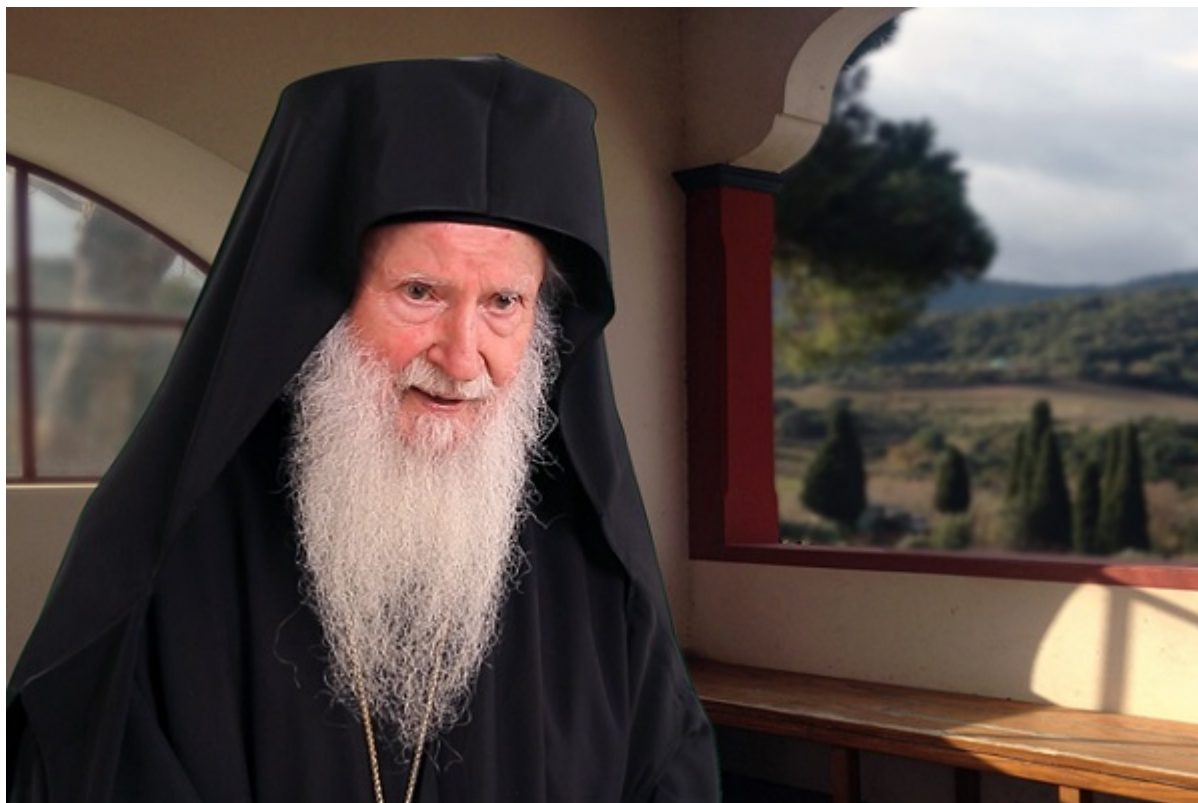


Sermon on the Apostolic Reading - 14th Sunday of Luke (Ephesians 6:10-17)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



In this Apostolic reading from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, we see an inspiring description of the suit of armor a Christian needs for warfare. Of course, the kind of example that St. Paul is presenting is a spiritual one, aimed at effectiveness in the spiritual warfare of a Christian. This is because the Christian has a constant enemy, the Devil (Satan), who with his tricks is trying to deceive people and lead them away from Christ. In order to help us appreciate the magnitude of this danger, St. Peter adds: *"... Your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"* (1 Peter 5:8). That is why St. Paul urges us, like a general to his soldiers, to **"Take up the whole armor of God."** This is so that you may be able to withstand the assault of Satan when it arrives. To take every necessary measure, in order to be able to remain firm, and remain steady in a fighting position (see verse 13).



What kind of arms then, is a Christian supposed to take up? Are all of them “defensive,” as we call them today? St. Paul specifies:

-“**Have your waist girded with truth**” (verse 14). Everyone knows that the whole arsenal of the fighter or soldier hangs from their vast belt. That is why St. Paul points out, that belief in the truth is vital for the Christian, so they are able to equip themselves properly. If someone has no knowledge of the truth of the Gospel or of the truth of the dogmatic teachings of the Church, and does not have an authentic faith, how can they possibly prepare themselves? This is impossible! Truth, therefore, is a thing of absolute necessity.

-“**Put on the breast-plate of righteousness**” (verse 14). God is righteousness and loves righteousness. So you too should avoid injustice and never be improper towards anyone in word or deed. Say what is right, declare what is right, and defend what is right. If you see something wrong, make sure that you do everything possible to stop it. Let justice be the rule of your life, even if it goes against your interests. St. Peter says that we should “live for righteousness” within the will of God (see 1 Peter 2:24). If we are shielded in righteousness, the wicked one cannot hurt us.

-“**Hold on to the shield of faith**” (verse 16). The shield that the fighters of old used was for protecting his whole body from the arrows of the enemy. In the same way, the faith in our Christ protects us from even the most burning arrows of the

devil. That is why Jesus often stressed the need for a firm faith.

-***“Take the helmet of salvation”*** (verse 17) so that you may protect your mind from any thoughts of doubt. The helmet of the ancient fighters, like today’s military helmet, was for protecting the head against any deadly strike. In the same way, the promise of salvation for the Christian who follows Christ is certain, and protects them from thoughts which may unsettle the spiritual life.

-***“Take also as a sword the word of God, which the Holy Spirit is providing for you”*** (see verse 17). St. Paul places great importance on the knowledge of the word of God: “Let the word of God dwell in you permanently in all its wisdom” (see Colossians 3:16). We know from the holy Gospel that Jesus himself, as a man, was tempted on the mountain after His baptism and triumphed against Satan by using the words of the Holy Scriptures. In the same way, the Christian fighter, by knowing well the words of God, ends up being victorious against any and all temptations.

We should add here another provision, which St. Paul is also recommending to the Christian. As warriors wear solid footwear on their feet in order to be able to run safely and easily, so you too should ***“shoe your feet with the preparation to proclaim the good news of peace”*** (see verse 15), the one that Christ has brought. This way, we are not only protecting ourselves, but everyone else from the wicked one who is seeking to cause turmoil.

My brothers and sisters! Our adversary the devil is real, and misses no opportunity to attack us in sneaky ways to snatch us away from Christ and make us his captives. Therefore, let us not leave ourselves without weapons and defenseless. Let us take up, fervently, the armor of God that the Great fighter, Paul is recommending to us. This way, we shall be confident that, in the spiritual struggle and with the power of Christ, we will be victorious! Amen.