

Home Group Leader's Notes

Week of October 5, 2020

Home Group Leader's Notes for "Armed" #3

In our current series, we are focused on the call to trust in God's power together and therefore stand against the devil's schemes and agents. Some have called this "spiritual warfare." The Bible is clear that these powers and battles are real, constant, and not to be fought individually or by our own strength. For the next several weeks, we will walk through each provision of God that enables us to stand together against the forces of evil.

OPENING DISCUSSION

We are walking through Ephesians 6:10-18 together. The author, Paul, is clear that there is a real devil that wars against God and His people using evil forces and schemes. Most of us recognize that there is evil in our world. **What do you believe are some of the forces of evil at work in our world? How are they manifest?**

NOTES TO LEADERS: WHILE THIS IS A VALUABLE INTRODUCTION TO OUR TOPIC, YOU WILL PROBABLY HAVE TO LIMIT THE DURATION OF THIS DISCUSSION.

What institutions in America are aimed at truth? How are they doing?

NOTES TO LEADERS: THIS MIGHT BE CONTROVERSIAL AS WELL. THE OBVIOUS ANSWERS WOULD INCLUDE EDUCATION, MEDICAL, LEGAL/JUDICIAL, ETC.

WHAT GOD'S WORD SAY ABOUT TRUTH

Read Ephesians 6:10-18. How is "the belt of truth" an essential in our lives?

NOTES TO LEADERS: HYLKE HYLKEMA'S MESSAGE LAST SUNDAY FOCUSED ON THIS POINT. WITHOUT TRUTH, WE HAVE NO MESSAGE, NO HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS, ETC.

Throughout Jesus time in ministry, He repeatedly focused on truth. What did He ask or say that we needed to know about truth?

John 1:14 NOTES TO LEADERS: JESUS CAME WITH BOTH TRUTH AND GRACE

John 4:24 NOTES TO LEADERS: WORSHIP MUST BE IN TRUTH

John 14:6 NOTES TO LEADERS: JESUS IS TRUTH. THIS MEANS MORE THAN TRUTH RESIDES IN HIM. IT PRIMARILY MEANS THAT "HE EMBODIES THE SUPREME REVELATION OF GOD." (Carson, the Gospel of John, p. 491)

John 14:16-17, 16:13 NOTES TO LEADERS: THE HOLY SPIRIT IS DESCRIBED AS THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH. HE GUIDES US INTO THE IMPLICATIONS OF WHAT IT MEANS THAT JESUS IS TRUTH.

John 17:17-19 NOTES TO LEADERS: THE FATHER USES TRUTH TO SANCTIFY US. THIS MEANS THAT HE USES TRUTH TO SET US APART FOR GOD'S GLORY, GOD'S SERVICE, TO THINK GOD'S THOUGHTS, AND ENJOY THE TRUTH OF GOD'S CHARACTER AND ACTIONS.

What is the role of truth in our lives? How do we learn truth?

NOTES TO LEADERS: THIS QUESTION SHOULD BRING UP A GOOD DISCUSSION. SEE BELOW

Ephesians 1:13; 4:21

NOTES TO LEADERS: GOD USED THE GOSPEL, THE MESSAGE OF TRUTH, TO LEAD TO OUR SALVATION. IT WAS THROUGH GOD'S REVEALED TRUTH THAT WE CAME TO LEARN OF JESUS.

Psalms 51:6 NOTES TO LEADERS: GOD DESIRES TRUTH IN MY INMOST BEING.

John 8:31-32 NOTES TO LEADERS: BY ABIDING IN JESUS, WE KNOW THE TRUTH WHICH SETS US FREE FROM THE SLAVERY TO AND CONSEQUENCE OF SIN.

Philippians 4:8 NOTES TO LEADERS: PAUL COMMANDED US TO DWELL ON TRUTH.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 NOTES TO LEADERS: THE TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE (GOD'S WORD) IS ALWAYS PROFITABLE IN OUR LIVES.

Acts 17:11 NOTES TO LEADERS: THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, GOD'S PEOPLE HAVE BEEN EAGER AND DILIGENT TO LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD.

Romans 15:4 NOTES TO LEADERS: THE SCRIPTURES ARE GOD'S REVELATION, THEREFORE TRUE, AND WERE GIVEN TO US THAT WE MIGHT HAVE HOPE.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Looking back at the opening discussion, how is God's truth an essential weapon against the forces of evil and their schemes?

NOTES TO LEADERS: HYLKE'S MESSAGE ON SUNDAY FOCUSED ON A NUMBER OF WAYS THAT THIS IS TRUE. WITHOUT THE STRENGTH OF TRUTH, WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO COMBAT THE LIES NOR RECOGNIZE THE SCHEMES OF THE ENEMY.

Why did Jesus stress the absolute essential of knowing the truth about Him?

NOTES TO LEADERS: HE IS THE COMPELLED EMBODIMENT OF THE CHARACTER AND PLAN OF GOD. WITHOUT HIM, WE CANNOT STAND AGAINST THE ENEMY OF GOD AND PEOPLE, THE DEVIL (SATAN).

How is knowing and practicing truth portrayed in the New Testament? How does false teaching affect our lives? God's church?

NOTES TO LEADERS: IN NEARLY EVERY LETTER OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, THE WRITERS POINT OUT TRUTH, FALSE TEACHING / TEACHERS, AND THE NEED FOR TRUTH TO KNOW, LOVE, AND FOLLOW JESUS. FALSE TEACHING CAN LEAD US AWAY FROM GOD AND HIS BLESSINGS, HIS GLORY. THIS LEADS TO THE CHURCH DRIFTING FROM GOD (CF. THE BOOK OF HEBREWS AND THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN REVELATION.)

What is the role of the Holy Spirit regarding truth? How does this happen in our lives?

NOTES TO LEADERS: THE HOLY SPIRIT ALWAYS POINTS TO JESUS WHO IS TRUTH. HE LEADS US MOMENT BY MOMENT INTO A DEEPER RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD INCLUDING THE TRUTH OF AND ABOUT GOD. HE ILLUMINATES SCRIPTURE, SPEAKS TO OUR MINDS, REVEALS THE TRUTH OF CIRCUMSTANCES, ETC.

How is truth our weapon against the wiles of the devil?

NOTES TO LEADERS: JUST AS JESUS SPOKE SCRIPTURE TRUTH TO SATAN WHEN TEMPTED. WE NEED TO KNOW, SPEAK, AND LIVE TRUTH WHEN THE ENEMY WANTS TO LIE OR DESTROY US.

How has God used truth in your life?

NOTES TO LEADERS: GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER.

What helps you learn truth? (What practices, rhythms, and people)

NOTES TO LEADERS: GOOD OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER.

Shepherds, the Enemy doesn't want us to learn from God and one another. Please be praying for our church family and God's people in these troubled times.

God's grace and truth to you,

Steve