

Text: Ephesians 6.11 Elijah White confirmation verse.

May 1, 2016

**Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.**

Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Amen.

If you look at Dubs, that's Elijah's nickname, he doesn't look like a guy you would want to get into a fight with, right? Big and strong. Yet he chose a verse about needing armor from God to have strength. Once you get to know Dubs a little, you realize he's more than just big and strong. He's really smart. One time, just one time, during Catechism class, he didn't raise his hand to answer a question. I said, "This must really be a tough one, even Dubs doesn't have his hand up." Then, with an exasperated sigh, Dubs raised his hand and said, "I was trying to give someone else a chance to answer." Yet he chose a verse about battling against the devil's schemes. Dubs has the wisdom from God to know he's not strong enough on his own. He needs the full armor of God. Dubs knows he's not smart enough on his own. He needs the full armor of God to take a stand against the devil's schemes.

Ooo, the devil's schemes. They are tricky. Before we sin, he tries to make sin look small. "It's no big deal. Everybody is doing it. It's just a little harmless fun." So we give in. Make fun of the nerdy kid. Smoke a little weed. Go too far on a date. And then, then after we sin, this is the devil's scheme. "Your sin is too big. You call yourself a Christian? God could never love someone who did that. You aren't good enough to go to church, to take communion. You should stay away." Man, isn't that devil a tricky little guy? First sin is small, then sin is big.

We need the full armor of God, the full armor that God gives to us. It's not an armor we can manufacture ourselves. It's a breastplate of righteousness, the perfect righteousness that Jesus gives, that totally covers our sin. It's the helmet of salvation, that assures us we are saved. It's the shield of faith, that puts out those flaming arrows of guilt. It's the belt of truth, the truth that Jesus will always love me. It's the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Dubs, it's that Word you have studied and learned that will enable you to take your stand. It's that word that is your sword to slay the devil. It's that Word that slices through the devil's lie. It is a big deal to make fun of that nerdy kid. He's a precious person for whom Jesus died. It is a big deal to smoke a little weed, it harms the body God gave you. And yes, that same sword that slays the devil can also heal your wounds. When you go too far on a date, that sword lifts you up with comfort, that God still loves you. That no sin is bigger than your Savior's forgiveness. Carry that sword to take your stand in the hallway. Wear that breastplate to take your stand with your buddies. Put on that helmet to take your stand on every date. Put on the full armor of God. Amen.