

REVIEW – Ephesians 6:10-18

- The Real War is a spiritual war – not fought with human weapons (2 Cor 10:3-5)
- Our strength comes from the Lord, not ourselves (Eph 6:10; Gal 2:20)
- We are to armor up together, as God’s people, and stand in the victory He has for us (Eph 6:11, 13)

PREVIEW – Today – Sword of the Spirit (which is the Word of God) and Prayer

- How Jesus used God’s Word to fend off the lies and temptations of the enemy
- How the Word works on us and then through us
- How we can continue to be a people of effective prayer

Ephesians 6:17b “...take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

1. Jesus models for us HOW TO use God’s Word in our spiritual battles (Matt 4:1-11)

Matthew 4:3-4 ³ During that time the devil [a] came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ [b]” NLT

- The devil tempts Jesus to question His identity and therefore take matters into His own hand and prove His worth rather than continue to rely on God for His identity, provision and worth (1 Jn 2:15-17)
- Even though the enemy knows and twists God’s Word, Jesus was able to rightly use God’s Word to fend off the temptations of the enemy (x3)
- We need to know how to accurately handle God’s Word (2 Tim 2:15) so we can successfully fend off the enemy’s temptations

2. Weapons of Warfare: God’s Word and Prayer

God’s Word (Eph 6:17)

1. First we must humbly accept God’s Word deep into the very core of our lives

James 1:21-25 *So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls. 22 But don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. 23 For if you listen to the word and don’t obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. 24 You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. 25 But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don’t forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.* NLT

- If we are not humbling ourselves before God and His word – we are in opposition to Him (1 Pet 5:5)
- God uses His Word as a mirror to expose areas that we need to surrender to Him (Heb 4:12-13)
- Enemy occupied territory
 - o **Unconfessed Sin** (Jam 5:16), **Anger** (Eph 4:26-27; Jam 1:20), **Unforgiveness** (Heb 12:15), **Sexual Sin** (1 Cor 6:18-20), **Occult/demonic practices** (tarot cards, Ouija boards, psychics, palm readers, spells, mediums – Gal 5:20; Rev 9:20-21; 21:8; 1 Cor 10:19-24)
- As God continues to bring victory deeper into our lives (sanctification – Phil 1:6), this allows us to be freed up to help others find the same healing and freedom we have found in Christ (Matt 7:1-6)

Prayer (Eph 6:18-20)

2. God uses prayer to change our perspective, increase our effectiveness & solidify our standing in His grace

Perspective – 1 Jn 5:14-15; Lk 22:42 (His will not ours)

1 John 5:14 *And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him.* NLT

- Talking to God reminds us life isn't about us but about Him and His will.
- Prayer gets our eyes off ourselves as the solution and onto God. He has the good plan (Rom 8:28-29)

Effectiveness – Jam 5:16-18; Eph 6:18-20

James 5:16b *The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.* NLT

- Prayer is one of the vehicles God uses to accomplish His will – He works when we pray!
- When we pray for each other, we enter into the spiritual fight together (don't fight alone)

Grace – Heb 4:14-16

Hebrews 4:16 *So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.* NLT

- He knows our weaknesses and instead of rejecting us, He invites us closer – to receive mercy & grace
- When answers to prayer don't match our expectations, His grace reminds us we're still loved/He cares

Practical Next Steps

1. Get into God's Word and allow His Word to get into you (read it, listen to it, talk about it with others)
 - a. Find a verse that increases your confidence in God's Word (Ps 119:105)
2. Ask God to examine your life (Ps 139:23-24) and see if there is any unconfessed sin you need to bring into the Light with Him (1 Jn 1:9) and with His people (Jam 5:16)
 - a. Anger, unforgiveness, sexual sin, occult/demonic practices
3. Make time to pour out your heart to God (Ps 62:8) in prayer
 - a. Use worship songs, or go on a walk, or write in a journal
4. Invite others to pray for you when you feel the battle raging (Jam 5:16b)
5. Pray with and for others regularly (Eph 6:18-20)



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



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