



GROWING – My Spiritual Defences

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Mark Wilshire

This Study Guide provides a summarised study with additional discussion questions based on the scriptures mentioned in the sermon.

Connect:

"Invincibility lies in the defence... ...know your enemy and know yourself and you can fight a hundred battles without disaster."

Sun Tzu (*500BC Legendary Chinese Strategist, writer: 'The Art of War'*)

1. Why do battles need preparation?
2. Take a moment to discuss the question; "What are spiritual battles?"
3. Read and discuss [1 Peter 5:8](#)
4. What are your spiritual vulnerabilities?
5. What could an enemy exploit in your life?

Engage:

6. Read [Ephesians 6:12](#)
 7. There are 3 categories of a spiritual enemy:
 - Rulers and authorities in the - unseen world
 - Mighty powers – in a dark world
 - Evil spirits – heavenly places
- You may say... "But I didn't become a Christian to sign up to fight!" The reality is, these powers are there regardless of our faith position! Jesus went to the Cross to bring Salvation and defeat Satan.
8. Why would God send His Son to fight what does not exist?

"The Son of God came to destroy these works of the devil."

1 John 3:8

9. **Direct Attacks** can come in the form of temptation and physical health. In what other ways can direct attacks come?

"Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry."

Matthew 4:1-2

- There are 3 big temptations:
Hunger & Power
Identity & Authority
Glory for worship - The battle is for our worship, because what we worship, we give authority too.
- 10. **Indirect Attacks** come through others and to others. They can come through close friends, difficult people and family.
- 11. What is the enemy's goal with these direct and indirect attacks?

Framework:

"When you're being attacked, it's proof that you're a believer. The more you make an impact for God, the more the Devil is going to fight you. You never outgrow it; it just gets more intense."

Rick Warren

12. BECOMING A RESISTANCE MOVEMENT – LEARNING TO STAND (PUT ON)

- Read [Ephesians 6:13](#)
- Wearing armour is not a request, but an instruction.
- There are no tactical retreats in Gods kingdom, you have to 'stand'.
- Read and discuss [2 Chronicles 20:15-17](#)

13. SPIRITUAL DEFENCES SUMMARY

- Read [Isaiah 59:17](#)
- 'Divine Warrior' references:
Strength to Stand - Belt, Breastplate
Stability in Movement – Shoes
Safety under Attack – Shield
Secure in Combat - Helmet, Sword

14. How can you have the ‘strength to stand’?

“Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth...
And the body armour (*thorax* breastplate) of God’s righteousness.”

Ephesians 6:14a & 15

15. What’s the difference between absolute and relative truth?

16. Ask yourself, “Am I living in God’s truth or am I misguided? (*Perhaps even worse; are you self-deceiving, living a double life, compromised?*)

17. Are you doing what’s right?

18. HOW TO HAVE ‘STABILITY IN MOVEMENT’:

“For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared.”

Ephesians 6:15

- Do you have peace in your walk?
- Do you have confidence or are you living in uncertainty and fear?
- Have you made peace with God? (Trusting in Jesus as your Lord and Saviour, understanding the meaning of the Gospel)

19. HOW TO HAVE ‘SAFETY UNDER ATTACK’:

“In addition to all of these, hold up the shield (*thyreon*) of faith to stop (*sbennymi*) the fiery arrows of the devil.”

Ephesians 6:16

- Are you living by faith?
- How does faith protect us against fiery arrows?

“Fiery darts fired by the enemy can be absorbed by our faith!”

Mark Wiltshire

- What is the definition of faith?

• Read [Hebrews 11:1](#)

• **Examples of ‘Faith’ from Hebrews 11:**

Verse 4 “By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain...”

Verse 8 “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go...”

Verse 29 “By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land...”

Verse 31 “By faith Rahab...protected the spies...”

- What could be written about you? Fill in the blanks: By Faith, _____

20. HOW TO ‘SECURE IN COMBAT’:

“Put on salvation (*sōtērion*) as your helmet...”

Ephesians 6:17a

- How does salvation protect you?
- Salvation reveals the big picture:
Understanding of personal identity and Sonship
Heaven is our home - this world is temporary

“Most of life’s battles are won or lost in the mind.”

Craig Groeschel

21. Read and discuss [2 Corinthians 10:4-5](#)

“and take the sword (*machaira*) of the Spirit, which is the word(*rhema*) of God.”

Ephesians 6:17b

22. Where is the enemy attacking your life?
23. What does the Word of God say about your vulnerabilities?

Conclusion:

- A soldier needed the full armour!
- Ephesians 6:13 says, “Therefore, put on every piece...”
- The enemy always goes for our vulnerabilities!!
- 1 John 3:8 says, “The Son of God came to destroy these works of the devil.”
- WE can be much stronger than we think, time to Stand with Confidence!!