



**MISSION OF GOD**

# TAKE UP GOD'S FULL ARMOR

MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

## Examining the text & our hearts:

*Bible Reading: Ephesians 6:10-17*

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strengthened by the Lord and by his vast strength. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God so that you can stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this darkness, against evil, spiritual forces in the heavens. <sup>13</sup> For this reason take up the full armor of God, so that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having prepared everything, to take your stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand, therefore, with truth like a belt around your waist, righteousness like armor on your chest, <sup>15</sup> and your feet sandaled with readiness for the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In every situation take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit—which is the word of God.

### 1. Spiritual Warfare Today

- "In contemporary society **our Adversary majors in three things: noise, hurry, and crowds.** If he can keep us engaged in 'muchness' and 'manyness', he will rest satisfied."* (R. Foster, Celebration of Discipline, p. 20)
- "**Superficiality** is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant gratification is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for **deep people.**"* (R. Foster, Celebration of Discipline, p. 1)

### 2. Take the Word of God (Eph. 6:17)

- Receive it (Eph. 6:17)
  - "This is your one sure guide in an unsure world. Study it. Love it. Live by it. In it you'll find a verse for every occasion."* (Ruth Graham wrote on the inside cover of her daughter Anne's Bible)
- Accumulate it (Lk. 4:1-13) – three times Jesus said to Satan *"It is written..."* – Jesus had no scroll to read from – God's word was stored up in his heart & also lived out of him
- Let it affect you (Jer. 15:16; Eph. 5:25b-26)

- a. *“If the word keeps going through you it will have a marvelous effect upon your mind and heart and life. It will cleanse and purify you and fit you to be a real worker for the Lord Jesus Christ.”* (Harry Ironside)
- d. Practice it (Phil. 4:9) – firefighters, surgeons, athletes practice over & over & over again – they practice **for events to come** – practice **with gear on** (ax, helmet, heavy coats) & practice **scenarios** so in the real situation they react well – they make lots of mistakes as they R practicing, but that **develops** their skills – It should B no different for U & me – we need to engage w G’s word again & again
3. Practice: **“So that you may be able to resist in the evil day.”** (Eph. 6:13)
- a. Hear God’s Word (Rom. 10:17)
- Simplest way to take in God’s word? Hearing it ~ develop a regular habit of going to church to hear God’s word.
  - Strengthens your faith – believing ability both initially and continually
  - Purpose of hearing? Become obedient to what we hear – not to merely obtain more information.
  - Goal of hearing God’s word? Develop more Christlikeness.
- b. Read God’s Word – like cruising on a lake in a speedboat: good overview & breadth
- *“No factor is more influential in shaping a person’s moral and social behaviour than regular Bible reading. If you want to be changed, if you want to become more like Jesus Christ, discipline yourself to read the Bible.”* (Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, pp. 32-33)
  - **“How often should you read the Bible? How often do you face problems, temptations, and pressure? Every day! Then how often do you need the Bible’s instruction, guidance, and encouragement? Every day!”** (Donald Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, p. 33)
- c. Memorize God’s Word (Ps. 119:11) – memorize some Psalms (23, 1, 139), the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:3-10), fruit of Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17).
- d. Study God’s Word (Ps. 19:7) – like slowly cruising around a lake in a glass-bottomed boat – unhurried, detailed way – **get a good study Bible** (ESV, NIV, Quest, 1<sup>st</sup> century) – study **key words**: kingdom, son of man, gospel, grace, peace – **characters**: Ruth & Naomi, Peter, Mary, Joseph
- e. Meditate on God’s Word
- The Bible is ancient meditation literature
    - “In Hebrew, the word meditate literally means ‘to mutter’ or ‘to speak quietly’. The idea is that every day for the rest of your life you **slowly, quietly read the Bible out loud to yourself** and then talk about it with your friends, pondering the puzzles, making connections, and discovering what it all means.”* (The Bible Project)
    - “It is impossible to learn how to meditate from a book. We learn to meditate by meditating.”* (R. Foster, p. 26)
  - Meditation is a biblical concept and tradition (Ps. 1:2, Josh. 1:8)
    - Eastern meditation – empty the mind and be free from burdens to experience Nirvana
    - Christian meditation – fill the mind with God and his word – absorption: **tea bag illustration**: U R a cup of hot water and G’s word is the tea bag
  - Create space for God
    - *“What happens in meditation is that we **create the emotional and spiritual space** which allows Christ to construct an inner sanctuary in the heart...We who have turned our lives over to Christ need to know how very much he longs to...commune with us.”* (R. Foster, p. 20)
    - *“Meditation boldly calls us to enter into the living presence of God for ourselves.”* (R. Foster, p. 24)
  - Methods: ~ Nutritionists tell us that to get the full benefit from food we eat, we should chew slowly ~ don’t rush UR time in the word ~ reject the lie that U don’t have time!!
    - Read John 14:6 again and again – **emphasize** a different word each time U read it & see which word grabs UR attention – then **linger** there – Ask yourself, *“How does this apply to me?”* Ask God, *“How do you want me to respond to these words?”*
    - Pray through a verse or passage to submit your mind to the Holy Spirit’s enlightening – Take your time – don’t rush it!
    - Read less in order to meditate more.
    - The outcome of meditation should be application