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"Sword of the Spirit"

In our spiritual battle, there are things we can do to help ourselves out.

- Stay away from things that open doors to our enemy.
- Wear your armor! (Ephesians 6:13-17)

The Bible is God's manual for life. (Proverbs 3:5-6)

Every Christian should learn to use the Sword of the Spirit well for three life-altering reasons.

1. **Someone who wields a sword poorly is a danger to _____ and to _____.**
 - A weapon can cut both ways. God's Word can be used to counter other people's worldly thinking AND our own.
 - Some people think scripture is primarily for debating ungodly people (2 Timothy 3:16-17). But we are told to gently instruct unbelievers. (2 Timothy 2:23-26).
 - God's Word is supposed to be a mirror before it is used as a weapon. (James 1:22-25)
 - God's Word is there to help in every situation. (Hebrews 4:12)
 - It's alive and active
 - It pierces to our most inward parts
 - Through God's Word the Holy Spirit can pierce us to our inmost being
 - It judges the thoughts (wrong thinking) and attitudes (pride, bitterness, entitlement, etc.) of the heart (Jeremiah 17:9-10)
 - When used on us, we should get a picture of the Holy Spirit using his Word like a surgeon's scalpel.
2. **It's one of two _____ "spiritual pieces of armor" listed in Ephesians (along with the shoes of the Gospel of Peace.)**
 - Both are also defensive.
 - **Shoes** – stand firm and go
 - **Sword** – Used both to defend against Satan's attacks and to remind him of our God, who is greater (Matthew 4:1-11)
 - Satan used scripture to try to tempt Jesus to sin. He will do the same to us.
 - The first two temptations Jesus used scripture to defend against Satan's temptations. The third time he uses God's Word to cause Satan to flee.
 - How do you fight the enemy?
 - We start each day remembering we are in a war (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)
 - Our offense starts with awareness and ends with obedience!
 - We recognize arguments and thoughts and situations that are anti-God
 - God's Spirit will never contradict God's Word
 - We battle through obedience to scripture
3. **It helps us _____ effectively.**

Ephesians 6:18 (NIV) And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

- **Different kinds of prayers** – Requests, Worship, Gratitude, Forgiveness
- **Misunderstandings about prayer**
 - Many believe prayer is for God – It's actually primarily for us
 - Prayer is not about changing God's mind on an issue. Prayer is to change our thoughts to match God's thoughts

- Many view prayer as our duty. We get to go before the all-mighty God of the universe!
- Easy things to pray for specifically – Family, people you know who are struggling, people you know who are lost, God’s wisdom (James 1:2-5)

Top 3 reasons why Christians don’t read their Bible regularly?

1. They don’t have time.
 2. They can’t understand it.
 3. People don’t see how it is directly applicable to their life.
- One study revealed these amazing stats: When people read their Bible at least four days per week:
 - Loneliness drops by **30%**.
 - Anger issues decrease by **32%**.
 - Alcohol consumption decreases by **57%**.
 - Viewing pornography decreases by **61%**.
 - Sharing faith with others increases by **200%**.
 - Discipling others increases by **230%**.
 - Not everyone will be a master swordsman, but all of us should be proficient enough to not be a danger to ourselves and others.
 - God has given us everything we need to navigate this world with wisdom and a weapon that helps us do battle against our spiritual enemy. (Psalm 119:103-105)

Small Group Discussion Questions:

Icebreaker Question:

- What’s the most useful tool or item you’ve ever owned, and why? How did it change the way you approached a challenge?

Main Passage: Ephesians 6:13-17

Head-Level Questions:

1. What does it mean that the Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17)? How does this connect with other pieces of the armor?
2. In Matthew 4:1-11, how did Jesus use Scripture to combat Satan’s temptations?
3. Hebrews 4:12 describes the Word of God as "alive and active." What do you think this means in a practical sense?

Heart-Level Questions:

1. Have you ever experienced a time when Scripture helped you in a personal battle? What happened, and how did it shape your faith?
2. Jesus used Scripture to combat Satan’s lies. What are some lies you currently battle in your thoughts? What truths from God’s Word could replace them?
3. James 1:22-25 warns against merely hearing the Word but not doing what it says. Have you ever struggled with applying Scripture in your life? What makes application difficult?
 - *Follow-up:* What could help you bridge the gap between hearing and doing?

Hand & Feet-Level Questions:

1. How can you become more intentional about using Scripture as a defense against spiritual attacks in your daily life?
2. Who in your life could benefit from a better understanding of God’s Word? How can you gently and wisely share Scripture with them?



Sample Small Group Questions
<https://bit.ly/GroupDiscussionQuestions>



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