

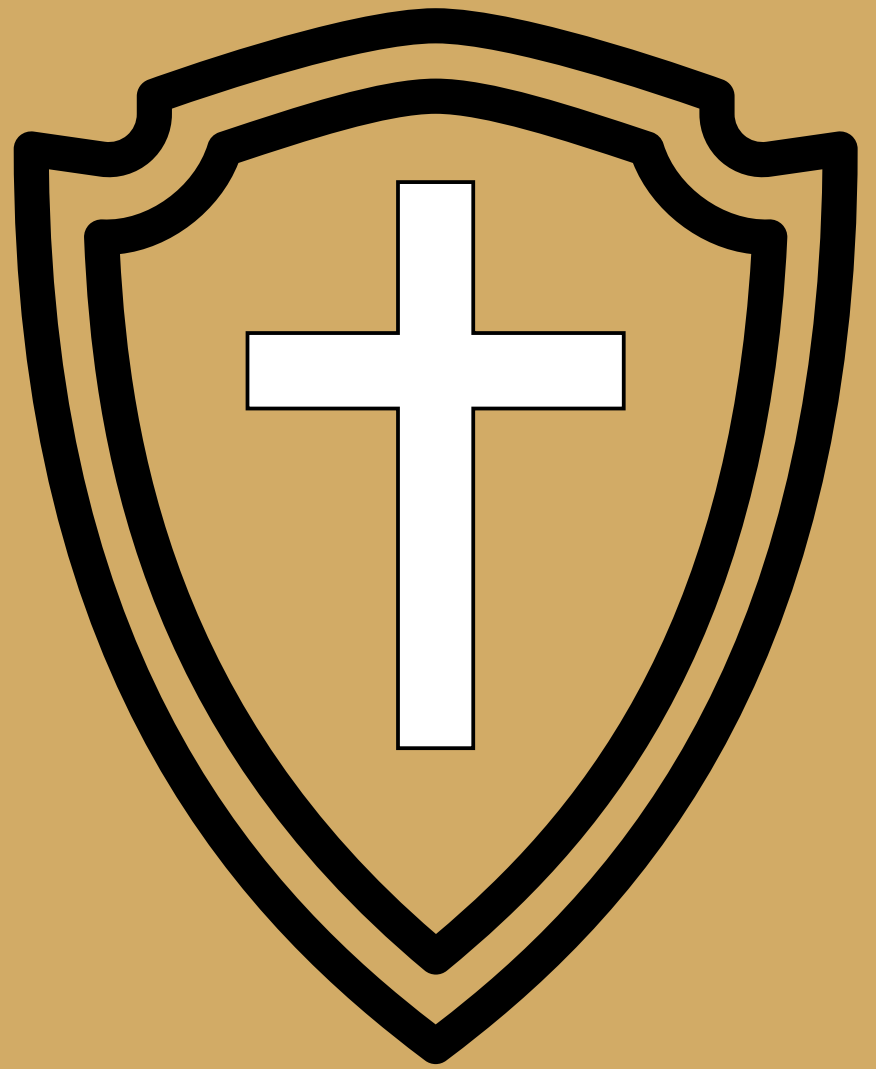


**SIZING UP THE ENEMY
WEEK 7 - 5/28/23**

WELCOME

When we get in our car, we put on our seatbelts. When we get on a bike, we wear a helmet. We wash our hands before we eat. Why? We do these things because we understand that riding in a car, getting on a bike, and even eating food can be hazardous to our health! So why would we go into a world that hates us (John 17:14) where we're going to wrestle with rulers, authorities, cosmic powers, and spiritual forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12) without wearing protective gear?

In the next seven weeks, we're going to put on the armor of God. We will put it on ourselves and help others put it on as well. The LORD is sending us to battle. We must be ready and we will be!



BEFORE THE SQUAD MEETS

1. If you're bringing a new person to the study, we recommend getting them study materials ahead of time so they can feel prepared.
2. Pray that the LORD will open your eyes and heart to receive the lessons he has to teach you in the study.
3. Read the scripture focus for the study.
4. Go through the questions and think about how you might answer them. We've provided space in the study for you to write down your answers if you'd like.



INTELLIGENCE BRIEFING

All the weapons we've looked at so far are defensive - the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of peace, shield of faith, and helmet of salvation all protect us from the enemy's attacks. Yet, we are also called to go on the offensive. Sometimes, the enemy is at the gate, trying to break our defenses. Other times, the enemy lies within. We can jeopardize ourselves by seeking the enemy's empty promises rather than the Lord. The sword of the Word of God is a double-edged sword. It cuts at the enemy, and cuts us to the heart, showing us our need for the rest that only Jesus can give us.

HISTORY OF THE CONFLICT

Rest is important. Without rest, we wear out, get fatigued, and ultimately can't do what we must. First-century Jews, the immediate audience of our text, made much of Sabbath rest. For example, Pharisees liked to quiz Jesus about the Sabbath, taking issue with some of the so-called work disciples did during the Sabbath. Sabbath prepares us for battle, but it's also a reward after a hard battle against our enemy and our own flesh.

BATTLEFIELD MAP

BASIC BIBLE

TRAINING

What is the LORD revealing to us in his Word? What does the church believe?



OUR TRAINING

How does God's Word apply to my life? What is God calling me to do? How is God comforting me in this text?

I. Read Ephesians 6:10-20. Who are our enemies? Why must we put on the whole armor of God?

II. When must we put on the whole armor of God?

III. What is the sword of the spirit?

IV. Who does Paul tell the church in Ephesus to pray for? Who should we pray for? When should we pray for them?

I. Who/what are the people/circumstances that are the most difficult in your life? How might the enemy exploit these people or circumstances? What can you do about it?

II. Who/what are the people/circumstances that give you the most joy? How might the enemy exploit these people or circumstances? What can you do about it?

FAMILY TRAINING

How does this scripture apply to my family life as a husband, wife, father, mother, or child?

I. Paul singles out prayer as a powerful spiritual weapon. How do you pray for your family? Do you pray for protection against spiritual attacks?

II. What weaknesses have you observed in Christian families that are prone to attack by the enemy? How can the church help families strengthen themselves where they're weak?

MEETING THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

What does this text tell me about proper worship? How can this text help me encounter the living God?

I. How does the enemy attempt to stop you from worshiping God? What article of armor have you found most useful to battle against the enemy's desire to keep you from holy worship?

II. How does the enemy attack our worship? What can we do about it?

COMBAT - CONQUERING THE ENEMY

What does the text show me about my role in building God's kingdom? How can God work through me to bring others to Christ?

I. Is the church ready for battle? Or have we put down our armor and stopped training? Explain.

II. What belief systems and ideas can you identify that are being used against the church as we proclaim the gospel? How can we prepare our young people to counter these ideas?

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