

## **Suited Up for Battle**

### **Ready:**

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in heavenly places." -- Ephesians 6:12

### **Set**

As the Character Coach for South Spencer High School's football program, I am always listening to the instruction given by coaches, hoping to build off their narrative for a team-building devotional. During one recent practice as the offensive line coach was positioning his linemen, he stood in front of them and said, "Gentlemen, this line must never be breached!" If it is, the heart of the offense, the quarterback, will be exposed, igniting chaos, resulting in a broken play. The offensive line coach sets blocking plans designed to stop the fiery arrows (linebackers) from breaching the wall of players surrounding the quarterback to protect the heart of the offense.

This makes me think of Proverbs 4:23: "Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life." The same imagery applies to both. Your heart is protected by a rib cage and if it was left unprotected, Satan's fiery darts could breach our vulnerable heart. Suddenly, the very place the Holy Spirit dwells within us becomes a place of negativity and hostility. But God, in His infinite wisdom, provides an extra layer of protection for us in the breastplate of righteousness. Just as a football player has pads for protection on the gridiron, God has provided all the armor we need to be protected from the evil one.

Protect your heart by taking every thought captive and submitting it to Christ. Put on the armor of God and extinguish the fiery darts the evil one throws at us like a blitzing linebacker and remember, "if God is for us who can ever be against us?" -- Romans 8:31

### **Go**

- You prepare for battle on game day. How do you prepare for battle against spiritual attacks?
- Which piece of God's armor do you never remove?
- Do you have a favorite Scripture verse to begin your day?

### **Workout**

Ephesians 3:16-17: Proverbs 15:13

### **Overtime**

“Father in Heaven, thank You for designing and providing all the protection we need from the attacks of the enemy. As we move through our day, prepare our hearts and minds to love our neighbor and battle evil. In Jesus’ strong name, Amen.”



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