

DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Our Mission: Reaching Out to Leaders Who Can Change the World.

June 2013

Ephesians: God's Plan for His Church

Lesson #12: The Armor of God

INTRODUCTION

How does the average person react to discussions concerning invisible, spiritual battles? Why?

EXPLORATION

Read Ephesians 6:10-20

Note: Paul's scope in Ephesians has been cosmic – the unseen world. He now describes the spiritual battle taking place in heavenly realms.

1. How does verse 6:10 compare with verse 1:19? To wage successful warfare against Satan, whose power is needed?
2. Would you describe the Christian's role as active or passive? Why? vv. 11; 13
3. According to verses 11-14, how are we to respond to evil?
4. Why are satanic forces generally described as "dark" with Godly forces as "light"? Jn 3:19; 1:4-5; 8:12
5. What are the pieces of armor in the battle attire of the Christian? Isa 59:15-21
Note: Arrows were pitch soaked and not designed as much to kill, as to set the soldier on fire and cause him to break rank, creating panic. The sword is the only piece of offensive equipment in the armor. 2 Tim 4:2; Heb 4:12 It can also be defensive. Luke 4:3-4
 - a. Why are you ready (stable) if you are "well shod"? (Isaiah 52:7)
 - b. How can faith extinguish "flaming arrows"?
 - c. How does the helmet protect you?
6. What (who) did Paul have in mind when he made this illustration?
7. Does this imply that a Christian should be a "Lone Ranger" or a soldier with many reinforcements to protect the "backside"? Where (how) does one find reinforcements?
8. How does one pray "in the Spirit"? v. 18; Rom 8:26

APPLICATION

How battle weary is your armor? What can you do to refurbish (or put on) your armor on a regular basis? How are you "on the offensive" for Christ rather than "just getting by"?

Let's return to Bastogne 53 years ago. The Germans have demanded surrender, threatening annihilation. How does General McAuliffe respond?

With a one word reply – now the shortest entry in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations: "Nuts." (The Germans were confused upon receiving this reply, and had to ask what it meant.) General McAuliffe saw the big picture; he did not know that he would be rescued, but he saw the proper role for his division in the overall scheme of things. He would hold Bastogne at all costs.

"Consider it pure joy, my brethren, when you face trials of various kinds." (James 1:2) Whatever the results in your part of the battle, whatever the appearance of the triumph of evil here or around the world, we KNOW that the Battle is the Lord's; we know that we are part of the Lord's army, and while we may fail individually and evil may triumph locally, in the end, God will be triumphant, his church victorious. Each and every Christian will be a part of that triumph.

Ray Stedman, 1999