

Butter Knife or Blade?

The Armor of God - The Sword of the Spirit Ephesians 6

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
Ephesians 6:17

What is it about a soldier that makes him dangerous?

He may have menacing armor and a fearful looking shield. He may even have some dangerous footwear, but it is a soldier's weapon that makes him the most dangerous. The other parts of his armor are meant to withstand the attacks of the enemy, but the weapon he carries is meant to attack, to strew down those that stand before him. I am sure a shield can become a weapon, but not nearly as effectively as a sword or gun.

The mere look at a weapon can bring fear into someone's heart. Why is that?

A weapon can shout death and defeat to those who come against it. It brings this sense of fear because the bigger the weapon the greater the fall. Why is it then that believers will put on the entire armor except for their swords? Those that do pick up the sword are not sure how to use it or may even cut themselves before they are a threat to the enemy.

Have you had a time where you have heard the Scripture being misused? What happened?

Paul says that our weapon is the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. In the first century, when the Roman foot soldiers were involved in hand-to-hand combat, a sword was considered among the Romans as the central weapon for victory in warfare. In Ephesians 6, the sword in which Paul refers to is the *machaira*. This particular sword varied in length from six to eighteen inches and was the common sword carried by Roman foot soldiers. This type of sword was able to be pulled out quickly and thrust into an enemy and then quickly pulled out to attack another. It was much more versatile than the two-handed broad sword.

Hebrews 4:12 tells us how valuable and dangerous our sword is when used as God intended. Jesus, himself, used this weapon in his battle against Satan in the wilderness (Matthew 4). With each attack that Satan pressed with, Jesus used Scripture to not only defend, but to strike back at Satan.

How does a swordsman become a master at using his weapon? Or what steps would you take if you wanted to learn fencing?

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”
Hebrews 4:12

"But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."
John 14:26

The more familiar we are with the weapon, the better equipped we are to use it correctly.

How to practice the use of Scripture:

- Read God's Word
- Know God's Word
- Meditate on God's Word
- Hide God's Word in your heart

I think the first thing I would do is find a good trainer. I would want to find someone who knows how to handle the sword. John 14:26 tells us that God provided the best trainer, the Holy Spirit. He is our helper or trainer and will teach us and help us to remember what we have been taught. There are others that can help us in this training as well, although the Holy Spirit is our top trainer. We can call upon friends, pastors, and family members to help us in this training.

Who can you think of right now that can help you in your study and memorization of God's Word?

Have you asked them to help you? I would encourage you to pray through this list and ask your master trainer who might be a good assistant trainer for you and then talk to that person.

Not only do we need a trainer, but we need to train. There are two parts to this.

First, we must know the weapon we are using. We must become familiar with God's Word.

Why do we want to know about our weapon? Why would it be important, say, to know about the different parts of a gun?

The more familiar we are with the weapon, the better equipped we are to use it correctly and the better equipped we are in keeping it in good working condition and keeping ourselves safe. There are so many stories of children who have gotten a hold of their father's gun and fired it because they did not understand the weapon. It was not a matter of practice of the weapon, but appreciation for the weapon.

We want to be familiar with Scripture. Do you know the books of the Bible? Do you know the themes of each book? Are you familiar with the history of Israel? Do you understand how the gospels work together?

We want to know about the Scripture, but we also want to know Scripture. This is the practice part of the training.

When was the last time you used Scripture in your day to respond to something or someone? Or used Scripture to fight off an attack in the mind or heart?

If it has been a while, then you might be out of practice. 2 Timothy says that Scripture can be used in all aspects of life. Here is how we practice.

1. Read God's Word
2. Know God's Word
3. Meditate on God's Word
4. Hide God's Word in your heart

Scripture enables us to:

- Expose deeds of darkness
- Refute worldly philosophies and false religions
- Preach the Gospel of salvation

It seems simple. It is.

When we pick up the sword of the Spirit we become an offensive soldier. We will be able to:

1. Expose deeds of darkness – The Word of God is a light which will shine out in the darkness and expose all that is in it. Ephesians 5:13; Psalm 119:105, 130.
2. Refute worldly philosophies and false religions – God’s Word is truth and will refute the false claims and the misguided. James 5:19-20.
3. Preach the Gospel of Salvation - The greatest way that we can damage the kingdom of Satan is to turn people away from Satan to Christ Jesus through the Gospel.

Do you believe in this weapon? Do you believe that God’s Word is inspired by God and is inerrant and infallible? It is a valid question, because if you do not believe in the weapon, then the weapon will be of no use to you.

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

David says it best when he writes:

“Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You” (Psalm 119:11).

Pick up your sword and fight!

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?
