

Ouachita Baptist University

## Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

---

Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians

W.O. Vaught Archive

---

4-1-1977

### Having on the Breastplate of Righteousness

W. O. Vaught

*Ouachita Baptist University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn\\_ephesians](https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_ephesians)



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), and the [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Vaught, W. O., "Having on the Breastplate of Righteousness" (1977). *Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians*. 59. [https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn\\_ephesians/59](https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_ephesians/59)

This Sermon Notes is brought to you for free and open access by the W.O. Vaught Archive at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact [mortensona@obu.edu](mailto:mortensona@obu.edu).

## HAVING ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS  
NUMBER 74  
EPHESIANS 6:14b

Dr. W. O. Vaught, Jr.  
Immanuel Baptist Church  
Little Rock, Arkansas

EPHESIANS 6:14b "...and having on the breastplate of righteousness;"

In our last study we saw the meaning of "Loins girt with truth." This refers to the whole system of salvation by grace and spiritual growth by grace. We advance one step farther in this study before us and see the meaning of "having on the breastplate of righteousness."

"Having on" is an aorist, middle, participle of "enduo." This means that little by little, point by point, you learn doctrinal truth and you store it away in your mind. The middle voice means that you are benefitted by this process. The participle means that this is a law and standard and it will always turn out this way. Christian maturity and happiness depends on having on this breastplate of righteousness.

The greek word for breastplate is "thorax" and is in the accusative singular and it means there is one breastplate for every believer. In a greek sentence an aorist participle takes precedence over the main verb in the sentence, and the main verb was in the previous sentence which is "to stand." Now if you are to stand, you must meet certain conditions and one is you must put on and keep on every day the breastplate of righteousness.

### The Meaning Of Breastplate

The breastplate is a very interesting thing. Most of the ancient peoples had very heavy and carefully made breastplates. The Egyptians, the Phoenicians, the Persians, the Assyrians and almost all nations had breastplates. They would take one piece of cloth and then another and another and then place a metal rim around it. When the Greeks came along, they made breastplates out of bronze. But the Romans had the best breastplates of all and they were made of heavy metal, overlaid with gold. In a previous study we saw the use of the belt they wore and how they fastened their equipment to the belt. Finally they came to attach their breastplate to their belt so it would turn when they turned. Later on they extended the breastplate until it covered the whole body. The idea behind the wearing of a breastplate was the idea of aggressiveness. It gave them freedom of action and confidence as they advanced toward the enemy.

### THE DOCTRINE OF THE EDIFICATION COMPLEX

This breastplate of righteousness is what we call "THE EDIFICATION COMPLEX OF THE SOUL." This word "edification" is a word that is found several times here in Ephesians. In Ephesians 4:12 and 16 and 29 the word is "oikodome." This is a compound word and it comes from "oikos" which means house or temple, and from "demo" which means to build or construct. So this word "oikodome" means to build a structure in your soul.

#### 1. THE MEANING OF OIKODOME.

In this word "oikodome" we have two greek nouns, a house and a building, and when these two words are brought together, it means edification. It means a spiritual building of doctrinal truth in the soul. It means to build a fortification in your soul out of doctrinal truth, and the word is edification.

2. THE SOURCE OF THE EDIFICATION COMPLEX IS GRACE.

We pick up this truth from Ephesians 4:12 and 13. God moves in and does this work within us and the breastplate is the result of his work of grace in our minds. No man can ever build this edification in his own life, it must be the work of God.

3. LOOK AT THESE BIBLICAL SYNONYMS FOR EDIFICATION.a. LIGHT.

PSALM 119:130 "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple."

EPHESIANS 5:8-9 "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)"

PSALM 43:3 "O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles."

The Bible teaches that "the entrance of thy truth giveth light." All spiritual growth comes in this way. So it isn't what we do that makes us great, but it is what we receive from God that fortifies us in the soul.

b. GLORY.

I CORINTHIANS 11:7 "For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man."  
This is the glory of God within us.

c. THE FULLNESS OF GOD.

EPHESIANS 3:19 "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

d. IMITATORS OF GOD.

EPHESIANS 5:1 "Be ye therefore followers of God as dear children:"

e. CHRIST AT HOME IN YOUR HEART.

EPHESIANS 3:17 "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,"

f. CHRIST FORMED IN YOU.

GALATIANS 4:19 "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,"

g. THE NEW MAN.

EPHESIANS 4:24 "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

COLOSSIANS 3:10 "And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:"

h. OBEYING THE TRUTH.

1 PETER 1:22 "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:"

i. THE PERFECT WORK.

JAMES 1:4 "But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

Now all of these are biblical synonyms of the Edification Complex. This is what Paul means when he says that we are to put on the breastplate of righteousness. Every time you hit one of these synonyms in Scripture, remember that millions of years ago God made provision for your every need. He knew exactly what your needs would be and he made provision for them all. God wants you to be happy and one way you can be happy is to wear the breastplate of righteousness. You can't live in the penthouse unless you climb to the top, and the way you climb up there is through the edification of your soul. This is the LIGHT, the FULLNESS OF GOD.

4. THE BIBLICAL USAGE OF EDIFICATION.a. THE CONCEPT OF THE CREATION OF THE EDIFICATION COMPLEX THROUGH DOCTRINAL TEACHING.

You can't pick up your Bible and read it every day and from that reading grow an edification complex in your soul. Someone has to teach you. You have to learn doctrine point by point. Your job is to find someone who is teaching doctrine and then stick with it until you learn it. (Just like the process you must follow when a little baby is born into the home. You must care for that baby, feed it carefully every day and little by little the baby will grow into a strong person.)

b. DON'T JUDGE A CHURCH BY ITS PHYSICAL PLANT OR ATTENDANCE.

The real prosperity of a church is determined by the number of people in that church who have built an edification structure in their souls out of Bible truth. If a church has hundreds of people who wear the breastplate of righteousness then that church is great. The real purpose of a church is to get the people to inhale Bible truth. Here is the criterion for the greatness of a church.

ACTS 9:31 "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied."

c. THE EDIFICATION STRUCTURE IN THE SOUL KEEPS YOU ON THE MAIN TRACK.

In 1 Corinthians 14:3-4 and 12 and 26, we have the contrast of the edification complex and the speaking in tongues. The temporary gift of tongues had a purpose, and that was to evangelize the Jews in Gentile languages before the second administration of the fifth cycle of discipline to the Jews. Tongues warned them of the coming of their doom.

d. THE EDIFICATION STRUCTURE IN YOUR SOUL IS TO BALANCE OUR HUMAN VIEWPOINT.

1 CORINTHIANS 8:1 "Now as touching things offered unto idol we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth."

Divine viewpoint must come before human viewpoint "Human viewpoint puffs up, but love edifies."

e. COMMUNICATION GIFTS WERE DESIGNED FOR THE EDIFICATION OF THE BELIEVER.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:8 "For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed."

5. THERE ARE TWO SPIRITS THAT ARE INVOLVED IN THE ERECTION OF AN EDIFICATION STRUCTURE IN YOUR SOUL.

a. The filling of the Holy Spirit.

JOHN 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

1 JOHN 2:27 "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

b. Your human spirit.

This is the grace cycle. It takes the Holy Spirit linked up with your human spirit to make the complete link.

6. HOW TO RAPIDLY CONSTRUCT THIS EDIFICATION STRUCTURE.

You daily take in doctrinal truth and apply faith to every act of your life.

JAMES 1:3-4 "Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

If you will run to the Word of God every day and take in truth, you will build a great structure of power in your life.

7. CHRIST IN HIS HUMANITY BUILT AN EDIFICATION COMPLEX.

LUKE 2:40 "And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him."

LUKE 2:52 "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

JOHN 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

By the time Christ was 12 years old, he was rapidly building this structure in his soul.

8. THE BUILDING MATERIAL OUT OF WHICH YOU BUILD THIS HOUSE IN YOUR SOUL.

"Gnosis" which is Biblical truth.

"Epignosis" and this is truth you transfer over into your human spirit.

"Sun iemi" and this is technical knowledge from Scripture.

"Sophia" and this is the residue of Bible truth in your human spirit.

The foundation is Bible doctrine. This is the greek word "Oida" and it means knowledge.

The first floor is Grace Orientation. "Eleos" is the word.

The second floor is Inner Happiness. "Chairo" is the word and it means to rejoice, to be glad.

The third floor is a Relaxed Mental Attitude. The word is "arketos" and it means to be content.

The fourth floor is the capacity to love. This involves both agape and phileo love.

The fifth floor is mastery of the details of life.

2 CORINTHIANS 10:5 "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

Now when you live in this kind of a house, it is glorious indeed. This is the breastplate of righteousness. Now God has designed this kind of happiness for you. Now you can't run over to the window every morning and say five times, "I am happy and ever expect to get happiness that way. Neither can you get it by walking down an aisle, or by dedicating yourself, or by becoming emotionally involved with your work. But remember this--happiness is the edification complex in your soul. It is putting on the breastplate of righteousness.

#### An Absolute Necessity

So we end this study by saying no doctrine--no happiness, no grace--no happiness. This happiness designed by God is perfect and it comes to us in a perfect way, and that's the way of grace. It is described for us in a perfect book. God does it all and it is outlined in the pages of the Bible. Once you understand the grace of God, you are on the way to an edification complex. There is no way for you to be happy apart from Bible doctrine. Every time a Roman soldier put on the breastplate, he was safe to go out and fight. When you put on the breastplate of righteousness, you are safe for the conflict. A Roman soldier would get hit with an arrow and it would bounce off his breastplate and he would shout, "It works--it works!" That's what the believer can shout when he grows an edification structure in his soul. It works every time.