

Each Study we will begin by reading **Ephesians 6:10-13**.

- We are on a mission – “Be Strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might” – The Ephesian letter has two halves. The first boasts of the amazing blessings and strength of Jesus, while the second challenges us to “walk in a manner worthy...” (**Eph. 4:1**). That means strength & resolve.
- Satan is unseen but active - “not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers...” This “not, but” construction notes that there will be flesh and blood decisions, but the real issue is the deceitful worker of death behind it, seeking to derail our faith and devour our souls.
- We need armor to survive – “Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.” We cannot defeat Satan and keep our souls from his grip without this armor, ALL of it, every piece, as each is in itself unique.

Review: “Gird your Loins with Truth”

- 1) This is about the Word of God – *Read, Study, Obey* (Ex – Exodus 28-30 – yes, even there!)
- 2) This is about Fact over Fiction – **Acts 26:24-26** – “Truth and Rationality” - Measure yourself!
- 3) This is about Putting on Christ – Is. 11:1-5 – He is full of grace and truth – emulate Him!

Review: “The Breastplate of Righteousness”

- 1) This is about the Word of God – It is about the Righteousness layered on us from the Word
 - a. His R. upon us – Grace / His R. in us – Faith / His R. through us – Good Works!
- 2) This is about Right and Wrong – **Ac. 10:35** – “do what is right” – boils down to daily choices.
- 3) This is about our Righteous King – **Is. 59:17** – He always chose God’s way. Inspirational!

Review: “Shod your feet with the preparation of the Gospel of peace”

- 1) This is about the Word of God – It bridges Peace and Preparation – Romans 1:16-17
- 2) This is about Good over Evil – The good news. Hope and peace and purpose.
 - a. The Gospel equips you with joy and support – who would give that up? For the flesh?
- 3) This is about Active Evangelism – Is. 52:6-10 – Announce Peace! Keep the waters flowing!

Review: “Taking up the Shield of Faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one”

- 1) This is about Belief in God – Conviction. Persuasion. Constancy. Belief in His Power! His Promises!
- 2) This is your Primary Defense – The shield is out ahead. Believing God is in the room and omnipotent.
- 3) This is about the Word of God – Rom. 10:17 – Through this we learn Who He Is and why we Trust Him!

Review: “The Helmet of Salvation”

- 1) This is about Guarding the Mind – The imagery leads is to mental protection – most battles are fought there!
- 2) This is about Hope of Salvation – We are to think and pray and consider salvation, the hope of it, all the time!
- 3) This is about the Word of God – All we know of heaven and Jesus who made it possible is found in these pages!

“The Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” – (v17) -

You all have been incredibly patient during this study and have listened to the reviews and stuck right there with me. I appreciate that. We will finish with a brief look at this potent phrase. What stands out to me is the uniqueness of this phrase compared to the others within all three main pieces of content.

1) This is about Offense!

- a. That is unique to everything we’ve studied so far. Each of the other pieces are about protection from the foe, extinguishing the arrows, defense. The Sword is not. It works in conjunction with those no doubt, but this is about offense, striking, winning.
- b. But how would one use offense against the devil. How can we strike out to slay the workings of the foe? He’s not physical, he’s not apparent. Well, I think we are about to get some help on that. There are TWO passages that use “sword” in a similar way.
- c. **Matthew 10:32-39** – The idea of a sword here means... division in relationships.
 - i. Look at **Luke 12:51** – “division.” It means the Truth will not so much impale another as slash the rope between them, sever them away.
 - ii. The Truth of God draws, with a razor edge, lines in the sand. This desires peace and wants all to join, but it is willing to forfeit peace and live with severed relationships, in order to follow God. (**II Cor. 6:7, 14,17** – that’s an offensive and godly strategy)

- iii. It is hard to imagine cutting people out of your lives for any reason. But the Word has to mean so much to you that you will do so for the sake of it, if others desert God or have an ill effect on your faith or your family. That's not defense, that's initiative.
- d. **Hebrews 4:12** – The idea of the sword here means – division, but not relationships, in you!
 - i. This means the word goes on the offensive, cutting and carving and attacking and fighting and winning, inside of you! Letting the word get in there and judge what's going on and direct the outcome and draw those lines for your conscience!!!
 - ii. Sure, you can fight policies through voting and FB Bible posts... but the SWORD is most needed and exemplified in the Word being allowed to make cuts and even divisions in YOU and in RELATIONSHIPS.

2) This is The Word of God

- a. Every lesson so far has said, "this is about the Word of God." Truth is what the Word uniquely possesses. Righteousness is taught by the Word. The good news of peace is what the Word gives you. Faith comes from reading the Word of God. Salvation is taught to us within the Word of God. But now, the full force of this weapon IS GOD'S WORD!
- b. **II Timothy 3:16-17** – All offense! And every aspect of it achieves this! Truth, Righteousness, Gospel of Peace, Faith, Hope of Salvation – "All Scripture"
 - i. Teaching – putting truth into the situation and shaping ideas
 - ii. Reproof – exposing error for what it is by shedding light on the subject
 - iii. Correction – setting people on the right path, think lines in the sand
 - iv. Training – making us stronger, bolder, more capable warriors.
 - v. Equipped, not just to defend, but for offense: GOOD WORKS!
- c. **Matthew 4:1-11** – And listen, let's not wane abstract here. The Word literally is used as an offensive tool to Teach, Reprove, Correct and Train, pushing the devil away!
 - i. **V3-4** – A weak and unnecessary challenge – answered by the Word pointing to God!
 - ii. **V6-7** – Misquoted scripture – answered by the Truth of the Word pointing to God!
 - iii. **V8-10** – An appeal to His pride – answered by the Word giving glory only to God!
- d. And by the way, use it as the Sword it was intended to Be. Put actual, real, tangible Bible verses, sermons, studied, moral implications INTO the RELATIONSHIPS in your life and INTO YOU. It hopes unto peace but may cause divisions. But Book, Chapter and Verse!
- e. **Luke 12:48** – Because one day, the sword will divide lost and saved, the Word of God.

3) This is "of the Spirit"

- a. I don't want to get too off course here, but this phrase, indicating the workings of (FROM) the Holy Spirit through the Word, gives us occasion to talk about WHY fewer and fewer people are reading and studying and directly applying the word.
- b. In our modern religious climate, "Christians" believe the Holy Spirit lives and both assists us in our defense and our offense, protection from the devil and providing the tools we need to fight. But increasingly this is found APART FROM THE BIBLE. The Word feels antiquated and dated to some, and they look inwardly for the Spirit to guide them today.
- c. Folks, THIS IS IT! The armor and the sword are the provisions of the Holy Spirit to you, and then (**Eph. 6:18**) you pray to God in connection with Him. That's fellowship with the Spirit.
- d. **II Thess. 2:13-15** – "By the Spirit" "in the Truth" "through our Gospel"! I'm not saying He doesn't do other things in other ways, but I'm saying that all He has provided to you in terms of fighting the adversary in Truth ... IS IN THIS BOOK! And grows through prayer!
- e. **II Peter 1:19-21** – As so must we be... moved by the Holy Spirit... by SCRIPTURE!

Conclusion – Winning isn't a matter of IF but WHEN. It's not about IF you can win with God, or find victory in Christ by obeying the Truth – **Eph. 6:13** – God says you will. For some it's a matter of WHEN – when will you let the sword divide right from wrong in you and choose right – for the first time or again?