

Breastplate of Righteousness Tape One: "Dealing with Failure"

Ephesians 6:10-14

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore, put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes you may be able to stand your ground and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then with the belt of truth buckled around your waist."

Review of Belt of Truth

Prayer to Receive the Strength of the Armor

This lesson is dealing with the question:

"What is the purpose of the breastplate of righteousness?"

In the everyday issues of life?

In the practical, common spiritual struggles that you face regularly?

What difference did it make that you put on the breastplate of righteousness that day?

What change happens in you on an average day when you put on the breastplate of righteousness?

What is the *primary purpose* of this piece of armor?

Paul, the author of the massive treatise on Romans regarding righteousness, had only 4 words to sum up God's righteousness here in this epistle. His comments are not minor. The first thing we're told we have to understand God's righteousness is - our direction with this is to have it - IN PLACE.

The whole armor deal is an analogy. He takes God's power and draws an analogy to a common Roman foot soldier.

The position of the breastplate is significant to understand how God's righteousness works in your life: "with the breastplate of righteousness IN PLACE."

Why is the position of the breastplate so important?

When a Roman soldier was engaged in battle and one on one he is fighting his enemy to the death, in the midst of this, if he is successful, if he is winning, if he is doing everything right, does he need his breastplate?

No.

The breastplate shouldn't even be touched.

The purpose of the breastplate of righteousness is for _____.

When his faith falters and the shield goes down....

When he misses the direction of the Lord....

When his belt is loose and he's tripping over his own clothing....
 When his helmet is cock-eyed and he can't see....
 When he's vulnerable....
 When the enemy goes for the death thrust....
 When he's failed and he deserves to die....

The thrust comes and he doesn't die because the **WHOLE POINT** of the breastplate is to protect you when you fail.

The purpose of God's righteousness: it is for dealing with failure.

"Have YOU faced major personal failures in your life?"
 What is your honest heart response?

When you failed did you have the breastplate of righteousness in place?
 When the death thrust, seeking to destroy you, aimed for your very heart, did it strike a glancing blow or did it pierce?

OR

If you haven't ever failed, is it because you're so terrified of failure that you've never allowed yourself to be in a position where you *could* fail?
 Do you know **HOW TO** deal with failure?
 Can you handle it when other people fail?

Three responses to Failure:

1. _____.

We've all done this - tasted it:

"You have the wrong information, buddy! I didn't do all those things!" "Even if you had the right facts, that's not what caused the failure! There's other people around here. They share some blame, too, buddy!" "It was a little mistake anyway!"

"You just don't understand me!"

What is the motive of a defensive response to personal failure?

_____ - _____

What's the opposite of right? Wrong. Righteous means to be right all the time. The self-righteous person is always concerned about looking right and being right and acting right. When you try to point out a personal failure, that doesn't compute because they always have to be right.

2. _____.

This is where there's no denying you did wrong. In fact, it becomes a 100 lb. weight in the midst of quicksand. It sinks you down and you walk through life thinking "I screwed up. I failed. I'm STUPID! I'm an idiot - I can't believe I did this."

This replays in your head over and over like a machine gun.
What is the motive of depression as a response to personal failure?

_____ - _____
Depression fools us by 'looking better' socially than defensiveness.

People notice depression and ask "Why are you so depressed?"

Our answer: "Because I should have done right."

"I'm depressed because it's very important to me that I do right - that I look right, that I act right,
that I BE right."

Self-righteousness is when the core drive of yourself is that you be RIGHT all the time.
When you recognize SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS as the root of your depression you will break it's power!

3. _____ (God's response).

Personal failure is like bouncing a \$2,000 check.

You can deny that you owe the money.

You can mully grub over it all day.

OR

You can pay the \$2,000.

Righteousness is a mathematical equation.

There's an issue of wrong. There must be something paid for that wrong.

Until it's paid you can deny it, you can mully grub about it.

Denying it IS NOT dealing with it.

Depression IS NOT dealing with it.

The only way to deal *permanently* with personal failure *forever* is to know what it means to put on the
breastplate of righteousness.

You cannot imagine the power of putting this on daily.

Final Thought:

Consider the phrase "...with the breastplate of righteousness IN PLACE."

"What does the breastplate of righteousness protect?"

What major internal organ does it protect? _____.

Metaphorically what does the heart contain? _____.

A broken heart....

A light heart....

A tender heart....

A hard heart....

A shattered heart....

A carefree heart....

A heavy heart....

The heart is the container of our emotions.

The plate covers our breast, which is the area of our emotions.

English IN PLACE equals Greek _____.

EN: _____.

DUO: _____.

What a brilliant man Paul was to put that 2 letter phrase *next to* breastplate.

Righteousness is an impenetrable plate over your emotions.

AND

This plate of protection over your heart sinks inside you until it fits so perfectly that you come to a state of rest.

What is it again that the breastplate of righteousness protects? _____.

The primary purpose of the breastplate of righteousness is to deal with _____.

Closing Prayer

Breastplate of Righteousness
Case One: "Dealing with Failure"
Discussion Questions

1. List some practical, common spiritual struggles that you face regularly:

2. What did you think of when Pastor John defined self-righteousness? Is this something you see in yourself that the Holy Spirit is revealing to your heart?

3. List some times when you experienced failure and you handled it by denial:

4. List some times when you experienced failure and you handled it by depression:

5. List some times when you experienced failure and you handled it God's way by dealing with it:

6. If you were wearing the Breastplate of Righteousness daily, what would you see God change in your life?

Breastplate of Righteousness
Tape Two: "My Identity From God"

Prayer: Appropriate the Word of God to be alive and quick and powerful.

Second of two weeks of introduction of second piece of the Armor of God

Review of positioning of Breastplate:

When a Roman soldier is in battle and when he is fighting a life and death struggle, he needs the breastplate in case his armor slips.

The primary purpose of God's righteousness is for us to learn to deal with _____.

En Duo: _____.

The breastplate protects the heart - our emotions. The Lord shows us that the same time that this breastplate protects us, His righteousness sinks inside you until God's righteousness fits you perfectly and your emotions come to a state of _____.

Therefore, God's righteousness is not just for dealing with failure, God's righteousness is for dealing with the _____ of failure.

"For in the gospel, a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'" Romans 1:17

The whole book of Romans is about knowing how to deal with (resolve) failure until it is nothing but a blessing in your life.

Romans 3:22 "This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."

3:28 "We maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law."

Romans 4:5 "However, to the man who does not work, but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness."

Romans 4:9 "Is this blessedness only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? We have been saying that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness."

Romans 4:11 "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith, while he was still uncircumcised."

Romans 4:13 "It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be the heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith."

Romans 5:1 "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 9:30 "...a righteousness that is by faith..."

Romans 10:6 "But the righteousness that is by faith..."

In five different chapters, Paul makes a jackhammer of a point here. The identity of this type of righteousness is that it is by _____.

The question:

What is the difference between the *breastplate of righteousness by faith* and the *shield of faith*?

Every detail of the armor has massive significance. Then why is it that we have two pieces of armor that deal with faith and have the same essence?

The shield of faith and the breastplate of righteousness are the same in these regards:

They are on the same _____. They are parallel in that they are chest level.

They are the same _____ and the same _____.

They are both of _____.

What's the difference?

The Breastplate of Righteousness

The Shield of Faith

It's about your _____.

It's about _____.

It's for dealing with _____.
(Protects your heart by _____.)

It's about _____.
(Protects your heart by _____.)

The breastplate is about failure.)

The shield of faith is about success.)

Stays in _____.

Moves _____.

Behind the _____ and _____.

It's _____ and _____.

(The breastplate is about becoming secure in your identity as a child of God.)

(The shield is the noisiest piece of armor.)

It is _____ on you - total state of _____.
You must stand _____.

You must _____ _____. It's about assertiveness and aggressiveness.
God likes us to chase down His blessings.

I Chronicles 4:10 "Jabez cried out to the Lord. Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my tent....God granted His request. Jabez was more honorable than all his brothers."

The shield of faith is a very volitional decision: I want every blessing God has for me.

Closing Prayer

Breastplate of Righteousness
Tape Two: "My Identity From God"
Discussion Questions

1. If you were allowing the Breastplate of Righteousness to protect you, what emotions would be different? What emotions are you experiencing now that are not of God?

2. What would a state of complete rest look and feel like to you?

3. Looking at a current experience where you feel failure, write about how that could be a blessing by God in your life?

4. If you struggle with wearing the Breastplate of Righteousness, please write below your decision, by faith, to begin allowing God to equip you with His Breastplate so that you can be free of the pains of failure and claim His promises by faith.

Breastplate of Righteousness
Tape Three: "God Thinks You Are Wonderful"

Today, if you can receive this, is the single greatest sermon I've ever preached.

This one series is the best series I've ever preached.

Come with expectation and prayer.

Understanding the gospel is richer because of the understanding of this series.

Ask God for an incredible revelation to come forward today in what He wants to say.

Opening Prayer to renounce the enemy of distraction and for our Holy God to open our hearts deeply.

Our last lesson highlighted in Romans (which is the essence of the gospel) that the main subject in Romans is God's righteousness.

Romans 1:17 "For in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed...."

How many times is the word righteousness in the book of Romans? _____ times.

Romans IS the book about God's righteousness.

Where does this great book of Romans conclude?

What is the result of the righteousness of God being given to us?

15:7 "Accept one another then just as Christ accepted you."

The word accept means _____ - _____.

Three synonyms of accept: _____; _____; _____

_____.

The essence of receiving someone whole-heartedly is to approve of them, to be pleased with them and to just think that they are wonderful.

What is the *opposite* of accepting?

Romans says unequivocally that the opposite is _____.

If you understand the breastplate of righteousness, if you understand the book of Romans, if you understand the gospel:

_____, (_____), _____

_____.

Some of you this morning will go through the greatest deliverance you never dreamed possible. The gospel says, the whole book of Romans says, scripturally, for a Christian, there is no such thing as ever criticizing another person.

God's righteousness says that God accepts you.

God approves of you.
God is pleased with you.
God thinks you are wonderful.

Do you know how far that will get you in the book of Romans? _____
By the end of Chapter Four, you get that God accepts you, approves of you and is pleased with you..
All of Romans 5 through the rest of the book is about how that works out in dealing with sin in our
lives and in relationship to other people.
The book sums all of this up by saying:

15:7 "Accept one another then just as Christ accepted you."

There are three times scripturally when we are to point out the wrongs of a brother:

1. If that person has sinned personally against you.

Matthew 18:15 "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault keeping it between the two of you."

Luke 17:3 "If your brother sins against you, rebuke him."

You can't avoid that there is a dealing with and a resolving of issues when your brother has sinned against you.

(NOT when you think he is doing something wrong overall, not when they are doing something that doesn't please you, but when they have SINNED personally against you.)

2. If you are an authority over someone (secular, spiritual, relational).
We are going to rewrite what we think about this by the book of Romans.

3. When you are asked to give counsel.

All of Romans 5, 6, 7 and 8 point out the difference between criticism and counsel.

Criticism is forced on you.

Counsel is asked.

Criticism emphasizes what you did wrong.

Counsel emphasizes what you don't understand about how you could do better.

Critical people are never sought after for counsel. You can measure the degree of criticism in your life by the degree to which people seek your counsel.

Scripturally there is no such thing as ever criticizing another person.

They walk right up to your heart, grab the gift that God gave you around your heart that He approves of you, that He is pleased with you, that He thinks you are right and take it and rip it right off of you.

v. 22: "So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God."

Believe about what things: _____

_____.

Three Biblical Boundaries for when someone thinks someone else is wrong:

(This means three boundaries for when YOU think someone else is wrong and same three boundaries for when someone else thinks you are wrong.)

1. _____.

Say to others, "Before you say anything, _____."

The Father looks at you and says, "I think _____ is wonderful."

Don't ever let people close to you who don't think you are wonderful.

How many of you have had close relationships with people who their aim in life was to straighten you out?

Before God, don't ever.

You are so wonderful.

The deception of a critical person is that they think they see things that no one else sees. You can see sin habits and see the struggles and the pain and the victory they've already won and you can see what God thinks about them. You can see the hope and the potential and you can still think they are wonderful.

We all battle with a critical spirit.

Set a boundary in your life on your perspectives of others.

2. _____.

Don't ever let someone near you until they are willing to understand you.

Critical people hate to admit that maybe they don't understand everything.

Proverbs 18:2 "A fool finds no pleasure in understanding but delights in airing his own opinions."

If they are not willing to understand you, scripture says they are a fool.

Why should you let a fool tear off the righteousness that Jesus Christ died to give you?

If someone criticizes you, ask them this: "You are telling me I did wrong and you don't even understand why I did that. Why don't you ask me why I did that?"

This is the door to dialogue.

3. _____.

This is the heart of Romans 5, 6, 7, and 8.
Romans 5, 6, 7 and 8 is why we wait until they ask for help.

This day, repent of two things:

- o If you have a habit of allowing people to criticize you and rip off the thing that Jesus Christ died to give you.
- o If you have a habit of criticizing children of the living God.

If you put these boundaries in place, you will be more of a teachable person.
Let nothing - no attack from hell - keep you from eating of the book of Romans.

Power must be accompanied by understanding.

If you have the habit of letting others criticize you, ask God for the power of God over your life for the spirit of rejection to be broken.

If you have the spirit of criticism, ask God for the power of God over your life for the spirit of criticism to be broken.

By the shed blood of Jesus, seek forgiveness.

Seek cleansing.

Receive forgiveness.

Submit to God.

Renounce the spirit of criticism.

Renounce the spirit of rejection.

Breathe in a whole new anointing of the Holy Spirit.

Breathe in a revelation of who you are.

Breathe in that God thinks you are wonderful.

Breastplate of Righteousness
Tape Three: "God Thinks You Are Wonderful"
Discussion Questions

1. What thoughts come to your mind when the Holy Spirit reveals that God thinks you are wonderful, that He accepts you, that He is pleased with you?

2. List some times when you have felt and received that acceptance:

3. List some times when you have offered others that same sense of feeling that they are wonderful, that you accept them, that you are pleased with them:

4. List some times when you have felt a spirit of criticism, either by the enemy's deception or by those around you:

5. List some times when you have allowed yourself to fall prey to the enemy and embodied a spirit of criticism to others:

6. How is the Holy Spirit convicting you that your own life could be more pleasing to the Father, specifically regarding receiving criticism and/or a habit you have of criticizing?

Breastplate of Righteousness
Cape Four: "Breaking Sin Habits"

The breastplate of righteousness is one of the greatest truths you will ever learn.

These truths will alter your life.

Today, we'll deal with two questions.

1. _____?

Righteousness = Right (opposite of wrong) + Eous (a way of life) + Ness (To have the nature of).

Righteousness: A _____.

You receive the inward nature of God to want to do _____.

This internal man wants to do right.

Two examples of connecting Righteousness and Obedience:

1. Do I wait until it feels right to do it?

OR

2. Do I do what I'm supposed to do whether or not it feels right or not?

Romans 6:16 "Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey--whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?"

The Bible says that obedience leads to righteousness.

2. _____?

Would you like to stop your sin habits, break your addictions?

HOW does righteousness help you break sin habits?

Roman 6:13 "Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness."

Romans 6:16 "Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey--whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death or to obedience, which leads to righteousness."

Romans 6:18 "You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness."

Romans 6:19 "...Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness."

Romans 6:20 "When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness."

Romans 6:22 "But now that you have been set free from sin.... "

Consider these scriptures as the control that righteousness brings to your life.

The DUAL answer to the two questions is:

1. There's something you must *see*.
- and
2. There's something you must *have*.

EVERY time you've ever tried to be obedient, if you weren't clear that there was something you must see and something you must have, then you weren't using obedience that leads to righteousness.

In Romans 5,6,7 and 8 there are 20 times the Apostle Paul says "there's something I want you to see/have....."

The thing you must see:

No one ever permanently broke a sin habit off their life until they saw that the sin habit was producing death in them and the way of God produces life.

This is the whole message of this section of Romans.

Sin is death:

Romans 5:12, 14, 20, 6:16, 21, 23, 7:5, 9, 11, 13, 8:2, 6, 13

God is life:

Romans 5:10, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 6:4, 13, 23, 8:2, 6, 10, 13, 17, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 37, 38-39

The thing you must have:

Romans 8 has 39 verses of which 24 times Paul mentions the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8 mentions the Holy Spirit more than any other place in the Bible.
It's not enough just to SEE your sin, you must then have the POWER to walk towards life.
The POWER is in the Holy Spirit, which gives us the new nature to want to do right.

HOW does this connect to obedience?
Do you obey just because it's the right thing to do? _____
If you do, then it's the extent of your vision and you will fail.

Obedience is seeing, as near as you can, what the will of God is and choosing to walk in that way and trusting, asking God "Open my eyes! Let me see life." while you are walking.

Obedience *leads to* righteousness according to Romans 6:16.

As you are obeying, you are trusting and asking for what you must see and what you must have. When you begin to see and to have, you will now have obedience that has led you to righteousness - the inward nature of God to *want to* do right.

Breastplate Prayer Phrases For Putting On This Armor:

1. The Position that the Breastplate brings between me and the Father:

By faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, I receive the free gift of righteousness that Jesus paid for me.

I receive the free gift of son-ship.

I renounce striving to earn your approval off of my life and I receive it as a gift.

I receive the truth that nothing I do right today will make me more pleasing to you.

I receive the truth that nothing I do wrong today will make me one ounce less your son and one ounce less invited into your presence through the blood of Jesus.

2. My Emotions:

Holy Spirit, I ask you to sink this gift of righteousness deep inside me until it fits perfectly and I come to a state of complete rest.

Holy Spirit, please fill my emotional cup with the Father's acceptance of me, the Father's delight in me.

Holy Spirit, make the core of my identity a son.

Holy Spirit, make me secure in my identity as a son.

3. The Issue of Obedience:

I ask you to fill me with the nature of God to want to do right.
Give me eyes to see life and death and the power to choose life.

4. My Relationships with Others:

Holy Spirit, give me a heart to bless as a secure son of the King.

Holy Spirit, set me free from wanting people to like me.
Holy Spirit, give me freedom from trying to impress people.
Holy Spirit, give me freedom from trying to earn people's approval.
Holy Spirit, give me freedom from criticizing or being criticized.

Closing Prayer

Breastplate of Righteousness
Tape Four: "Breaking Sin Habits"
Discussion Questions

1. What thoughts come to your mind when you ponder the meaning of righteousness and the new nature that has been offered to you in Christ?

2. When Pastor John talks about "wanting to do right", how does that apply in your life?

3. What sin habits and/or addictions do you feel the need to break and to release?

4. What does the Holy Spirit bring to your heart when you contemplate the application of this sentence: "Everything of sin is death and everything of God is life."?

5. If you have been so convicted, below ask the Holy Spirit to breathe fresh power on you to help you to break and to release the sin habits in your life:

6. Which Breastplate prayer phrases gave you a new insight or touched a chord in your heart or were new thoughts to you:

*Breastplate of Righteousness
Answer Key*

Cape One: Dealing With Failure

Page One

dealing with failure

Page Two

defensiveness self-righteousness

Page Three

depression self-righteousness deal with it
the heart your emotions

Page Four

en duo in place, fitting perfectly, coming to a state of rest
to sink inside your emotions the emotions of failure

Cape Two: "My Identity From God"

Page Seven

failure to sink inside you until it fits perfectly and you come to a state
of rest of rest emotions of failure
by faith

Page Eight

level shape size
faith identity circumstances
failure claiming God's blessing dealing with failure
not failing one place moves all over the place
scenes and quiet out front and loud placed
rest still take it up

Cape Three: "God Thinks You Are Wonderful"

Page Eleven

63 to receive whole-heartedly to approve;
to be pleased with; to think you are wonderful to criticize
Scripturally, for a Christian, there is no such thing as ever criticizing
another person. Ever.

*Breastplate of Righteousness
Answer Key, Continued*

Tape Three, Continued

Page Twelve

chapter four

If you ever allow another person to criticize you, you have permitted them to rip off your breastplate of righteousness.

Page Thirteen

does a lot of wrong things, stupid things, hard-hearted things,
rebellious things

put your attention on how your own life could be more pleasing to the Father.

Page Fourteen

about the brother who screws up a lot, about the brother who's weak in faith, the brother who has a filthy mouth, who doesn't pay his bills, the brother who needs a bath, the brother who always has sour look on his face

accept them accept me your name

understand them rarely offer advice

Tape Four: "Breaking Sin Habits"

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How does obedience connect to righteousness?

a new nature to want to do right

How does righteousness help you break sin habits?

Page Nineteen

Everything of sin is death and everything of God is life.

The power of the Holy Spirit

Page Twenty

No

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