

Week Forty-four: "The Armor of God"

Day One: Small Group Guide

Read: Ephesians 6:10-20 (p. 1363)

Read: Commentary (p. 1362)

Reflect: How healthy is your spiritual immunity system? How healthy is your crap detector?

Dig: How often does the author use the word "stand" in this passage? How do you do that in the spiritual realm?

What part does prayer play in this passage?

Of all the armor, which is the only effective weapon?

Read Romans 13:12-14 (p. 1298). What new information do you find here to help you understand the armor of God?

Apply: In a prayer time, mime out the actions of putting each piece of the armor of God on with prayer. Now take your stand against Satan's schemes this day.

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Day Two: "The Belt of Truth"

Read: John 17:13-19 (p. 1224)

Read: Commentary (p. 1225)

Reflect: Since Satan's major tool is deception, in what ways has he tried or succeeded in deceiving you?

Dig: How is truth defined in this passage? (see verse 17)

Why is being "sanctified" so important in seeing truth?
See Matthew 5:8 (p. 1081) for part of the biblical answer.

See Romans 1:21-23 (p. 1279). How does this add to your understanding of these verses?

Why might this passage begin with the "belt of truth"?

Apply: Read the "ways that you can be deceived by the world" on page 1511 in the back of the Freedom in Christ Bible. Then seek forgiveness from God for the false beliefs you have held.

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Day Three: "The Breastplate of Righteousness"

Read: Acts 24:10-16 (p. 1269)

Read: Commentary (p. 1270)

Reflect: What do you usually do when you feel accused and condemned?

Dig: What does Paul say to defend himself? What specific points does he make?

In Paul's statement, "...I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man..." is he accepting imputed righteousness or calling to their attention his imparted righteousness? See the commentary for the distinction between the two.

Read Romans 3:21-24 (p. 1283). What do these verses do to help you understand how Christ's righteousness protect our hearts (become our breastplate)?

How does Romans 8:31-34 (p. 1290) give you confidence in spiritual warfare to stand up to Satan's accusations?

Apply: Make a list of the sins that Satan could use against you to accuse you. Now confess each one, accept the righteousness of Christ and make your stand against those accusations as you enter your day.

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Day Four: "The Shoes of Peace"

Read: Romans 16:17-20 (p. 1302)

Read: Commentary (p. 1301)

Reflect: Is it easier to unify or to divide?

What is the greatest sin in the church?

Dig: What does the last verse have to do with the first three? In other words, why the introduction of Satan here?

Take a look at the phrase "by smooth talk and flattery," and then look up James 3:3-6 (p.1443). What similarities do you find between these two texts?

Is unity a gift of the Spirit or something we strive for? For a biblical answer to this question turn to Ephesians 4:2-3 (p. 1359)

Apply: What do you need to do in a practical way to keep the unity of the Spirit? Determine in prayer to do this today.

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Day Five: "The Shield of Faith"

Read: Psalm 7:10-16 (p. 593)

Read: Commentary (p. 594)

Reflect: If Satan were to design an arrow to pierce your defenses, what do you think he would shoot at you? Where are you vulnerable?

Dig: If you read the first line of Psalm 7:10, what might "shield of faith" mean to David?

Does God still express his wrath against our enemies?

See Revelation 20:7-10 (p. 1501) for a biblical answer to this question.

How does Romans 12:17-21 (p. 1295) help you understand how to exercise our trust in God when it comes to battling our enemies?

Apply: Conclude with a prayerful reading of Psalm 91 (p. 652) as you use God's Word to develop trust in him as your Shield.