, packed and delivered the box of "preparedness items" that we need! We don't have to brainstorm a list, go looking for them, ensure they work....the box of items we need to STAND FIRM has already been given to each one of us.....we find this explained in Ephesians 6.....**

1st half of Ephesians Paul is exhorting us about who we are in Christ....

chosen

holy

blameless

our adoption as sons & daughters

our inheritance in Christ

alive with Christ, seated in Heavenly places

Ephesians 6:10-18

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

- we must PUT it on! USE it! EXERCISE it!

- FULL armor - we need ALL the pieces and parts....if we are missing something we become vulnerable to the enemy!

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12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

- our enemy is NEVER a person - a child, diagnosis, teacher, mother-in-law, financial situation, a pandemic...it is never what we can see
- the enemy: deceive, divide, manipulate, twisting, steal, kill, destroy; he is subtle, powerful and clever and good at what he does...hiding behind circumstances...but don't be fooled, it is not the circumstances that are the enemy but it is the enemy of our soul!

13 Therefore *, 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.

You ready to unpack the box....let's do this!

BELT OF TRUTH

14a Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH,

- not glamorous, doesn't seem powerful or threatening to the enemy....but it is the first thing Paul mentions....because it is the BELT that all of the other armor pieces anchor to!
- every other piece is made secure because it is anchored to the belt!
- **Prov. 3:5 - don't lean on your own understanding, in all your ways submit to him and he will make your paths straight**
- I have to have an objective standard so I can judge things rightly, so my perspective is accurate
- **Jn 1 describes our Heavenly Father - full of grace and truth**
- **Jn 14 - Jesus describes himself as "the way, the truth and the life"**
- conversely....**Jn 8:44 calls Satan the Father of Lies**
- **Jn 8:32 - You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free!!**
- When everything is in upheaval and changing and chaos seems to be ruling the day....TRUTH doesn't ever change, always the same, always steady, solid, absolute!

MOM: IS YOUR LIFE ANCHORED IN TRUTH? ARE YOUR WORDS ANCHORED IN TRUTH? ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ANCHORED IN TRUTH? ARE YOUR ACTIONS ANCHORED IN TRUTH? IS TRUTH THE FIRST THING YOU PUT ON EACH DAY AS YOU PREPARE FOR THE DAY?

BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

14b and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS,

- breastplate protects the vital organs....and specifically the heart
- righteousness = right living that creates an environment for right things (unrighteousness = wrong living the creates an environment for wrong things)
- righteousness is aligning my behavior with God's truth!
- truth and righteousness go together
- **2 Cor. 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**
- the belt of truth is what shifted the weight of the breastplate (70 lbs...heaviest armor) off of the shoulders and redistributed allowing the soldier more freedom of movement - truth of Jesus!
- trying to be righteous on our own is TOO heavy; God's standard of perfection is TOO high - unattainable! Jesus came to lift that burden and carry it for you....truth brings freedom! (Jn 8)
- Christ's righteousness is what protects us!

MOM: ARE YOU WEARING THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS ALONG WITH THE BELT OF TRUTH? IS YOUR ATTEMPT AT RIGHT LIVING ANCHORED TO THE TRUTH OF WHO JESUS IS AND WHAT HE HAS DONE TO SET YOU FREE?

GOSPEL OF PEACE

15 and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;

- Roman soldiers would wear these brass greaves or brass fitted shin and foot protectors; create a hard surface over the top of the foot and the front of the shin; impenetrable to attack
- as those who walk in the gospel of peace...we have a resolved heart that is able to walk at a steady pace because we are at peace with God, ourselves and others
- We carry peace into our homes, our jobs, our communities...
- **I Jn. 2:6 (NAS) he that says he abides in HIM(Jesus) ought himself also to walk even as he walked.**
- We bring God's peace with us into the places He sends us....helping restore man into right relationship with God and with each other!

MOM: ARE YOU BRINGING THE PEACE OF JESUS WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO? DO YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR ROLE OF BEING A PEACE MAKER IN THIS WORLD....MAN TO GOD AND MAN TO MAN?

SHIELD OF FAITH

16 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.

- this is the only piece of armor that is not affixed to our body; it turns with us, moves with us
- By using our faith as a shield, we are able to "catch" the fiery darts of the enemy and render them ineffectual...that which was meant to harm us...our faith "catches" and extinguishes!
- **Rom. 12:3 God has given each of us a "measure of faith" we must grow & develop it**

MOM: ARE YOU NURTURING YOUR FAITH AND USING IT TO PUT OUT THE FIERY DARTS THAT THE ENEMY SHOOTS RIGHT AT YOU? DOES YOUR FAITH DEFLECT THOSE ATTACKS OR CATCH THEM...DOES YOUR FAITH EXTINGUISH THESE ATTACKS OR DO THEY HIT YOUR FAITH AND CONTINUE TO BURN?

HELMET OF SALVATION

17a And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION,

- the helmet of salvation is the HOPE that comes as a result of salvation!
- **this is arguably the most important piece of armor...**because it is what protects our mind
- this hope makes us secure in who we are
- I Thess. 5:8 - we wear the hope of salvation as a helmet
- the hope of salvation is the HOPE that comes with all of the promises of God...

Hope of forgiveness

Hope of freedom

Hope of healing

Hope of redemption

Hope of restoration

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Hope of life to the full
Hope.....

- 2 Cor. 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

MOM: WHERE DOES YOUR HOPE COME FROM? ARE YOUR THOUGHTS A PLACE OF HOPE? IS YOUR MIND PROTECTED BY THE HOPE OF YOUR SALVATION? HOW ARE YOU WORKING THAT OUT IN YOUR DAILY LIFE?

SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

17b and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

- this is the only offensive piece of armor!
- Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.
- this is how we repel temptation....Jesus (Lk 4) modeled this when He was tempted in the desert; for every temptation he countered back "it is written"
- Ps. 119:11 I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.
- THIS IS THE ONLY WEAPON THAT BOTH PROTECTS/DEFENDS US AND DESTROYS THE ENEMY...."2FER"

MOM: DO YOU USE GOD'S WORD DAILY? ARE YOU RECITING IT, MEMORIZING IT, READING IT, PRAYING IT, SINGING IT, DECORATING WITH IT, BECOMING ADEPT AT USING IT? IT IS YOUR ONLY OFFENSIVE WEAPON!!

PRAYER

18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints,

- HOW DO I STAND FIRM....I PUT ON MY ARMOR....ALL OF IT....I PRAY!!!
- pray with strong purpose and perseverance
- pray for the saints...pray on behalf of others
- PRAYER ACTIVATES OUR ABILITY TO USE THE ARMOR TO IT'S FULLEST POTENTIAL!!
- Praying being something you overlay on top of everything else!!

MOM: DO YOU BATHE EVERYTHING IN PRAYER? DO YOU HAVE AN ONGOING CONVERSATION WITH GOD ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING IN YOUR LIFE AND IN THE WORLD AROUND YOU? ARE YOU FERVENT IN PRAYER? CONSTANT IN PRAYER?

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Closing:

Having done all of this....having put all of this on.....NOW I am ready to STAND FIRM!!!

Regardless of what life brings
Regardless of how "good" I am
Regardless of how prepared I am in the natural
Regardless of what the journey of mothering holds
Regardless of the twists and turns that we KNOW will come
Regardless of the nitty gritty details.....
I know I can stand firm!!

MOMS....this Mother's Day weekend....be reminded, be encourage, be challenged....that God has purchased, packaged and delivered the box of preparedness items that you need to STAND FIRM!!!

Put them on - do your part!
All of them - don't leave any unused!
Pray - activate. Your ability to stand firm with an ongoing conversation with God

Stand firm

Proverbs 31:25

She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come

PRAY!!!