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## *Devotion for September 7, 2021*

*"Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the Gospel of peace. In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication."*

*- Ephesians 6:13-18a*

**I think this Bible passage presents a wonderful picture of a normal Christian who has been prepared to do the will of his or her Father in heaven, and to go forward in the name of His Son, Jesus.** Not only to go forward, but not to be intimidated, compromised, pushed around, or injured as to not go forward. In short, to be steadfast in the faith regardless of the path of trials along the way.

You see, things that happen along the way are not punishment, they are trials. In order to continue to go forward, even though things get tough, we need to rely on what and who our Father in heaven has given us. St. Paul has told us of truth, righteousness, and peace. These are great pieces of armor as we go forward, but this is not our own truth, righteousness, and peace. It was given to us.

It is what has been given and also who has been given. We know that the law came through Moses, truth and grace from Jesus Christ. Jesus came and preached and taught the truth and revealed His Father to us. He was and is righteous. He lived a life among us that was sinless and totally obedient to His

Father who sent Him. He took the sins of the whole world to the cross and died on Good Friday. Jesus had faith that His Father would raise Him up on Easter morning, which He did, thus giving us the Good News of the Gospel, forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

It is this very Good News, the Gospel, that the Holy Spirit uses to work faith in the hearts of men and women. The Holy Spirit uses the word of God as law to cut the heart like a sword and the Gospel to save those who have been cut, working faith in them. Those who have this saving faith go forward in the Spirit into the world with the saving message of the Gospel, helping to save those of the world from eternal destruction.

Do you know that you and I have already been issued this set of armor? Yep! That's right. When we were baptized, we put on Jesus. Jesus is that armor. We are members of the kingdom of God and have received the Holy Spirit. We can go forward steadfast in the faith, for we have been forgiven. We have been given the peace of the Gospel which is forgiveness of sins and eternal life. We already have the shoes of readiness given to us by the Gospel. God's surely with us through all trials as we have the Word of God; the sword of the Spirit.

We know that when we are being tested, we can ask for help in the name of Jesus, believe in our heart, and receive from our Father in heaven the peace that keeps us steadfast in the faith until the end.

*In Christ Jesus,  
Rev. John Kyle, Associate Pastor  
Grace Lutheran Church & School*

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