

We are an army!

Lesson for Sunday, October 30, 2022

INTRODUCTION:

- IDEA: Have a pop quiz! Figure out a way to see who knows the vision and its four parts for memory (only except perfection) and give them something (candy, etc.).
- Once you are done, take a moment to read it together as a class.
- Today we are wrapping up our brief series on the vision, and we are going to focus on one specific phrase: *"build an army."*
- Why an army? Why that specific word and the image that it brings to one's mind? That is the point of our discussion today.

BIBLE STUDY: Read the text: Ephesians 6:11-20 and make the following points.

1. We are soldiers (vs. 11)
 - a. The "soldier" terminology is used often in the pages of our Bibles. Consider: Philippians 2:25; 2 Timothy 2:3-4; Philemon 1:2
 - b. Discuss: How do soldiers differ from civilians?
 - i. Think about their sacrifices. What do they give up to be a soldier?
 - ii. Think about their commitment to a specific cause.
 - iii. Think about their dedication to always being ready.
 - c. Paul is discussing how soldiers are to be prepared for the attacks of the enemy. He is giving specific instruction on how they are to *"put on the whole armor of God."*
 - d. He is making the case that we are soldiers. We are a part of the Lord's Army!
 - e. Reflect on your discussion in letter b and apply that to Christian soldiers.
 - i. What sacrifices should we make?
 - ii. What cause are we to be committed to?
 - iii. How do we stay always ready?
 - f. Where are the soldiers?
 - i. Many Christian soldiers have gone AWOL. Church rolls are full of names of missing soldiers.
 - ii. Many Christian soldiers are POW's. They have allowed themselves to become enslaved by sin and thus are unable to serve effectively in the Lord's Army.
 - iii. Many Christian soldiers are inadequately equipped. They are saved, but have never grown in their faith. They are immature and not equipped to handle the expectations of spiritual battle.
2. We have an enemy (vs. 12)
 - a. Verse 12 is a sobering verse. Compare it with 2 Corinthians 10:4-5.
 - b. Again, Paul is using war terminology as he compares the Christian life to warfare. How does he describe the battle we are in?
 - i. Not carnal: Fleshly or human. We are not in a physical battle that requires hand-to-hand combat. We are in a spiritual battle.
 - ii. We cannot fight spiritual battles with earthly weapons. That would be like taking a water gun to a shoot-out.
 - c. The terms Paul uses are defined below:
 - i. *Principalities*: the first ones, preeminent ones, leaders.
 - ii. *Powers*: the authorities, the demons of Satan in the lower atmosphere who constitute his kingdom in the air.
 - iii. The rulers of the darkness of this *world*: Satan and his demons.
 - iv. Spiritual wickedness in *high places*: Satan and all his demonic forces.
 - d. What can we conclude from this verse? The forces of evil are: powerful, numerous, organized, and evil. Again, this is the sobering reality of what we are standing against.
3. We have protection (vs. 14-18)

- a. Never forget that God has given us everything we need for life and for Godliness (2 Peter 1:3).
- b. Paul goes into depth describing the armor that every Christian has been issued at the time of their enlistment into God's Army:
 - i. Belt of Truth: The truth stabilizes. This is the great battle of the day: the battle for truth.
 - ii. Breastplate of Righteousness: Our hearts and vital organs are protected when we live righteous lives in this unrighteous world.
 - iii. Shoes to carry the Gospel: A soldier's footwear is critical. Our shoes have been equipped to carry the most important message every human heart needs to hear.
 - iv. Helmet of Salvation: We are called to keep our minds on Christ and to think Biblically on every issue.
 - v. Our Sword – the Word of God: Our only weapon is the only weapon we need – God's Word.
 - vi. Praying always: Our Commander in Chief is always ready to answer our calls.
- c. The Armor of God is what allows us to stand strong in this evil world (see vs. 11 & 14).

CONCLUSION/APPLICATION:

- If you are a Christian, you have been enlisted into God's Army and stationed at the Florence Baptist Temple.
- Our mission is to build an army of Bible-believing people, mobilized and committed to Jesus Christ and His church.
- Our strategy is to worship God, love others, witness everywhere and make disciples.
- Will we be found faithful on the spiritual battlefield?

TIP: Save a few minutes at the end of class to pray specifically for Friend Day! Pray for people by name!