

Conversation Starters

- What are you most looking forward to about the fall?

Discuss

The term “weaponized” has exploded in our culture in recent years. The original idea of weaponization was arming something for impact, converting something so that it could be used as a weapon, or to supply or equip something with weapons. This series will be about weaponizing your life – and more specifically how God wants to weaponized your life for His purposes.

The first step in weaponizing your life is suiting up. And believe it or not, if you are a follower of Christ, you really do have one to put on – it’s called the armor of God. And it’s the first step in weaponizing your life so that it can be an assault force for impact and influence.

We hear about the Armor of God in a letter recorded in the New Testament. The letter was written by a man named Paul to a group of Christ followers living out their faith in the city of Ephesus, an ancient city whose ruins now reside in modern-day Turkey. But when Paul wrote his letter, Ephesus was anything but in ruins. It was one of the premier cultural epicenters, one of the 12 cities of the Ionian league and later part of the great Roman Republic, home of the famed Temple of Artemis, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. During the time of Paul’s writing, Ephesus was second in size and importance only to Rome itself. And Paul knew that every Christ follower there needed to suit up. Here’s what Paul wrote to them:

“God is strong, and he wants you strong. So take everything the Master has set out for you, well-made weapons of the best materials. And put them to use so you will be able to stand up to everything the Devil throws your way. This is no afternoon athletic contest that we’ll walk away from and forget about in a couple of hours. This is for keeps, a life-or-death fight to the finish against the Devil and all his angels” (Eph. 6:10-12 Msg).

- What if there is an entire spiritual realm in open conflict, and you are a player in it whether you know it or not? How would it change how you see your life?
- The Bible (and Jesus) take spiritual battles between good and evil seriously. Do you sense battles like this happening in the world around you? What comes to mind?

Paul went on to explain what the Armor of God consists of.

“Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. 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 saints” (Eph. 6:13-18 NIV).

There are six piece of armor mentioned to pay attention to.

1. Belt of truth

- Why would a belt have been important in battle in Jesus’ day? How might that relate to defending ourselves against evil today?
- What is the “truth” referred to here (see John 8:31-32)?

2. Breastplate of righteousness

- What is the purpose of a breastplate in battle?
- What does it meant to be righteous?
- How can righteousness act as a breastplate in spiritual warfare?

3. The gospel of peace

- Why would sandals (or shoes) have been important for battle in Roman times? What would they have made possible?
- What is the gospel (see 1 Cor. 15:1-4)?
- What does it meant to have “your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace?”

4. The shield of faith

- What do shields do in battle?
- What is faith (see Heb. 11:1)?
- How does faith act like a shield in spiritual battles?

5. The helmet of salvation

- Why are helmets so important in war?
- How does salvation protect our heads from the blows of evil (see Romans 8:37-39)?

6. The sword of the Spirit

- How is a sword different from the other pieces of armor mentioned above?
- What is meant by the sword of the Spirit (see Eph. 6:13-18 above)?
- How does the word of God act like a sword (see Heb. 4:12)?
- How can we use the word of God like a sword in our everyday lives?

Next Steps

- Of all the pieces of the Armor of God, which stands out as being most overlooked or underused in your life?
- What can you do this week to begin suiting up for spiritual battle?

Pray

Father, thank you for equipping us with your armor. It protects and defends us from the darkness in the world, and enables us to cut through the darkness and shine your light. Equip us for battle in the weeks ahead. Prepare our hearts and minds for the evil in this world and strengthen us for what lies ahead.