

The Armor of Light

by Richard E. Bieber

The time has come for us to wake up and put on the armor of light, facing reality, casting off the works of darkness, and living as people exposed to daylight, by faith clothing ourselves in Christ and opening our spirits to the glory of God.

Scripture: Isaiah 60:2

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "End Times"

Description

Richard E. Bieber delivers a powerful sermon urging believers to wake up from spiritual slumber as the time of salvation draws near, likening the current world events to the impending storm before World War II. He emphasizes the need to cast off works of darkness and put on the armor of light, living in a manner that reflects exposure to God's truth and light amidst growing darkness. Bieber challenges believers to choose between living for temporary pleasures, making provision for the flesh, or embracing the armor of light to withstand the spiritual corruption and challenges of the coming days.

Transcript

Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed; the night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy.

But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its lusts. Romans 13:11-14

In one of his novels, Sartre describes how it was in France before the outbreak of World War II. Signs of impending crisis were everywhere. Anyone with half-a-mind could see that the serenity of those summer days was an illusion. Yet, the people went on living as if that golden hour would last forever. They kept looking away from the storm clouds.

Suddenly, the storm arrives. No more lying on the beach and gazing up at the sky, dreaming away the days. No more carefree afternoons in the park.

- Occupying armies.

- Tanks, guns.

- Labor camps.
- Hunger, cold, danger.

Today, everybody can see the clouds gathering, everybody can hear the thunder in the distance getting louder. Even the people who are supposed to have some control over events know, in their hearts, that something's going on which is beyond their control. Like the officers on a ship, assuring the passengers that everything's fine, when they know very well the ship is sinking.

Among believers,

- who have any sense of God working in history,
- who have an ear for the voice of the Spirit,

it's obvious that Divine Judgment, on a world-wide scale, is no longer something we merely talk about in bible studies. It's something we're about to live through.

Knowing what we know as we watch the structures of this world crack and crumble, and as we see the prophecies of Divine Judgment begin to unfold before our eyes,

- we have to decide how we are going to live in this present hour.

We have three choices:

1. We can do what those Frenchmen did back in 1939: make the most of each golden day that's left until they end.

"Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die."

2. Or, we can start making provision for the flesh so that we can go on fulfilling its lusts for a while yet.

Knowing that fuel is going to be scarce, we can try to figure out a way to hoard it.

We can stock our basements with food, and dig bomb shelters in our back yards. But all the while we think we're beating the uncertain future, we are selling our souls to the demon of fear.

- Even if we have a thousand gallons of gasoline in a secret tank,
- Even if we have enough wood piled in the garage to keep us warm for the winter,
- Even if we have a cabin in the wilderness stocked with everything we need to keep us going for years,
- the very fact that we're thinking and living this way indicates that we've already lost our minds to the Enemy.

3. There's a third way in which we can live in these few remaining days of peace and plenty.

We can put on the armor of light.

If we're looking for survival, we'd better be looking for something much more than physical survival. What's the point of coming through the storm with our bodies in one piece if our minds and spirits are wrecked in

the process. Twisted out of shape by fear,
adultery,
perversity,
drunkenness,
murder,
hate.

The real dangers of the coming days will not be starvation and violence, but spiritual corruption, the likes of which this world has never seen. What's the point of having your basement loaded with food and fuel while your mind is wide open to every delusion the Evil One sends your way.

Arm yourself indeed for the days ahead. But for pity sake, not with guns and rations and money! Arm yourself with light. So that no matter how alarming, or confusing things get, you'll be able to keep moving in God's will.

The night is far gone, the day is at hand." Romans 13:12

But that day isn't going to look like day for a while.

- At the very time that God's light comes to His people,
- at the very time that God's glory rises upon them,
- darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people, as never before.

In Revelation, when the Lamb breaks the seven seals and the seven trumpets are blown, (i.e., when God causes the light of His judgment to search the earth), darkness rises up against that light in the form of a hideous, undisguised trinity of evil. The dragon, the beast, and the false prophet.

And the minds of the multitudes are, by that time, so deluded that they see this grotesque, false godhead as beautiful, and deserving of worship.

"Men worshiped the dragon for he had given his authority to the beast. And they worshiped the beast saying, 'Who is like the beast and who can fight against it?'"

Revelations 13:4

These people had ample opportunity to worship the True Father who has given His authority to the True Son. This didn't impress them.

The true and living God?

Who is He?

But when the Prince of this world takes off his mask and shows himself in all his hideous strength, they bow down and worship.

"Darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people." Isaiah 60:2

And this very darkness will be, to the people of God, a sign of the coming Day - evidence that God is breaking through and fulfilling His Word.

Seen with the eye of the Spirit, all these signs of darkness will indicate that the Day of God we've been waiting for is now at hand.

"The night is far gone, the day is at hand. Let us then cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light." Romans 13:12

And the time to put on the armor of light is not at the end of the tunnel, when things start looking bright, but now, when they keep looking darker.

To put on this armor of light involves three basics:

1. To put on the armor of light is a thing of the mind.

"it is full time now, for you to awake from sleep."

In other words, make your mind face reality. No longer allow it to indulge in dreams and delusions. No longer allow your mind...

- to dwell in the unreal past. The past is gone
- and it never was what you're telling yourself it was,
- or to escape into the unreal future,
- or to live in a dream-world here in the present.

Open your eyes and see what's really going on. If you're willing to face reality, God will enable you to see reality. Face the truth about who you are.

- You're not the big shot you like to pretend you are.
- And the fellowship you belong to is not the big-shot fellowship you like to pretend it is.
- You're just a servant.
- And your fellowship, at best, is just an infinitesimal part of the divine plan that is now unfolding.

Face the truth that the only "big one" on earth is Jesus Himself. And the only way to know Him and walk with Him is to get under His yoke and learn from Him to be meek and lowly of heart.

Wake up! Get these delusions of grandeur out of your mind and see the lines being drawn for the final battle.

2. To put on the armor of light is a thing of daily living.

It involves casting off the works of darkness and living as people who are exposed to the daylight continuously.

- No pretenses.
- No putting on that special face for brothers and sisters.
- Or that special voice of piety.

Be what you are and not some phony religious freak. And no self-indulgence, as Phillips renders it - no getting drunk, or playing with sex. And this includes all the other ways we manage to turn ourselves into slobs.

And no quarrelling and jealousy. How much energy is consumed by believers as they let their hearts smolder with rage and envy against brothers and sisters.

We are to live daily, hourly, as men and women who know that their lives are exposed to Light, from which nothing is hidden.

3. Finally, to put on the armor of light is a thing of spirit.

- By faith our spirit clothes itself in Christ.
- By faith we see the glory which even now stands above all this darkness.

And, we open our spirits to that glory. We welcome it into our hearts.

"Lord Jesus, fill us with your Spirit! Flood us with your life!"

That prayer is answered. The Spirit comes and keeps coming, dwells in us, rules us, quicken us, guides us.

And as long as we follow where the Spirit leads and do what He commands, He continues to wrap us in the very light of God.

Arise, shine, for your light has come. And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the people.

But the Lord will arise upon you, and His glory will be seen upon you.

And nations shall come to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising.

Isaiah 60:1-3

The ones who are going to survive the days ahead will not be those with plenty of hams and canned heat hoarded in their basements, but those whose minds, bodies, and spirits are wrapped in the armor of light. The same light that shone in Bethlehem, and opened the eyes of the blind, and bled and died on Calvary, and rose on the third day.

The same light that is soon going to cause presidents and prime ministers to claw the earth looking for a place to hide.

Let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Romans 13:13-14

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