

# L O V E

## l n c o r r u p t i b l e

### **Introduction:**

If you have ever served in the armed forces, or know someone who has, then you know first-hand about the realities and implications of war. My father served in the military during war time, and one thing I've always noticed about how he talks about that time is that, well, he doesn't. It doesn't recall good memories. In this week's passage the Christian life is likened to war. One with a real enemy, real preparations, and real consequences.

**This Week's Main Focus:**  
***Jesus has won the victory and  
we stand with him in the armor of God.***

Before you Google "first century Roman military facts" in preparation for studying God's armor this week, let's first look at Paul's source material for his extended illustration on what Christians need to stand firm against the spiritual forces of evil. The prophet Isaiah develops the concept of a warrior God fighting for his people. Isaiah describes a belt (11:5), a breastplate and helmet (59:17), feet ready to share the good news (52:7), and garments of salvation (61:10) to illustrate how God responded in spiritual warfare. Paul focuses on how God's faithful followers would be adorned in God's character. The traits Paul connects to God's armor correlate with markers of believer's identity in Christ including truth (4:21,25), righteousness (4:24), the gospel of peace (2:14; 4:3), faith (3:12, 17), salvation (2:5,8), the working of the Spirit through the word (3:5), prayer (1:15-21; 3:14-21), and the mystery of the gospel (1:9; 3:3-6; 5:32). Paul's illustration does not mean a literal "breastplate will protect one's heart" but instructs on behavior flowing from the power of Christ. Think of the armor of God as a reminder and summary of what Paul has taught throughout Ephesians, not as an introduction of new material.

Understanding the real battle we face and the tools God has provided should make Christians people of prayer. In your group, look to the Lord for strength, as you are concerned for one another's faith and the building of God's kingdom.

### ***This Week's:***

- Scripture Passage: [Ephesians 6:10-24](#)
- RightNow Media Video: [Session 9](#)

### ***RightNow Media Video Recap:***

1) Pastor J.D. says often, as he did in the video, "If dependence is the objective, then weakness is an advantage." What is an area of weakness in your spiritual life that you have to trust God daily for strength?

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### **Bible Study Questions:** (Read Ephesians 6:10-24)

- 2) After reading these verses, summarize the situation the church faces in the world. What does this mean for our lives as Christians?
  
- 3) What does verse 10 tell us in this passage about both strength and its' source?
  
- 4) List the armor Paul uses as an illustration in this passage. For each piece, what does it mean in practice to put it on? And what would it look like if you neglected to put it on?
  
- 5) What does this passage command Christians to do in the face of spiritual warfare?
  
- 6) Paul repeats "all" four times in 6:18. What does each "all" say about the priority that prayer should have in the life of a believer?

### **Group Application Questions:**

- 7) Verse 12 tells us that we don't primarily fight against "flesh and blood" but with spiritual forces. Do you tend to make too little or too much of the devil and his aims and power? What effect does this have on your fight against sin?
  
- 8) The home and the workplace are battlegrounds in which we are called to stand firm against the devil's schemes. Where is the battle hardest for you, and how can your group help you stand?

### **Ephesians Study Summary Question:**

- 9) Break into groups of 2-4. Have each group focus on one chapter of Ephesians and give a summary of the main point of the chapter. Then have each group share with the larger group what they have found.

### **Prayer:**

- Beginning next week, your small group will begin a four-week Evangelism study.
- Pray from Ephesians 6:19-20 with one another that:
  - Through the study, God would give us words to say to our non-Christian friends.
  - We would be bold to proclaim the mystery of the gospel.
  - We would be more identified with Christ than anything else.