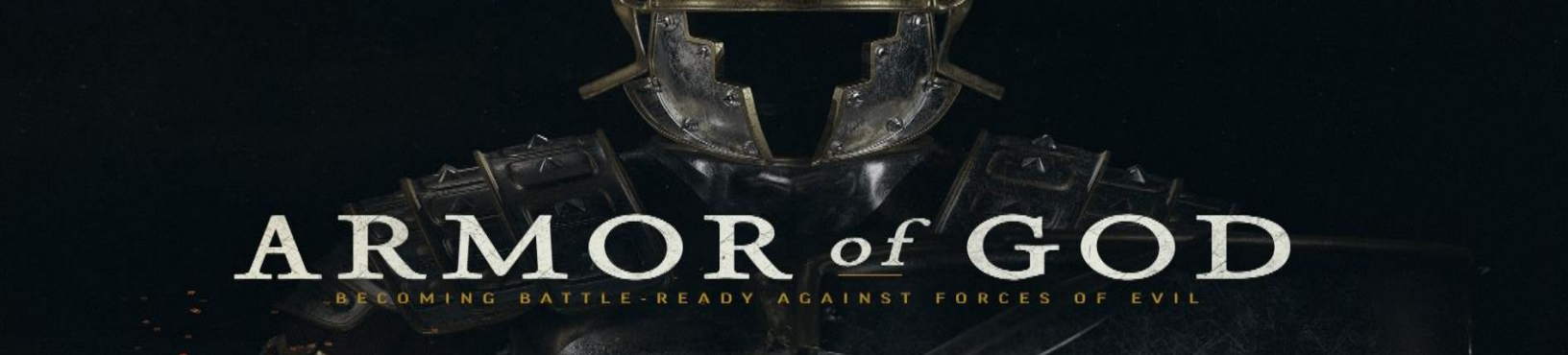




ARMOR *of* GOD

BECOMING BATTLE-READY AGAINST FORCES OF EVIL

The Armor of God: The Breastplate of Righteousness

OPENING QUESTION

Think of a time in your life when you felt genuinely unprepared for something difficult that came your way. What did that experience teach you about the importance of preparation?

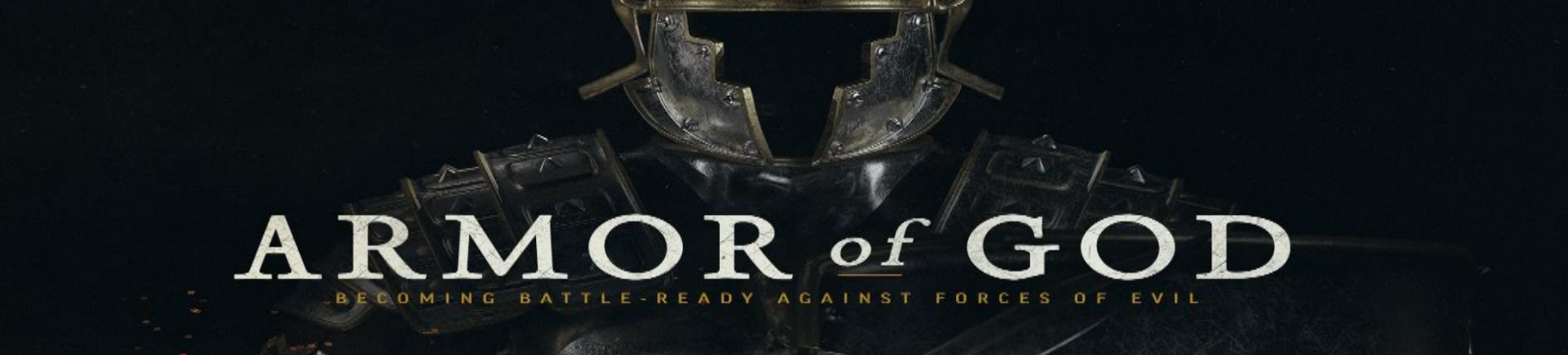
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Understanding the Battle

1. Courtney described the enemy as someone with a calculated strategy against us, using temptation, accusation, and division. Where have you personally seen or experienced one of those tactics at work in your own life or in the lives of people close to you?
2. The illustration of a lion looking for prey that is distracted, isolated, or weak was used to describe how the enemy operates. Which of those three vulnerabilities do you think is most common among believers today, and why?
3. Ephesians 6:13 uses the word "when" rather than "if" when referring to the day of evil coming. How does that distinction change the way you think about spiritual preparation in your daily life?

Understanding Righteousness

4. Courtney made the point that our own righteousness and good works are never enough to fully protect us, and that Jesus essentially says, "Wear mine." How does that truth sit with you personally? Is it easy or difficult to receive righteousness as a gift rather than something you earn?



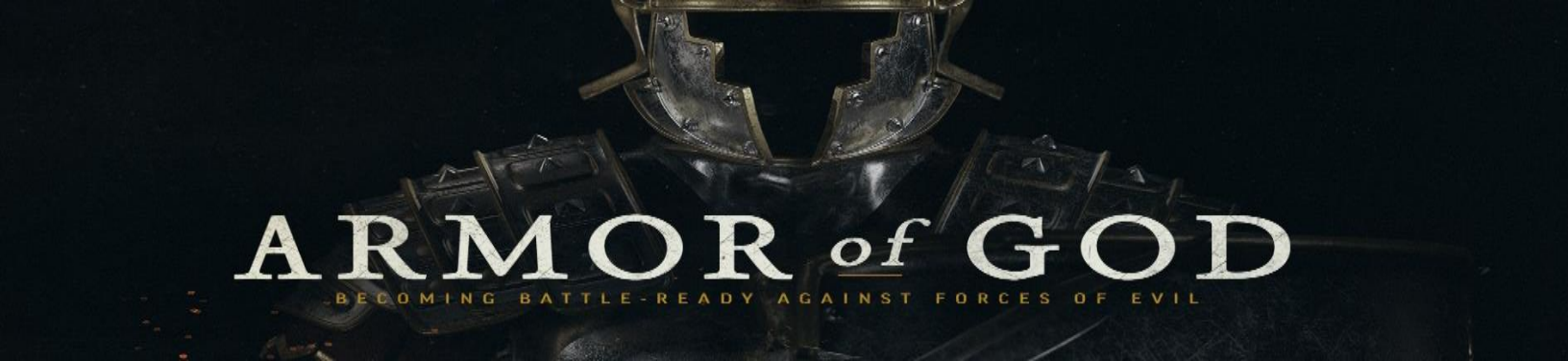
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5. The breastplate of righteousness protects the heart. Courtney mentioned that when our hearts are unguarded, things like bitterness, fear, unforgiveness, and pride can creep in. Which of those tends to be the most persistent threat to your own heart, and what does guarding against it look like for you?
6. Job 29:14 describes putting on righteousness like a garment, something worn actively and intentionally every day. What does that active, daily choice look like in practical terms for someone in your stage of life?

Strength in the Lord

7. Courtney outlined four ways we grow strong in the Lord: through faith, through grace, through the Word, and through the Holy Spirit working in our inner being. Which of those four feels most alive in your life right now, and which one feels like it needs more attention?
 8. Courtney's oldest daughter wrote on the spine of her Bible, "This is how I fight my battles." What is a phrase, verse, or truth that has served as a personal anchor for you during a difficult season?
 9. Courtney reminded us that there are seasons when some people in the body are wounded and need others to come alongside and carry the load for them. Is there someone in your life right now who needs that kind of support from you? Is there an area where you need to be willing to let others carry some of the weight for you?
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PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

Choose one or two of these to commit to as a group or as individuals before you meet again.

1. **Start your day suited up.** Each morning this week, take a few minutes before the noise of the day begins to intentionally pray through the armor of God. Acknowledge that you are putting on the breastplate of righteousness, not through your own goodness, but through what Jesus has done for you.
 2. **Audit your heart.** Set aside time this week for an honest personal inventory. Ask yourself whether bitterness, fear, unforgiveness, pride, or any other vulnerability has found a foothold in your heart. Bring whatever you find to God in prayer and, if appropriate, to a trusted friend or mentor.
 3. **Engage your community.** Identify one person in your life who seems distracted, isolated, or worn down right now. Reach out to them this week, not with an agenda, but simply to let them know they are not alone.
 4. **Get into the Word.** If you do not have a consistent habit of reading Scripture, commit to starting one this week, even if it is just a few minutes each day. Write down one verse that speaks to who God says you are and put it somewhere you will see it daily.
 5. **Take communion intentionally.** If you did not take communion during the service, consider doing so this week at home or with your group. Use it as a deliberate moment of remembering what Jesus did and recommitting to walking in the righteousness he provides.
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