

Sword of the Spirit – Ephesians 6:10-19; Luke 4:1-15

- I. Good morning, we have been in a series called Armor of God . . .
  - a. Belt of Truth – Satan’s native tongue is lying so truth is the foundation of our armor, the belt is the organizing principle to armor
  - b. Breastplate of righteousness – because we are right with God, we can live in a righteous way that honors our relationship with him
  - c. Gospel of Peace – Shoes – Prince of Peace made peace, we can have peace with God, in ourselves, with others
  - d. Shield of Faith – reminds us that God loves us, God wants the best for us, and God shows us the way to that – faith is when we follow him in that even when we can’t see how it will turn out
  - e. Helmet of Salvation – reminds us of our eternal identity and destiny in Christ and that we are who God says we are.
- II. As we bring this series to a close, we are going to focusing on a weapon in our arsenal that serves both as a defense mechanism and offensive weapon.
  - a. This morning my goal is for us to see how this integral piece of the armor serves us against the enemy’s attacks.
  - b. The Sword of the spirit
    - i. **Read Ephesians 6: 10-19 (SLIDE)**
    - ii. Verse 17 . . . “and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”
  - c. I want to remind us of this morning that the native tongue of our enemy or accuser is lies.
  - d. My desire is that you would find that the sword of the spirit is another tool that helps us cut through the darkness and expose the lies of the enemy.
- III. Sometimes when learning how to use something, like a tool or a weapon, we need to see how to use it and how not to use it.
  - a. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ilsNz6pZcM&ab\\_channel=VictoryMartialArtsAustralia](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ilsNz6pZcM&ab_channel=VictoryMartialArtsAustralia)
  - b. <https://www.jukinmedia.com/licensing/view/932817>
- IV. It’s amazing the contrast between someone who doesn’t know what they are doing .and someone who does.
  - a. How do we use the sword improperly . . . ?
    - i. We aim it at others
    - ii. We take things out of context
- V. To learn how to use the sword of the Spirit properly, we look to Jesus, the master swordsman in Luke 4

**VI. Luke 4**

**a. Verses 1-2**

i. **“And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry. (SLIDE)**

1. This passage starts out by letting the reader know that Jesus was led into the wilderness and was full of the Holy Spirit.
2. Forty days is significant language to the reader because it reminds us of:
  - a. Moses’ forty days on the mountain without food (Exodus 34)
  - b. Elijah’s forty days in flight to the mountain of God (1 Kings 19)
  - c. Israel’s forty years in the wilderness (Deuteronomy 8:2-6)
    - i. This text is the backdrop of the story in Luke 4
    - ii. Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 3 times
3. Another thing that is significant as we think about the context of this passage, we look back to chapter 3, where Jesus was baptized.
  - a. In Luke 3: 21 it says, “Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove, and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son, with you I am well pleased.”
  - b. This is powerful because this is prior to Jesus doing anything related to ministry.
4. So, he was led into the wilderness and immediately the devil takes an opportunity to hit him when he is most vulnerable because he was hungry.
5. Jesus, full of the Spirit, is vulnerable, but he already has the sword attached to his hip – he’s prepared.
6. Let’s see how Jesus uses the sword to confront the enemy.

**b. Verses 3-4**

i. **“The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread.” And Jesus answered him, “It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone.” (SLIDE)**

1. The devil immediately attacks his identity. How often does this happen to us?
2. This is the first instance where we see Jesus wield the sword of the spirit, the word of God and cut through the darkness of the enemy’s temptation
  - a. **Uses Deuteronomy 8:3**
    - i. **“It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone.”**
3. Have you ever been hungry?

- a. For real food? For that thing you know you can't have? For someone or something that is not yours?
  - b. Our appetites are voracious at times.
  - c. Mike Breen has explained that the way this temptation plays out in our culture is through the lens of consumerism.
    - i. Instead of going to the word of God, or taking something to the cross, we consume to numb out.
  - d. As we consider how this affected Jesus, it tempts him to solve a real-world problem – hunger. He is tempted to solve a real-life social problem by turning stones into bread.
  - e. Jesus knows that this solution – while real – isn't the real solution which is why he reminds the devil that scripture says that man cannot live on bread alone.
4. Interesting thing about temptation, and we will see 2 more, a temptation is not something that is usually out of your reach. A temptation is often something that is well within your reach and can be grasped.
- a. What's in your reach? What could you potentially be exposed to that doesn't serve you well?

**c. Verses 5-8**

**i. "And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." And Jesus answered him, "It is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve." (SLIDE)**

1. Jesus is now being tempted with something that is incredibly enticing – he is being tempted with the opportunity to have authority and glory – without the sacrifice. The devil makes the claim that it has been given to him, and Jesus doesn't argue.
2. What he does though is continues to wield the sword by quoting Deuteronomy 6:13 and reminds the liar that the only worship that is due is to the Lord.
  - a. **Deuteronomy 6:13**
    - i. **"You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve."**
    - b. Interesting side note for me here is that Jesus doesn't argue with a liar. You ever tried to argue with a liar. It's futile.
3. This temptation from the devil also tempts Jesus with a political aspiration – Would Jesus submit to the ruler of the world, the devil, to achieve good for the people of the world?

4. The story of Jesus is powerful because the King, who has all the power and authority, was willing to endure the cross and not take shortcuts.
5. He could have had an easier path - This temptation would have exempted Jesus from having to go through the pain of the cross.
6. This temptation manifests in our lives as the temptation for ambition or competition – the temptation to have everything we want or desire and taking shortcuts to get there.
  - a. How many times in our lives have we taken a shortcut and missed out on the opportunity to grow?
    - i. OKC Thunder story
      1. It's one thing to take a shortcut that is trivial.
      2. What happens when we take shortcuts on things that have lasting, potentially enduring effects?
7. This temptation is to do things by our own power and not wait on God's timing – even to get the good things that God promises us.
8. Mitzi's mom's quote – "God will always meet your needs in legitimate ways, the devil will try and use illegitimate ways."

d. Verses 9 – 13

i. "And he took him to Jerusalem and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, "He will command his angels concerning you, to guard you" and "On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone." And Jesus answered him, "It is said, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test." And when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from him until an opportune time." (SLIDE)

1. Can you imagine the beginning of Jesus' ministry with a spectacular start like him literally jumping from the pinnacle of the religious world and having angels catch him? Can you imagine the article – Man from Nazarene jumps from temple and Angels catch him.
2. **Again, Jesus quotes a passage out of Deuteronomy 6:16.**
  - a. "It is said, you shall not put the Lord your God to the test."
3. The devil also uses scripture but isn't quite the swordsman that Jesus is – the devil quotes Psalm 91:11-12.
  - a. Jesus is able to discern between an appropriate use of scripture against inappropriate uses of scripture.
4. This temptation also hits Jesus at a real pain point – could Jesus win over the religious leaders by exploding on to the scene by showing them a scene of supernatural power?
5. This temptation is real for us as we consider our need for approval or celebrity. Sometimes, we are tempted to put on a big show to be

seen by the world and gain status. The temptation with being a celebrity is that we are known, but nobody really knows us.

a. Approval – the need for affirmation from people . . .

**6. James 4:7 – “Resist the devil and he will flee from you”**

a. Resist is the same word as withstand in Ephesians 6

b. At some point, the devil is defeated

- VII. Why was Jesus able to use this weapon so effectively?
- a. He spent time studying
    - i. **Luke 2:42-52**
  - b. He spent time with the father to know the truth
    - i. We see in scripture so many times, that when the crowds came, and he withdrew to the mountain to be with the Lord
  - c. He knew his calling and his purpose
    - i. **Luke 4:18**
- VIII. As a community, what’s at stake if we don’t learn how to use the sword.
- a. Lies creep in
    - i. We believe a lesser story than what the gospel promises
    - ii. The story of the gospel is from death to life
    - iii. So many of us live in death when we have been rescued
  - b. We get tricked
    - i. We look around and compare ourselves to others
    - ii. We live in a world where “your truth” is all that matters
      - 1. What if your truth is opinion?
        - a. Where is the source of your truth?
        - b. Where do we get our truth?
          - i. Our friends.
          - ii. Our parents
          - iii. Ourselves
          - iv. Media
- IX. As a community, what’s possible if we learn to use the sword.
- a. Imagine a group of people a community that is sharpening the sword and uses it well
    - i. Jesus went into the desert prepared.
    - ii. What happens when we train and prepare for the attacks of the enemy?
      - 1. Instead of marriages being broken, they have a chance to be restored
        - a. This hits close to home with me - Caleb and Addi marriage and counseling
          - i. Lies v. Truth
      - 2. People repenting because scripture convicts us
      - 3. Where we get in the word, not because we must make him happy, but because we are training.
- X. As we think about the why the word of God is so important as a tool for us, let’s be encourage by what scripture says about it.

a. Hebrews 4:12-16

- i. “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of the soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning to the intentions of the heart.” (SLIDE)

b. I Peter 1:23-25

- i. “. . . since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for “all flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.” And this word is the good news that was preached to you.”

c. John 6:63

- i. “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” (SLIDE)

XI. As we close, I want to take us back to Luke 4:14-15

a. “And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and a report about him went out through all the surrounding country. And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all. (SLIDE)

- i. He was led into the wilderness by the spirit, tempted, and after resisting temptation by cutting through the enemy’s lies, using the sword of the Spirit, returned in the power of the Spirit.
  - 1. My friend Dave Rhodes likes to say, “what Jesus resisted in the wilderness determined the power with which he lived.”
  - 2. This is our opportunity – using the sword of the Spirit gives us a chance to combat the enemy’s tactics and live full, wholehearted lives full of power.

- b. Worship Song – I speak Jesus . . .
- c. **Blessing:** *May today be the day that we draw our swords, and we use them as they were intended – not to cut down others and prove our points, or to harm each other, but to wield them against the enemy and confront the lies that tempt us to live a lesser story.*