

*The Biblical-Principle Approach Homeschool Experience™*

## *The Philosophy*

**EXPANDED (G)**

The Biblical-Principle Approach  
Understanding Strongholds



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Note: This first section is a warm-up. It consists mostly of reading.

## Preparation for Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

In previous lessons, we've already addressed the importance of Renewing our Minds in Christ Jesus. Understanding how to arm up with Biblical principles—the Truths of God's Word—prepares us to stand firm. It's one of the first steps for us to take in our journey forward as Christians. This helps to equip us for spiritual battles.

Homeschooling isn't *just* a lifestyle. And, it's not *just* discipleship. It's also about training your family for spiritual battles.

**Ephesians 6:10-18** gives us the picture of what it's like to put on the full armor of God:



- 10) Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.
- 11) Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.
- 12) For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
- 13) Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.
- 14) Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
- 15) And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;
- 16) Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.
- 17) And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:
- 18) Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

(KJV)

Yes, there are a lot of spiritual battles to face. But, God gives us what we need for the day of [spiritual] battle.

You're already putting into practice having your loins girt about with Truth. If your not sure what that even means, it's okay. Firstly, just know that you are off to a great start by knowing how to reason from Truth.

Secondly, for the longest time, I didn't know what that even meant: "having your loins girt..." It's a bit challenging to put on armor if one doesn't understand the purpose of its pieces and exactly how they fit together. There aren't any pictures in an instruction manual to tell us how to girt our loins. We can be left with asking: 'What's going on here? What are we doing?'

## Preparation for Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

Matthew Henry's Commentary explains the essential need for Truth:

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Truth or sincerity is our girdle, v. 14. It was prophesied of Christ (Isa. 11:5) that righteousness should be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. That which Christ was girded with all Christians must be girded with. God desires truth, that is, sincerity, in the inward parts. This is the strength of our loins; and it girds on all other pieces of our armour, and therefore is first mentioned. I know no religion without sincerity. Some understand it of the doctrine of the truths of the gospel: they should cleave to us as the girdle does to the loins, Jer. 13:11. This will restrain from libertinism and licentiousness, as a girdle restrains and keeps in the body. This is the Christian soldier's belt: ungirded with this, he is unblessed.



It's okay to take a little while to let that infuse your mind.

Read the commentary on it again.

Has God left you helpless for the day of spiritual battle?

What's the first thing He gives us to withstand the wiles of the devil?

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Matthew Henry reminds us that God wants Truth in a certain location.

Where does God want Truth? \_\_\_\_\_.

How important—how powerful—is the Truth of God's Word for the day of spiritual battle?

Would He give it us to fight with if it would have little to no effect?

## Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

As believers, you have on the breastplate of righteousness.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines *righteousness* as:

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Purity of heart and rectitude of life; conformity of heart and life to the divine law. Righteousness as used in Scripture and theology, in which it is chiefly used, is nearly equivalent to holiness, comprehending holy principles and affections of heart, and conformity of life to the divine law. It includes all we call justice, honesty and virtue, with holy affections; in short, it is true religion.

(KJV)

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Matthew Henry's Commentary explains:

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Righteousness must be our breast-plate. The breast-plate secures the vitals, shelters the heart. The righteousness of Christ imputed to us is our breast-plate against the arrows of divine wrath. The righteousness of Christ implanted in us is our breast-plate to fortify the heart against the attacks which Satan makes against us. The apostle explains this in 1 Th. 5:8, Putting on the breast-plate of faith and love. Faith and love include all Christian graces; for by faith we are united to Christ and by love to our brethren. These will infer a diligent observance of our duty to God, and a righteous deportment towards men, in all the offices of justice, truth, and charity.

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What do you think of the breastplate of righteousness securing the vitals and sheltering the heart?

Do you have purity of heart and rectitude of life because of Jesus Christ?

Are you comprehending God's Holy principles and affections of heart?

How important—how powerful—is the breastplate of righteousness for the day of spiritual battle?

Would He give it to us for the day of spiritual battle if it would have little to no effect?

## Preparation for Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

Lace up those special shoes for the day of spiritual battle.

Matthew Henry's Commentary explains:



Resolution must be as the greaves to our legs: And their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, v. 15. Shoes, or greaves of brass, or the like, were formerly part of the military armour (1 Sa. 17:6): the use of them was to defend the feet against the gall-traps, and sharp sticks, which were wont to be laid privily in the way, to obstruct the marching of the enemy, those who fell upon them being unfit to march. The preparation of the gospel of peace signifies a prepared and resolved frame of heart, to adhere to the gospel and abide by it, which will enable us to walk with a steady pace in the way of religion, notwithstanding the difficulties and dangers that may be in it. It is styled the gospel of peace because it brings all sorts of peace, peace with God, with ourselves, and with one another. It may also be meant of that which prepares for the entertainment of the gospel, namely, repentance. With this our feet must be shod: for by living a life of \*repentance we are armed against temptations to sin, and the designs of our great enemy. Dr. Whitby thinks this may be the sense of the words: "That you may be ready for the combat, be shod with the gospel of peace, endeavour after that peaceable and quiet mind which the gospel calls for. Be not easily provoked, nor prone to quarrel: but show all gentleness and all long-suffering to all men, and this will certainly preserve you from many great temptations and persecutions, as did those shoes of brass the soldiers from those galltraps," etc.

How does the Gospel give us peace despite spiritual battles that we face?

Is your heart resolved to adhere to the Gospel and abide by it?

How will the Gospel help you walk a steady pace?

\*Keep the word "repentance" in mind.

What kind of a mind are we to endeavor for and what does the out working of that to look like?

## Preparation for Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." (v. 16). How does the shield of faith protect us and from what does it protect us?

Matthew Henry's Commentary explains:



Faith must be our shield: Above all, or chiefly, taking the shield of faith, v. 16. This is more necessary than any of them. Faith is all in all to us in an hour of **\*temptation**. The breast-plate secures the vitals; but with the shield we turn every way. This is the victory over the world, even our faith. We are to be fully persuaded of the truth of all God's promises and threatenings, such a faith being of great use against temptations. Consider faith as it is the evidence of things not seen and the substance of things hoped for, and it will appear to be of admirable use for this purpose. Faith, as receiving Christ and the benefits of redemption, so deriving grace from him, is like a shield, a sort of universal defence. Our enemy the devil is here called the wicked one. He is wicked himself, and he endeavours to make us wicked. His temptations are called darts, because of their swift and undiscerned flight, and the deep wounds that they give to the soul; fiery darts, by way of allusion to the poisonous darts which were wont to inflame the parts which were wounded with them, and therefore were so called, as the serpents with poisonous stings are called fiery serpents. Violent temptations, by which the soul is set on fire of hell, are the darts which Satan shoots at us. Faith is the shield with which we must quench these fiery darts, wherein we should receive them, and so render them ineffectual, that they may not hit us, or at least that they may not hurt us. Observe, Faith, acted upon the word of God and applying that, acted upon the grace of Christ and improving that, quenches the darts of temptation.

Do you know that *temptation* has dichotomies?



# Preparation for Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

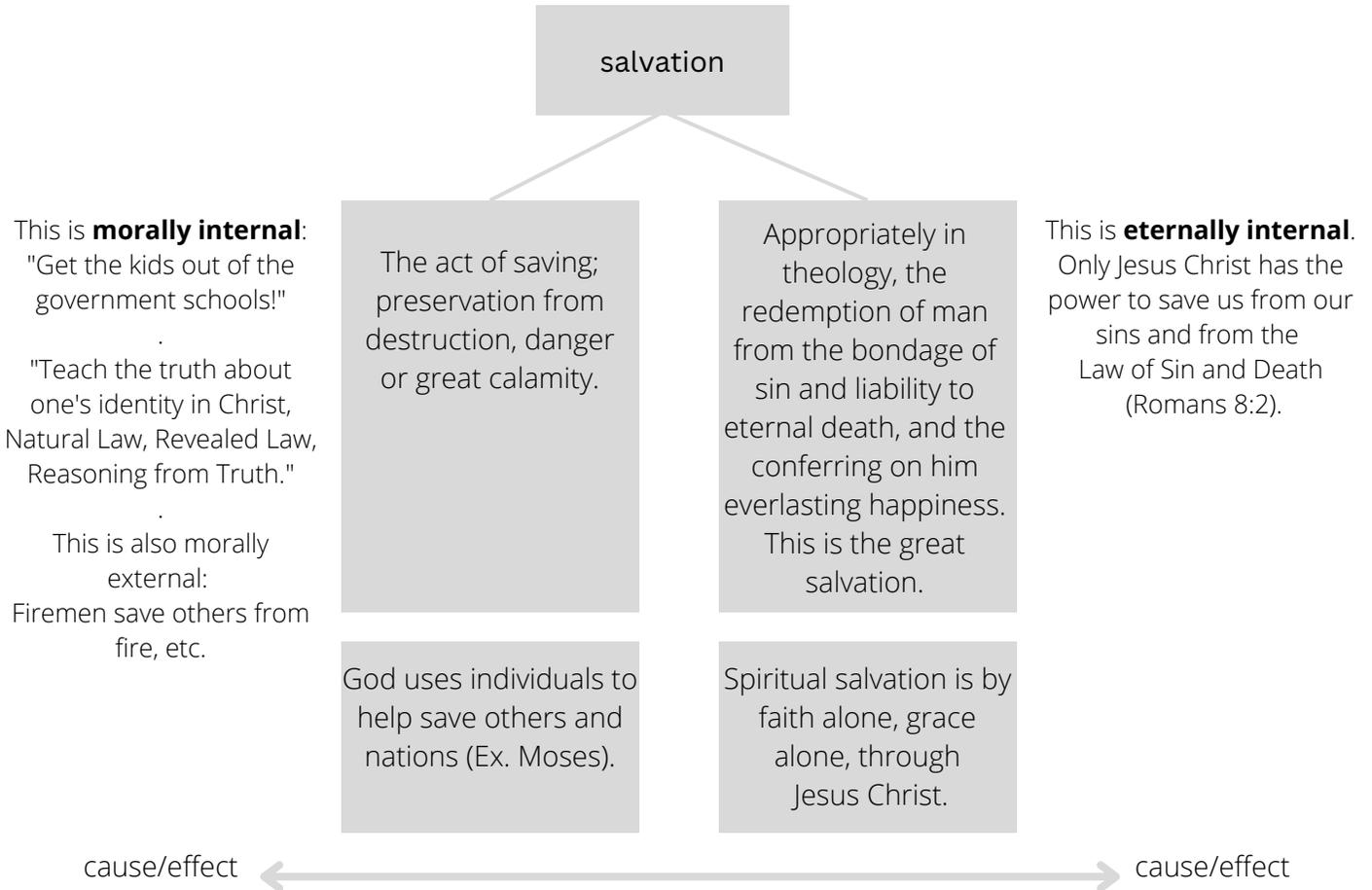
"And take the helmet of salvation. . ." (v. 17a). How does the helmet of salvation protect us and from what does it protect us?

Matthew Henry's Commentary explains:



Salvation must be our helmet (v. 17); that is, hope, which has salvation for its object; so 1 Th. 5:8. The helmet secures the head. A good hope of salvation, well founded and well built, will both purify the soul and keep it from being defiled by Satan, and it will comfort the soul and keep it from being troubled and tormented by Satan. He would tempt us to despair; but good hope keeps us trusting in God, and rejoicing in him.

Do you know that *salvation* has dichotomies?



# Preparation for Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

"... and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. . ." (v. 17b). How does the helmet of salvation protect us and from what does it protect us?



Matthew Henry's Commentary explains:



The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. The sword is a very necessary and useful part of a soldier's furniture. The word of God is very necessary, and of great use to the Christian, in order to his maintaining the spiritual warfare and succeeding in it. It is called the sword of the Spirit, because it is of the Spirit's inditing and he renders it efficacious and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword. Like Goliath's sword, none like that; **with this we assault the assailants**. Scripture-arguments are the most powerful arguments to repel temptation with. Christ himself resisted Satan's temptations with, It is written, Mt. 4:4, 6, 7, 10. This, being hid in the heart, will preserve from sin (Ps. 119:11), and will mortify and kill those lusts and corruptions that are latent there.



Okay, so there are mind viruses out there.

But, **how powerful** is the Word of God?

Say it here: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Does arguing against ideas with Scripture-arguments (principles) defend only the believer?

How does Romans 10:17 maybe link to the Sword of the Spirit?  
"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (KJV)

## Preparation for Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" (v. 18). How does praying and watching affect us once we have on our armor?

Matthew Henry's Commentary explains:



Prayer must buckle on all the other parts of our Christian armour, v. 18. We must join prayer with all these graces, for our defence against these spiritual enemies, imploring help and assistance of God, as the case requires: and we must pray always. Not as though we were to do nothing else but pray, for there are other duties of religion and of our respective stations in the world that are to be done in their place and season; but we should keep up constant times of prayer, and be constant to them. We must pray upon all occasions, and as often as our own and others' necessities call us to it. We must always keep up a disposition to prayer, and should intermix ejaculatory prayers with other duties, and with common business. Though set and solemn prayer may sometimes be unseasonable (as when other duties are to be done), yet pious ejaculations can never be so. We must pray with all prayer and supplication, with all kinds of prayer: public, private, and secret, social and solitary, solemn and sudden; with all the parts of prayer: confession of sin, petition for mercy, and thanksgivings for favours received. We must pray in the Spirit; our spirits must be employed in the duty and we must do it by the grace of God's good Spirit. We must watch thereunto, endeavouring to keep our hearts in a praying frame, and taking all occasions, and improving all opportunities, for the duty: we must watch to all the motions of our own hearts towards the duty. When God says, Seek my face, our hearts must comply, Ps. 27:8. This we must do with all perseverance. We must abide by the duty of prayer, whatever change there may be in our outward circumstances; and we must continue in it as long as we live in the world. We must persevere in a particular prayer; not cutting it short, when our hearts are disposed to enlarge, and there is time for it, and our occasions call for it. We must likewise persevere in particular requests, notwithstanding some present discouragements and repulses. And we must pray with supplication, not for ourselves only, but for all saints; for we are members one of another. Observe, None are so much saints, and in so good a condition in this world, but they need our prayers, and they ought to have them. The apostle passes hence to the conclusion of the epistle.

Jot down your initial thoughts about the role of prayer:

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# Heavy Lifting: Understanding Strongholds



## Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

Now that you have the full armor of God and understand how to put it on and the purpose of each unit, it's time to see its use in spiritual battles.

What have you understood about *strongholds*? Are they external and internal? Can they be positive and negative?

### Old Testament

#### Assignment 1:

Do you know that a stronghold can be a positive thing? Read the following passages of Scripture and write down what you learn about a *stronghold*.

1. Psalm 46:7 \_\_\_\_\_  
(See *refuge*, Strong's H4869, outline of Biblical usage.)

2. Psalm 48:3 \_\_\_\_\_  
(See *refuge*, Strong's H4869, outline of Biblical usage.)

3. Psalm 94:22 \_\_\_\_\_  
(*Refuge* here is similar.)

4. Explain this stronghold in relation to internal and external effects for the individual.

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### New Testament

In the New Testament, the Greek word for stronghold is *ochuroma*. It's external like a fortress or a castle.

A missionary once explained that the Apostle Paul transforms and molds this into an internal place where believers draw to escape (which is part of the definition for *ochuroma*). That will make more sense as you go through the Word Study for this lesson.

## Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

Let's look at how Paul uses *stronghold* in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5.



(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds). 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;

(KJV)

### The armor of God literally gives us the ability to pull down strongholds.

1. In the Greek, the word for "*pulling down*" is Strong's G2507 - kathaireō. And, its Biblical usage is:

II. to pull down, **demolish**

a. the subtle reasonings (of opponents) likened to a fortress, i.e. **to refute**, to destroy

2. In the Greek, the word for "*imaginings*" is Strong's G3053 - logismos. And, its Biblical usage is:

II. a reasoning: : such as is hostile to the Christian faith

Strong's Definitions for it are:

reasoning (conscience, conceit):—imagination, thought.

3. In the Greek, the word for "*knowledge*" is Strong's G1108 - gnōsis. And, its Biblical usage is:

1. knowledge signifies in general intelligence, understanding

a. the general knowledge of Christian religion

b. the deeper more perfect and enlarged knowledge of this religion, such as belongs to the more advanced

c. esp. of things lawful and unlawful for Christians

b. moral wisdom, such as is seen in right living

# Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

**The armor of God literally gives us the ability to pull down strongholds.**

4. In the Greek, the word for "strongholds" is Strong's G3794 - ochyrōma. And, its Biblical usage is:

- II. anything on which one relies of the arguments and reasonings by which a disputant endeavours to fortify his opinion and defend it against his opponent

5. In the Greek, the word for "thought" is Strong's G3540 - noēma. And, its Biblical usage is:

- I. a mental perception, thought; no'-ay-mah; from G3539; a perception, i.e. purpose, or (by implication) the intellect, disposition, itself:—device, mind, thought.

The most common related English word is *mindsets*. Whatever country, province, state, county, city, neighborhood one lives in, there are *mindsets* that are contrary to God's Word. They're contrary to the Biblical way of thinking and living.

**Assignment 2:**

After considering and pondering all of these definitions: 1. Explain how the Biblical-Principle Approach to life and learning is the action of putting on the armor of God; 2. How the Biblical-Principle Approach trains us in how to demolish mindsets against the knowledge of God.

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# Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

Understanding how strongholds operate gives the ability to be on the offense and defense as circumstances necessitate. From this study, we can reason that we don't "**bind**" strongholds. Rather, Biblical thinking dismantles and replaces them.

**There are 2 things to change in the world: 1. strongholds; 2. spirits. We are only addressing strongholds in this lesson.**

Do you remember that on page 5 you were told to make note of the word *repentance*? The same missionary (mentioned earlier) explained that a lot of Christians misunderstand what repentance is. Many Christians think that it means "to confess." But, confession and forgiveness aren't the same as repentance. Confession and forgiveness are necessary and they come **before** repentance. And, repentance means that an individual **changes their way of thinking**.

Many Christians need to understand how to change their way of thinking and this is done by reasoning **from** Truth.

Here's another thing to understand. Satan works through schemes/ mindsets/ thoughts (2 Cor. 2:11). The word *devices* may be used in place of *schemes*. But, they mean the same thing. **Satan manipulates wrong thinking**. Satan wants to keep people in spiritual darkness—to put a veil over people's eyes and darken their capacity to think and discern in all areas of life. That is the spiritual battle that we face and God has given us His full armor to fight it.

### Assignment 3:

Explain the importance of following knowing Scripture (memorization of verses **and** the understanding and applying Biblical principles).

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## Understanding Strongholds

The Philosophy Expanded (G)

### In this expanded lesson, you learned or reinforced your convictions of:

- putting on the armor of God
- how each unit of armor protects us
- the fact that there are dichotomies of temptation
- the fact that there are dichotomies of salvation
- what *confession* and *faith* are and that they come before repentance
- what *repentance* is
- the fact that Satan works through schemes (mindsets, ideas, thoughts)
- what it means to tear down mindsets against the knowledge of God (Christian faith, principles and morals)

### In this module, you reflect on:

- God, in His Sovereignty has provided spiritual armor for us
- the proper use of each unit of the Armor of God
- how the Biblical-Principle Approach is the putting on of spiritual armor
- how loving our Heavenly Father is to give us what we need for the day of spiritual battle
- the fact that God equips us
- the fact that we can choose to put on the armor and allow for Christ to govern in and through us
- the fact that Christ can use us to help protect the mindsets of ourselves and our family
- the fact that Christ can use us to help change the mindsets of others with the Truths of God's Word