

Under Armor



During the great wars in our country's history, we had tons of propaganda letting people know. We had posters saying Uncle Sam needs you. We had news about the front lines before every movie instead of previews. Cartoon characters from superman to Donald Duck went to war as one of the troops.

How silly would it be if we were at war and didn't know it? If we just pretended it wasn't going on around us and went about our days business as usual? It's scary to think of, but that's happening spiritually. The Bible has many stories of angels and demons and spiritual battles. And too often, we don't talk about it, let alone do anything about it.

The hard truth is there are forces in this world that want you to fail. They want you to doubt. They want you to do the wrong thing and slip up. And if aren't wearing our armor, we aren't prepared for those battles.

For the next few weeks we are going to be discussing the armor of God. It is a collection of spiritual pieces that we need to be wearing every day. Things like our salvation and faith, pieces of armor that we need in our spiritual battle.

So join us as we learn what armor we need to wear and how we can use it properly. After all, we're in this battle together!

Belt Of Truth

¹²The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.
Romans 13:12 (NLT)

Why? So We Can _____

¹²Our fight is not against people on earth but against the rulers and authorities and the powers of this world's darkness, against the spiritual powers of evil in the heavenly world. Ephesians 6:12 (NCV)

See Story of Elisha and the armies
can be found in II Kings 6:14-17

The _____

¹¹Put on the whole armor of God.
Ephesians 6:11² (ISV)

¹³For this reason, take up the whole armor of God.
Ephesians 6:13³ (ISV)

Truth Holds _____

⁸And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.
Philippians 4:8 (NLT)

¹⁴Your kingdom is built on what is right and fair. Love and truth are in all you do. Psalms 89:14 (NCV)

Truth Gives _____

⁷Let your roots grow down into Him, and let your lives be built on Him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness. Colossians 2:7 (NLT)

Truth Is At _____

³⁷Then Pilate said, "So, are you a king or not?" Jesus answered, "You tell me. Because I am King, I was born and entered the world so that I could witness to the truth. Everyone who cares for truth, who has any feeling for the truth, recognizes my voice."
John 18:37 (MSG)

¹⁰Anyone who believes in the Son of God has the truth that God told us. I John 5:10^a (NCV)

¹⁷Make them holy by Your truth; teach them Your Word, which is truth. John 17:17 (NLT)

Truth _____ You _____

⁶Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me."
John 14:6 (NLT)

³¹"If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; ³²and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."
John 8:31^b-32 (NRSV)

⁴⁶Then the Lord gave special strength to Elijah. He tucked his cloak into his belt and ran ahead of Ahab's chariot all the way to the entrance of Jezreel.
I Kings 18:46 (NLT)

¹⁸My children, we should love people not only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring.
¹⁹This is the way we know that we belong to the way of truth. I John 3:18-19 (NCV)

Group Discussion Questions

Do you ever think of life as a spiritual battle? Why or why not?

Before tonight, what had you known about the Armor of God? Do you think we as Christians discuss it enough? Why or why not?

Do you feel prepared to go out and live as a Christian? Why or why not?

How important is truth to you? Does your actions reflect that? How so?

How does truth hold everything together? Do you know / have you ever experienced times where things have fallen apart because of lies? What happened?

When in your life has knowing the truth given you strength?

Have you ever experienced the freedom of truth, telling the truth, getting out from under a lie? What happened?

How would you describe truth?

Personal Reflection

Thoughts and Prayers

Breastplate Of Righteousness

¹²The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.

Romans 13:12 (NLT)

What Is _____?

Righteousness = _____ - _____

⁷Dear children, don't let anyone deceive you about this: When people do what is right, it shows that they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous.

I John 3:7 (NLT)

²⁵For we will be counted as righteous when we obey all the commands the Lord our God has given us.

Deuteronomy 6:25 (NLT)

God Wants Us To _____ It

²²Flee from youthful passions. Instead, pursue righteousness, faithfulness, love, and peace together with those who call on the Lord with a pure heart.

II Timothy 2:22 (ISV)

¹⁸Wicked people do not really gain anything, but if you do what is right, you are certain to be rewarded.

Proverbs 11:18 (GNT)

Righteousness = _____

⁴Don't sin by letting anger control you.

Psalms 4:4^a (NLT)

⁵Those who live following their sinful selves think only about things that their sinful selves want. But those who live following the Spirit are thinking about the things the Spirit wants them to do. ⁶If people's thinking is controlled by the sinful self, there is death. But if their thinking is controlled by the Spirit, there is life and peace.

Romans 8:5-6 (NCV)

Righteousness Protects Your _____

⁴⁵Good people bring good things out of the good they stored in their hearts. But evil people bring evil things out of the evil they stored in their hearts. People speak the things that are in their hearts.

Luke 6:45 (NCV)

How? Live _____

³Clean living before God and justice with our neighbors mean far more to God than religious performance.

Proverbs 21:3 (MSG)

⁸If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. John 1:8-9 (NIV)

God Gives Us _____ To Be Righteous

¹⁴Do what is good and run from evil so that you may live! Then the Lord God of Heaven's Armies will be your Helper, just as you have claimed.

Amos 5:14 (NLT)

¹¹If your little boy asks for a serving of fish, do you scare him with a live snake on his plate? ¹²If your little girl asks for an egg, do you trick her with a spider? ¹³As bad as you are, you wouldn't think of such a thing—you're at least decent to your own children. And don't you think the Father who conceived you in love will give the Holy Spirit when you ask Him?"

Luke 11:11-13 (MSG)

We're Righteous Through _____

²¹But now God has shown us a way to be made right with Him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses and the prophets long ago. ²²We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are.

²³For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. ²⁴Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when He freed us from the penalty for our sins.

Romans 3:21-24 (NLT)

Group Discussion Questions

Why do you think righteousness is so important to God?

Is it hard to be righteous? Why or why not? What do you do to build up or hold on to your righteousness?

How do you pursue righteousness?

Have you ever experienced God's power helping you to be righteous? What happened?

Why do you think the world / satan / sin / whatever else works so hard to combat our righteousness?

Before tonight had you associated righteousness with self-control? Why or why not? Do the two go together? Why?

Why is living right not as much of a priority among Christians (or people in general) today?

What does it mean to you that you no longer have to *earn* righteousness, that you are righteous through your relationship with Jesus and what He has done for you?

Personal Reflection

Thoughts and Prayers

Gospel Shoes

¹²The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.

Romans 13:12 (NLT)

¹⁵Put shoes on your feet so that you are ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. Ephesians 6:15^b (ISV)

Are You _____?

¹⁵And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. ¹⁶But do this in a gentle and respectful way. I Peter 3:15^b-16^a (NLT)

_____  _____

⁵Test yourselves to make sure you are solid in the faith. Don't drift along taking everything for granted. Give yourselves regular checkups. You need firsthand evidence, not mere hearsay, that Jesus Christ is in you. Test it out. If you fail the test, do something about it. II Corinthians 13:5 (MSG)

Are You _____?

¹⁵Then He said, "Go into the world. Go everywhere and announce the Message of God's good news to one and all."
Mark 16:15 (MSG)

You Need To Be An _____

⁶Everywhere in the world that Good News is bringing blessings and is growing. This has happened with you, too, since you heard the Good News and understood the truth about the grace of God.
I Corinthians 1:6^b (NCV)

Group Discussion Questions

Do you feel you are ready to talk to someone about your faith? Why or why not? Do you feel like you will ever be ready?

What can be done so you feel more comfortable in sharing your faith?

Do you feel that Christians are always sharing their faith and are gentle and respectful about it? Why or why not? What can you do to make the situation better?

There's an old expression "Serve a better steak and they'll come to you for dinner." Do you think the church acts this way? Why? Is that in line with *going with the gospel*? What can we do to make it better?

Some other evangelists:

John Bates, founder of BIGWORDS.com has "Evangelist" on his card

Karen Allen is the "Internet Evangelist" for the Recording Industry Association of America

Business Week magazine named John F. Welch the greatest innovator in management and called him a "Management Evangelist"

To determine a company's "Web DNA", web consulting firm Russell Reynolds Associates asks in their questionnaire "Are you more evangelical than Matthew, Mark, Luke or John?"

What do these people see that the Church doesn't? What can we do to be more like an *evangelist* as they see it?

Personal Reflection

Thoughts and Prayers

Shield Of Faith

¹²The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.
Romans 13:12 (NLT)

What Is _____?

¹Faith means being sure of the things we hope for and knowing that something is real even if we do not see it.
Hebrews 11:1 (NCV)

³By faith we understand that the entire universe was formed at God's command, that what we now see did not come from anything that can be seen.
Hebrews 11:3 (NLT)

_____ By Faith

⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith.
Ephesians 2:8^a (NIV)

¹⁶We know very well that we are not set right with God by rule-keeping but only through personal faith in Jesus Christ. How do we know? We tried it—and we had the best system of rules the world has ever seen! Convinced that no human being can please God by self-improvement, we believed in Jesus as the Messiah so that we might be set right before God by trusting in the Messiah, not by trying to be good.
Galatians 2:16 (MSG)

⁹If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.
Romans 10:9-10 (NLT)

The First Thing _____ Is Your Faith

¹⁶At all times carry faith as a shield; for with it you will be able to put out all the burning arrows shot by the evil one. Ephesians 6:16 (GNT)

¹The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?" ²"Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden," the woman replied. ³"It's only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, 'You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.' " ⁴"You won't die!" the serpent replied to the woman."

Genesis 3:1-4 (NLT)

Faith Can Do _____

⁸Control yourselves and be careful! The devil, your enemy, goes around like a roaring lion looking for someone to eat. ⁹Refuse to give in to him, by standing strong in your faith. I Peter 5:8-9^a (NCV)

⁴For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith.

I John 5:4 (NLT)

How To Get _____ Faith

²³"What do you mean, 'If I can'?" Jesus asked. "Anything is possible if a person believes."

Mark 9:23 (NLT)

Group Discussion Questions

We use the term faith in church a lot, are there things besides God you have faith in? Like What? How come you have faith in those things?

How can you get your faith in God and who He is to be as strong as your faith in the things you just mentioned?

Do you feel your faith is strong? Why or why not? Is your faith stronger in some things and weaker in others? What and why?

Do you believe that faith can do anything? That if you truly believe in something it will happen? Why or why not? Do you see this attitude in our society today?

Have you ever thought about your part in Christ saving you? That you have to believe? Why do you think God doesn't just save but waits for us to believe?

Do you believe the statement the first thing attacked is your faith is true? Why, what happened?

After your faith is attacked, is there any way to get it back? How?

Where do you need more faith? What can you do for your faith to grow in that area?

Personal Reflection

Thoughts and Prayers

Helmet Of Salvation

¹²The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.

Romans 13:12 (NLT)

What Is _____?

¹⁶God loved the world so much that He gave His one and only Son so that whoever believes in Him may not be lost, but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NCV)

⁹If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.

Romans 10:9-10 (NLT)

⁶Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Me."

John 14:6 (NLT)

³This is the way our Savior God wants us to live. ⁴He wants not only us but everyone saved, you know, everyone to get to know the truth we've learned: ⁵that there's one God and only one, and one Priest-Mediator between God and us—Jesus, ⁶who offered Himself in exchange for everyone held captive by sin, to set them all free. Eventually the news is going to get out.

I Timothy 2:3-6 (MSG)

Salvation _____ You

¹Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has become a child of God. I John 5:1^a (NLT)

Your Head = _____

¹⁷For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and His gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:17 (NLT)

¹²Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow Me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life." John 8:12 (NLT)

It's A _____

²⁴Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If any of you wants to be My follower, you must turn from your selfish ways, take up your cross, and follow Me."

Matthew 16:24 (NLT)

Group Discussion Questions

How important is a helmet? How important is having a personal relationship with Jesus, having “salvation” to your faith in God?

Do you consider yourself defined by your relationship with Jesus? How So (or why not)?

Do you “feel” saved? Why or why not? What gives that feeling? Is your salvation based on a feeling?

Why do you think God gave us the choice of Salvation? Some people think you have to choose daily to follow Jesus. Do you agree or disagree?

If someone were to save your life, how would you reward them? What would be enough? Do we see that same level of more for the One who saved our soul forever, for our God?

When you think of your relationship with Jesus, do you see it as going on beyond this life? Why or why not? How does it feel to know your soul will live forever?

Do we see our life as being defined by our choices? What about our faith, how important are the choices we make to our faith?

Why aren't more people wearing helmets? Why aren't more people who have helmets sharing them, letting people know about Jesus and His love for us?

Personal Reflection

Thoughts and Prayers

Sword Of The Spirit

¹²The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.

Romans 13:12 (NLT)

What Is The _____ ?

¹⁷And take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Ephesians 6:17^b (NLT)

¹²For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword, piercing until it divides soul and spirit, joints and marrow, as it judges the thoughts and purposes of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12 (ISV)

It's An _____

⁴We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments.

II Corinthians 10:4 (NLT)

Need To _____

The Story Of The Temptation Of Jesus
can be found In Luke 4:1-13

Need To _____

¹¹I have hidden Your word in my heart, that I might
not sin against You. Psalm 119:11 (NLT)

¹⁶Christ's message in all its richness must live in your
hearts. Colossians 3:16^a (GNT)

¹⁸You must grow in the grace and knowledge of our
Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. II Peter 3:18^a (NLT)

⁸Always remember what is written in the Book of the
Teachings. Study it day and night to be sure to obey
everything that is written there. If you do this, you
will be wise and successful in everything.
Joshua 1:8 (NCV)

Group Discussion Questions

Do you think of the Bible as “offensive”? Why or why not?

Out of all the armor so far, how is this piece different from the others?

If you met someone from another faith, would you expect them to know their holy book? Do we have that same expectation of Christians? Why or why not?

Would you say that you have a “working knowledge” of the Bible? Why or why not?

What can be done to help you know your Bible better? What are you already doing?

Do you think memorizing Scripture is important? Do you do it? Why or why not? What can be done to help you memorize Scripture?

Can you tell of a time when knowing the Bible allowed you to hear God’s voice or it changed your life in some way?

Why is there so often a disconnect between the Word of God and it changing your life? What needs to happen for the Bible to affect how you live?

Personal Reflection

Thoughts and Prayers

Prayer

¹²The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living.

Romans 13:12 (NLT)

¹⁸Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere.

Ephesians 6:18 (NLT)

You Can't Do It _____

³Timothy, I thank God for you—the God I serve with a clear conscience, just as my ancestors did. Night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers.

II Timothy 1:3 (NLT)

¹⁴They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

Acts 1:14 (NLT)

⁴²All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

Acts 2:42 (NLT)

²³"I will surely not stop praying for you, because that would be sinning against the Lord."

I Samuel 12:23^a (NCV)

Respond To Prayer

²⁰But King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet, the son of Amoz, prayed about this and cried out to heaven.

²¹And the Lord sent an angel who destroyed every mighty warrior, commander and officer in the camp of the king of Assyria. So he returned in shame to his own land. II Chronicles 32:20-21^a (NASB)

²⁹He answered, "There is no way to get rid of this kind of demon except by prayer." Mark 9:29 (MSG)

⁷While Jesus lived on earth, He prayed to God and asked God for help. He prayed with loud cries and tears to the One who could save Him from death, and His prayer was heard because He trusted God.

Hebrews 5:7 (NCV)

Waits For Prayer

¹⁰When Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored his fortunes. In fact, the Lord gave him twice as much as before! Job 42:10 (NLT)

⁶Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has done. Philippians 4:6 (NLT)

Pray

¹⁷Pray all the time. I Thessalonians 5:17 (MSG)

²Be persistent in prayer, and keep alert as you pray, giving thanks to God. Colossians 4:2 (GNT)

We _____!

¹³God made you alive with Christ, and He forgave all our sins. ¹⁴He canceled the debt, which listed all the rules we failed to follow. He took away that record with its rules and nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵God stripped the spiritual rulers and powers of their authority. With the cross, He won the victory and showed the world that they were powerless.

Colossians 2:13^b-15 (NCV)

Group Discussion Questions

How important is prayer to you? Is it evident in how much you pray or what you pray for?

If prayer is so important, why don't more people do it?

Why do we generally save prayers until a last resort?

Why do you think God waits for our prayers?

How do you feel/would you feel knowing that people are praying for you? How would that change what you think about your day?

Do you think lots of Christians try to live out their faith alone? Why? Why do you think God wants us to be together instead of going to church on the internet or just watching services on TV?

When you think of that verse "Pray all the time", what does that mean to you? How can you live that out?

After this series, what are your thoughts on the Armor of God? Do you see a spiritual battle around you?

What do you think of the notion that the war is already won, how does that make you feel?

Personal Reflection

Thoughts and Prayers