



FIGHT

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

To be Biblical is to believe in the supernatural. There is an unseen realm that affects the physical one. There are spiritual realities happening around us all the time. God wants us to be aware and to be active in the great battle taking place between good and evil. Over the next few weeks, we're going to be studying these things. My prayer for you is you would be better equipped to stand against evil in your life and experience the power of God and His active work in the world.

As we learn and walk through this series together, I want to challenge you to commit to the following three things:

1. **Commit to attending church every week.** Each week, we will be learning how to discover God's plan for combating evil during the sermon. The discussion in your group will be much more powerful if you have already experienced the sermon before your group meeting.
2. **Commit to attending your group each week.** The group discussions you have with others will help you apply what's taught on the weekend. Attending the group each week will also help you build your relationship with others in your group.
3. **Commit to reading the devotional on the Sun Valley App every weekday each week.** The devotional content each day will help you go further with the content from the sermon and your group discussion. This will help you!

I am praying for you and your group as we strengthen our resolve to be part of God's work together. Let's do this!

Growing with You,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad Moore', with a stylized, cursive script.

Chad Moore

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BELT

week one

The battles we fight against in this world are not just from culture or even our own flesh. They are spiritual. Paul, the author of Ephesians, clearly indicates this and says no tangible weapons can effectively be employed against Satan and his minions. We are not given a specific list of strategies or tactics our enemy will use. However, it is clear when we follow God's instruction, we will be able to stand and have victory regardless of Satan's strategies, misguided cultural values and even against our own flesh. The first piece of our spiritual wardrobe is the "Belt of Truth."



CONVERSATION STARTERS

1. If this is the first time for your group to meet, take a moment to introduce yourself, share something about your family, tell how you ended up at Sun Valley and where you are currently serving.
2. A recent study shows the average person lies once or twice a day and starts lying at the age of two. What is the biggest lie you have ever heard? Why do you think people feel they have a need to lie?



SERMON NOTES REVIEW

Looking back at your sermon notes from this weekend's teaching, was there anything said that caught your attention, challenged you or confused you?



WATCH THE VIDEO

[YouTube.com/SunValleyGroups](https://www.youtube.com/SunValleyGroups)



GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What is something you had to fight for in your life?
2. Define “truth” in your own words. What influences in your life have helped shape your definition of truth concerning God and your own life?
3. Chad mentioned God can’t help you if you’re pretending to be someone else because that person doesn’t exist.
 - Sometimes we wear a mask in social situations because we are trying to fit in and be more social. Other times, it’s because we are trying to be somebody else. Is there a place in your life you have been pretending and wearing a mask? (Think: marriage, family, friends, church, little league, self, etc.)
 - How can stripping away these masks be beneficial spiritually?
4. Jesus had a lot to say about truth and whom we should follow and believe. Read aloud what Jesus says to the disciples in ***John 14:5-7***.
 - Jesus states truth is a person, not an idea. How does Jesus’ statement of truth effect who should be allowed to speak truth to you?
 - How does it compare to the cultural view of truth?
 - What do you think Jesus wanted the disciples to understand from this statement?
5. Jesus called Satan “the father of lies.” In light of ***Romans 8:38-39***, what lies do you sometimes find yourself believing about others, yourself and God?

6. In **John 10:10**, Jesus says He came so we may have life and have it abundantly.
 - What steps can you take towards acknowledging truth and experiencing this abundant life?
 - How can you as a group support one another in this?
7. During the third week of this study, it is encouraged for your group to serve together. Start planning where your group can go serve together. Discuss as a group some serving options.



PRAYER

Close your group in prayer. Ask God to help you stand firm in His truth and to recognize the lies of the enemy.



ACTION ITEMS

- “Truth” is a theme throughout the book of John. On your own this week, read the following verses where Jesus discusses truth. *John 8:31-32 John 17:17 John 14:6*
- Take some time to talk to God this week about your blindspots where you might be ignoring, escaping or masking the truth. Ask Him to reveal to you what parts of your life He wants you to acknowledge and begin to experience the healing of His truth.
- Read the devotionals in the SV App this Monday - Friday.

BREASTPLATE

week two

The Apostle Paul compares the Armor of God with military gear and every article represents a portion of God's strength He extends to us when we become His children. The breastplate of righteousness refers to the righteousness purchased for us by Jesus on the cross. To say Yes to Jesus is to be fitted with the breastplate of righteousness. It is specifically designed by God to protect our heart and soul from the schemes, deceptions and fatal blows from the enemy. Our own righteousness is no match against evil attacks. The breastplate of righteousness has Jesus' name stamped in it. It is as if He is saying, "Your righteousness isn't sufficient to protect you. Here, wear mine."



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Look at last week's Action Item on truth and share what you learned about truth in your reading of the scriptures that were provided. Did you discover any blindspots in your life?
- Americans spend thousands of dollars on safety every year. From security dogs, home security systems, airbags, helmets and security software. Share a story of the last time you were saved from injury by some form of safety or security measure. What could the consequences have been without it?



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GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What are some things you do to guard your heart?
2. In **Luke 2:10** an Angel says, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people."
 - Why is this great news?
 - How does this great news translate into our righteousness?
3. In **Ephesians 6:13**, we are instructed to put on the armor of God. This implies we don't automatically or naturally wear it all the time. It is a decision and action we have to make daily.
 - If our heart and soul are exposed, meaning not under the protection of God's righteousness, how can the world, the enemy and our own flesh attack us?
 - How have you seen this work in your own life?
4. The Bible says our attempts at producing our own righteousness are useless and lead only to legalism and self-condemnation, not a saving grace. Read aloud **Isaiah 64:6**. How does this verse describe our own efforts at righteousness?
5. Our righteousness is received by faith in Jesus. It is not a feeling or something we can earn. Rather, the truth of our righteousness is accomplished only through the work of Jesus. Read aloud **Ephesians 2:8-9**.

- What does this verse tell us about where true righteousness comes from?
 - How is this different from what worldly wisdom, ideologies and other religions might say about being a good or spiritual person?
6. Continue to discuss the details of when and where your group can serve together during the third week of this study.



PRAYER

Close your group in prayer. Thank God for His righteousness He gives us through our faith in Him. Ask Him to give you the courage to live this out daily in His strength.



ACTION ITEMS

- As we wear Jesus' breastplate of righteousness, we begin to develop a purity of heart that translates into actions. Wearing this breastplate creates a lifestyle of putting into practice what we believe in our hearts and our lives begin to conform to the image of Jesus. Read through the verses below this week. What are three ways you can move towards HIS righteousness? Please share these three with your group next week. *John 1:29; Hebrews 10:12; Corinthians 5:20-21; John 15:4-11; Psalm 23:1-6; Titus 3:4-7*
- Read the devotionals in the SV App this Monday-Friday.

SHOES

week three

This week, we put on the third piece of our spiritual armor: shoes. Ephesians 6 says we should have our *“feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of grace.”* In the days of Jesus, Roman soldiers would put nails in the soles of their shoes so as not to slip, to stand firm and not give up ground in battle. This is both defensive and offensive. In order to defend ourselves against spiritual attacks, the lies of culture and this world, we must have peace and confidence in our position to stand firm in our faith regardless of our circumstances. We must also know God’s Word, understand His grace and take His gospel to others who do not yet know Him. We must stand Firm!



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- What are the three ways you identified in last week’s Action Item in which you can move towards Jesus’ righteousness?
- Describe your favorite pair of shoes and why they are your favorite.



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GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Spend some time in silence and prayer, then start with the first question: How are you doing in the realm of peace?
2. The Gospel means Good News. The Good News is Jesus has rescued us from sin and darkness. The Gospel (Good News) of Peace is simply the message Jesus gave to those who trust in Him. It comes with the assurance from God we are His children and He provides us with peace, readiness and stability to stand firm in battle.
 - If you have said Yes to Jesus, what does this free gift mean for you in your daily life? Has it changed how you handle relationships, finances and free time?
3. The more firmly we are rooted in the gospel, the more our “feet are fitted with readiness” to stand in battle. Read aloud ***Luke 6:46-49 and Matthew 13:18-23.***
 - Can you see yourself in one or more of the builders or sowers?
4. Each day we face battles. These battles may include lies we believe about our worth, identity, struggles with anger, past hurts, relationships or addiction.
 - What is the battle you are facing today?
 - How can your shoes (the Good News) help you stand your ground?
5. As Jesus followers, we have an enemy. Satan wants us to think sharing the Good News of the gospel with others is worthless, hopeless or will result in too negative of a response from those we share it with.

- In your adult life, have you ever had a time when you've been discouraged by these lies?
 - Have these lies kept you from sharing the Good News with others?
 - Has there been a time when you have been hesitant but shared the gospel anyway?
6. **1 Peter 3:15** instructs us to *"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have."* Often times this is as simple as telling our story.
- Have you ever shared your story with another person? Consider sharing it in your group today.
 - Who in your life needs to hear the Good News?
7. Sometimes sharing the Good News is simply serving others. This week is the week for your group to go serve together. Write below the details of where you are going to serve together this week.

Project: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____



PRAYER

Close your group in prayer. Thank God for His gift of the gospel and ask Him to help you stand firmly upon it as your foundation. Ask Him for the courage to share the gospel with others.



ACTION ITEMS

- Ask God who He wants you to share the message of the gospel with. Ask Him for the courage and opportunity to share it.
- Read the devotionals in the SV App this Monday-Friday.

SHIELD

week Four

This week, our spiritual armor is not another article of clothing, but a shield. This shield is to protect us from the flaming arrows that are continually hurled at us from our culture and our enemy. These arrows often come in the form of fear, doubt and lies. The enemy wants to weaken us through these tactics and, over time, tear down our defenses to make us vulnerable to buy into his tactics. Our shield is the shield of faith. It is our faith in Jesus that protects us and keeps us safe. Fear and faith cannot exist together. We daily make decisions to surrender to one or the other. A simple acronym for Fear is False Evidence Appearing Real. So, this week *“take up the shield of faith with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.” Ephesians 6:16*



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Last week we looked at Shoes as part of our spiritual armor. The Shoes symbolize we need to be ready to go and share the Gospel. Looking back at last week's Action Item, was there someone in your life you were able to share the Gospel with or have a conversation about Jesus?
- If you were a superhero, what superpower would you have or super-gadgets (spider web, lasso of truth, power ring, hammer, etc.) would you employ? What purpose would you use your superpower and gadgets for?



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GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What is one area of your life you tend to be afraid of?
2. Jesus had harsh words for our enemy, the devil, and those who do his deceptive work. Read aloud ***John 8:42-44***.
 - What does Jesus have to say about our enemy and his tactics?
 - Are there lies that have infected you (in the past or currently) in which you have accepted as truth that may have come from culture, the devil or even loved ones?
 - What do these verses tell us happens to us when we believe the lies of the deceiver?
3. Read aloud ***1 Peter 5:8-9***.
 - What advice does Peter give to us in these verses as we go into battle daily?
 - How do we become self-controlled, alert and resistant?
 - ***Romans 10:17*** says, “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” In the Old Testament, King David often prayed he would stay close to God’s Word and not live in fear. Read aloud ***Psalms 119:1-8***. What do you think he was hoping to gain from prayers like this?
 - What would you like to apply to your life from King David’s prayer and why?

4. **Romans 8:31** asks the question “*If God is for us, who can be against us?*” If the battles we fight are spiritual in nature, it only makes sense we would run to God when we face our battles to arm ourselves with our shield. What wisdom have you gleaned this week to empower you to stand strong?



PRAYER

Close your group in prayer. Ask God to reveal to you this week possible lies you tend to hear the loudest. Ask God to help you replace those lies with His truth and how He sees you.



ACTION ITEMS

- Read through the verses below. These verses will help you see how God sees you and what you mean to Him. Write down the verses that stand out to you and try to memorize one. *Psalm 139:1; Exodus 33:17; Zephaniah 3:17; Isaiah 41:10; James 4:8; Hebrews 13:5; Jeremiah 31:1*
- Read the devotionals in the SV App this Monday-Friday.

HELMET

week Five

Ephesians 6:12 tells us, *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world.”* This week, we look at what Paul calls “The Helmet of Salvation.” When a soldier suited up for battle, the helmet was the last piece of armor to go on. It was the final act of readiness in preparation for combat. The assurance of salvation is our impenetrable defense against anything the enemy throws at us. The idea in this verse is as we prepare for Satan’s attacks, we must grab that helmet and buckle it on tightly. Salvation is not limited to a one-time act of the past or even a future hope. God’s salvation is an ongoing, eternal state His children enjoy in the present. It is daily protection and deliverance from our sin nature and Satan’s schemes. The unsaved person has no protection for his mind to fight off the blows of false doctrine and spiritual deception.



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Which verse or verses from last week’s Action Item stood out to you and why?
- What was your most irrational childhood fear or belief?



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GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What was the moment you first said Yes to Jesus?
2. It's been said that in situations, we can't control our first thought but we can control our second. Our initial thought or feeling is our gut reaction, but what we do with it is up to us. Read aloud **2 Corinthians 10:5**.
 - What does it mean to “take every thought captive?”
 - What are some tools or strategies you either already use or could start using to help you with this?
3. The outcomes of the battles of our “thought-lives” determine the course of our actual lives. **Romans 12:1–2** instructs us to renew our minds by allowing the truth of God's Word to wipe out anything contrary to it. This transformation is not immediate or one-time, but is a continuous process.
 - In what ways do you find yourself tempted to “conform to the pattern of this world?”
 - What battles of the mind do you find yourself constantly facing?
4. One of Satan's most effective weapons against us is discouragement that leads to a loss of hope. It is easy to let our circumstances convince us God does not really love us or that His Word is not really true.
 - When have your circumstances caused you to be discouraged and lose hope?
 - How does having confidence in your salvation help you overcome discouragement and find your hope?

5. Because of the redemptive power of what Jesus has done for us, our enemy no longer has any hold on us. He knows that, but he also knows many of God's children do not understand that—or at least they do not live as if they do. What would it look like for you to live as though you know you cannot be separated from the love of Jesus?
6. Since there is only one week left in this series, begin discussing your plans as a group for what is next after this series ends.



PRAYER

Close your group in prayer. Thank God for His gift of salvation and ask Him to help you remember to put on your helmet each day so you can be insulated against the suggestions, desires and traps the enemy lays for you.



ACTION ITEMS

- The helmet of salvation is available to those who have said Yes to Jesus and have put their faith and trust in Him. Read the following verses, sometimes referred to as “The Romans Road,” that explain the Good News of salvation.
Romans 3:23 Romans 6:23 Romans 5:28 Romans 10:9 Romans 5:1
- If you're ready to say Yes to Jesus and begin a relationship with God through Jesus right now, you can do that by talking to Him through prayer. You can use the words on the next page:

"God, I confess I am a sinner and I believe Jesus died to pay for my sins. I believe He rose from the dead to be my Savior. Today, I say YES to following You by accepting You into my life as my Savior. I turn from doing things my own way and give You control of my life. I accept You alone as the only way to have my sins forgiven and the only way to have a right relationship with You. Thank You for saving me and giving me new life in You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

- The next step after saying Yes to Jesus is getting baptized. You can sign up to be baptized online at **baptism.sv.cc** or on the SV app. If someone in your group is getting baptized, plan to be there to support them!
- Read the devotionals in the SV App this Monday - Friday.

SWORD

week six

For the last five weeks, we have been looking at what it means to be spiritually prepared for battle: *“To stand strong in the Lord and His mighty power.”* To stand with truth, righteousness and readiness, to carry a shield, wear a helmet and now to wield a mighty Sword. We must understand in this life there will be difficulties and hardships. In Ephesians 6, the Apostle Paul clearly states the difficult battles we fight are not against flesh and blood, but are spiritual in nature. Up to this point, our armor has been generally defensive. But this week we look at the *“Sword of the Spirit.”* The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. It can be used defensively, but in this case, it is an offensive weapon belonging to the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 4 describes God’s Word as *“living and active and stronger than any double-edged sword.”* God’s Word is piercing and penetrates deep to the heart and lays open the feelings and motives of all those it touches. The Sword is a gift and comes from the heart of our Creator.



CONVERSATION STARTERS

- Look at last week’s Action Item. Did you say YES to Jesus? If so, share that with your group.
- Over the last five weeks, we have looked at the “Full Armor of God” and how to fight our battles. What has been most beneficial to you and why?



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GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What is a scripture that spoke to you and helped you in a time of need and gave you truth to cut through the lies?
2. The Bible is unlike any other book ever written. It was written over a period of fifteen hundred years by forty different authors on three different continents. Yet the theme of redemption, relationship and the nature of God runs through it all. Read aloud **2 Timothy 3:16-17**. What does Timothy claim about God's Word and its purposes?
3. Effectively using the sword takes practice. Jesus models this when He is faced with temptations from Satan in the wilderness. Jesus, being fully God and fully man, was often tempted by Satan just as we are. Read aloud **Luke 4:1-13** and discuss the following questions:
 - How might the fully human part of Jesus have been tempted in these verses?
 - Satan's temptations to Jesus are common to man: pursuing physical desires, pursuing power and becoming a spectacular spectacle to test God and amaze the masses. We too struggle with the same temptations. How are these temptations similar to the ones you face in your life?
 - How did Jesus combat Satan's temptations?

4. We saw in these verses that Satan attempts to employ God's Word against Him. Read aloud **Genesis 3:1-5**. How is this story in Genesis similar to the story you just read in **Luke 4**?
5. Knowing God's Word is a huge part of battling life's difficult times and navigating the world in which we live. What are some strategies you can employ to learn more of God's Word to fight life's battles and overcome the lies you may tell yourself?
6. Discuss your plans as a group for what is next after this week. If you are going to continue to meet, determine a location, day and time for next week's group. Sermon notes and videos are available for each series on the SV App under the Sermon Notes each week.



PRAYER

Close your group in prayer. God, thank You for Your Word. I ask You would instill in me a desire to know Your Word and use it to guide my life and direct my path.



ACTION ITEMS

- Read **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** this week. What does Paul say is the key to fighting battles?
- Read the devotionals in the SV App this Monday - Friday.



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