

## **ON GUARD!**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Jesus Christ freed us from slavery to sin, but the enemy knows that our weakness is our sinful nature and he will do everything to bring us down. We are constantly being bombarded by what we see on TV, what is accepted in society and even the standards and truths taught in the bible are being questioned. The attack starts in our minds but the enemy's ultimate goal is our heart!

Pastor Pat always used to say, "if the enemy can blind your mind, he will deceive your heart."

**Proverbs 4:23**(NLT) Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

There is a mighty war going on for our souls and thus we need to be on guard 24/7/365. We can never let our guard down.

God has given us armour and weapons to help us with our guard duty. We need to use the following ones:

- Right believing.
- Right walking.
- Right living.
- Right thinking.
- Right speaking.
- Right trusting.

The goal of today's message is to bring us to the place where we can apply this protection and live as overcomers.

### **MESSAGE**

The enemy's attack is often subtle. We need to be wide awake!

**Genesis 14:17-21**(NLT) After Abram returned from his victory over Kedorlaomer and all his allies, the king of Sodom went out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh (that is, the King's Valley). 18 And Melchizedek, the king of Salem and a priest of God Most High, brought Abram some bread and wine. 19 Melchizedek blessed Abram with this blessing: "Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth. 20 And blessed be God Most High, who has defeated your enemies for you." Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods he had recovered. 21 The king of Sodom said to Abram, "Give back my people who were captured. But you may keep for yourself all the goods you have recovered."

This was a subtle attack and a test. It could have resulted in blessing or cursing!

- 2 kings came to meet Abram:
  - The king of Sodom – “burning”.
  - The king of Salem – “peace”.

This is very symbolic...

- The king of Sodom represented wordliness, the flesh and satan.
- The king of Salem represented – righteousness and peace, “Melchizedek means king of righteousness”.

Abram had just won a great physical battle, but now he was facing a different battle, a spiritual battle.

### **Melchizedek**

Melchizedek, is a type of Christ, he was both a king and a priest, and in Hebrews 5:6, Jesus is described as a Priest in the order of Melchizedek.

- Did you notice that the king of righteousness and peace was the first one to approach Abram.
- He didn't make any demands, instead he gave bread and wine and he blessed Abram.
- Isn't that like Jesus, He comes to us first too!
  - He comes to bless and save us – the bread and wine represents His body and His blood.
  - He offers us eternal life!

### **King of Sodom**

He is a type of satan...

- He was the king of burning – representative of hell – and Sodom was a city God destroyed because of its great sin.
- He came with demands and he came offering worldly riches.
- Give me back my people! Keep the goods (worldly wealth).
- He always comes after Jesus has already been, and he tries to offer us a worldly alternative – it may even seem compelling!
- He even tried to tempt Jesus!

What would have happened to Abram if he accepted that offer? Could it be that he would have been found in Sodom at the time of its destruction? Even there, satan's plan was to destroy Abram because he knew the Saviour, Jesus Christ would be born from Abram's descendants.

***In just the same way, satan comes to us with his demands and his offers – “If you worship and serve me, then I will make you rich...”***

***But Jesus, in total contrast says, come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest! Jesus always comes first – have we accepted what he has to offer, or have we been deceived and taken the enemy’s offer?***

## **ABRAM MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE**

**Genesis 14:22-24**(NLT) Abram replied to the king of Sodom, “I solemnly swear to the Lord, God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, 23 that I will not take so much as a single thread or sandal thong from what belongs to you. Otherwise you might say, ‘I am the one who made Abram rich.’ 24 I will accept only what my young warriors have already eaten, and I request that you give a fair share of the goods to my allies—Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre.”

- Abram didn’t fall for the king of Sodom’s ploy.
- He wouldn’t allow Sodom’s king to get **any kind of hold over him**.
- He wouldn’t take the offer of goods – he just requested fairness to those who had supported him.
- Instead, Abram glorified God by giving him a 10<sup>th</sup> of the goods he had recovered – by doing so, he acknowledged God as the one who had given him the victory.

***My question today is whether we have made the right choices in life and Jesus is in control with His presence, grace and blessing over our lives, or has the enemy managed to somehow get a hold in our life? Has it become a stronghold? It could be anything: lust, pride, greed, unforgiveness, anger, doubt, fear???***

## **HOW DO WE ENSURE WE ARE ON GUARD?**

**Ask Che to share the vision from Friday night.**

**Ephesians 6:10-12**(NLT) A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on all of God’s armour 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.

**We put on the Armour of God so that we will be able to stand firm against the strategies of the devil!**

Not only that but we are to put on every piece – the WHOLE armour of God:

**Ephesians 6:13**(NLT) Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armour so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. 14 Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armour 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.

Let's paraphrase that armour:

### **1. The belt of Truth = Right believing.**

The first line of protection is to know God's word. What does God's word say about my situation, about the choices I am making. Have I even considered God's word in my situation? Am I choosing the King of Righteousness or the king of worldliness?

- ***Do I believe what God says or what the world says?***
- ***Am I living out what I say I believe, or is it just nice words?***

### **2. The sandals of the Gospel = Right walking.**

Shoes protect our feet – If we wear the Gospel of truth, it will help us to walk sure-footedly. Feet represent walking – they take us where we want to go:

- Where am I walking? Am I walking into temptation or am I walking into God's blessing.
- Am I walking into church (where the gospel of peace leads me), or am I walking into the shopping center (where the flesh leads me)?
- Am I walking in peace?

**1 John 2:6** (NKJV) He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

***Are we following in Jesus footsteps and walking as He walked!***

### **3. The breastplate of righteousness = Right living.**

The breastplate guards the heart. We are the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. If we live in righteousness, we will guard our hearts, the enemy will not be able to deceive us.

***Can we say today that we are living righteous lives? Or are our hearts exposed because there is compromise that we need to deal with?***

### **4. The helmet of salvation = Right thinking.**

The mind is the real battlefield. The first thing we need to do is know that we are saved, but we need to do more:

**Romans 12:2** (NKJV) And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

- We need to check our minds all the time – “is my thinking conformed with God’s word, or am I thinking wrong thoughts”.
- Remember, if the enemy can blind your mind, he will deceive your heart.

***Are we thinking right? Ore are there thoughts that need to be taken captive?***

Let us bring our thinking under the blood of Christ, let our thoughts be renewed so that they align with the Word of God!

## **5. The sword of the Spirit = Right speaking.**

**Proverbs 18:21**(NKJV) Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.

**Psalms 149:6** (NKJV) Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, And a two-edged sword in their hand,

What we say has incredible power – this is part of our armour against the onslaught of the devil.

- We must speak life – the Word of God is life.
- We must praise God – The Word of God will show us what to say.
- We must confess the Word – we speak out God’s promises into every situation.
- The Word is our only true weapon – **Revelation 12:11** And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. Their testimony must have been God’s word!

***What have we been saying? Have we been confessing God’s word or do we need to go for some spiritual speech therapy?***

## **6. Prayer = Right trusting.**

This brings us back to Abram’s choice:

- When we pray, it’s like him choosing Melchizedek. Melchizedek represented God and trusting in God.
- When we trust in man or remain prayerless, it’s like choosing the king of Sodom.
- When we call out to God for help in prayer, we are trusting right!

***Who are we trusting today? Have we been calling out to the LORD? Are we believing for an answer?***

## CONCLUSION

We have to be on guard all the time so that we can identify, withstand and overcome the subtle, and not-so-subtle attacks of the enemy. God has given us fantastic armour:

- Right walking.
- Right living.
- Right thinking.
- Right speaking.
- Right trusting.

Let us put all this armour on all of the time – it will help us to keep our hearts and lives right before God and we will walk in victory.

Finally, we need to deal with the breaches in our defense:

**2 Corinthians 10:4-5** (NLT) We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. 5 We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ.

Let us bring those strongholds before the Lord today and tear them down so that we can start anew. In Jesus name.