

Body Armor

*When you are too sure of yourself, you are less on guard against the enemy.
(Saint Bonaventure)*

It was 1:30 A.M. on Friday, December 6, 1991; Officer Tommy Garrison was on Highway 309 in Byhalia, Mississippi. He had stopped a gray Monte Carlo occupied by three men because the car did not have a tag. Garrison approached the vehicle and asked the driver for his license. "I don't have my license with me," the driver stated, "but I do know my number." Garrison shined his flashlight into the car and noticed three VCRs stacked in the back seat. "Where did you get those?" he asked. Suddenly, catching him off guard the three men jumped out of the car. Before he could draw his weapon the first man attacked him with a knife. As he fought the assailant a second man shot him twice. The first bullet struck Tommy in the stomach and knocked him off balance. The second round hit his chest, knocking him to the ground. The three men jumped back into the Monte Carlo and spun out, heading north toward the Tennessee line. But before they were out of sight, the dazed policeman was able to get on his feet and run back to his patrol car. He announced on the radio, "Shots Fired ... Officer Down!" Almost immediately, help arrived and an all points bulletin was issued. How did Tommy Garrison survive this brutal attack? Before going on shift that evening he put on his bullet-proof vest. This seven-year piece of equipment was cumbersome and reeked with the smell of sweat. He did not wear it regularly because it was constricting and a nuisance. But as fate would have it; the weather was cool that morning so he put it on to help keep him warm. That smelly cumbersome vest saved his life and since the attack he has never been on duty without it.

Congress found in 2001 that the risk of dying by gunfire is 14 times higher for a law enforcement officer not wearing body armor than for one wearing it. One individual conducting the study commented, "To be out in the field without a vest is like playing Russian roulette; the more you spin the chamber and pull the trigger, the more likely you are to get shot."

Opposition is a fact: the person who is not conscious of being opposed had better watch himself for he is in danger (J. I. Packer). We have an enemy lying in wait, a great perpetrator who is out to destroy our souls. Satan is wandering throughout the whole earth, killing, stealing and destroying. His footprints are everywhere: war, terrorism, lust, pride, molestation, murder, addiction, violence. We must protect ourselves with the shield of faith in Christ and the vest of right standing with God. No ammunition the enemy possesses is capable of penetrating God's armor; so wear it constantly and protect yourself from every lethal weapon in the enemy's arsenal.

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