Ephesians 6:10-18
The Best Defense Is…
Pastor Mike

I. _____ weapons for a _____ battle

A battle between _____ lies and _____ truth

II. The uniqueness of the sword as an _____

    a. In all warfare the _____ is a _____

    b. Attacking by _____ we fight on

Defensively we _____ and _____ lies & temptations

Offensively we _____ and _____ the truth

III. The uniqueness of the sword; requires _____

    a. If unprepared, Satan will try to turn the _____

    b. The importance of _____ and _____

IV. The importance of prayer as part _____

    a. We need God's help to _____ and _____ what we know

    b. Applying the _____ message to daily life

Closing Question;

<u>*Questions for reflection, application, and discussion*</u>

1. Paul begins this section on the armor of God by teaching that we are in a spiritual war against spiritual demonic powers (Eph 6:12), and he ends by calling us to rely on God's spiritual power, taking up "*the sword of the spirit*," and "*praying at all times in the spirit.*"
   a. In his message, Pastor Mike said that we can be guilty of affirming the spirit nature of the battle in our words, while in our practice we ignore or deny the spiritual forces involved. Do you agree or disagree with this? Why?
   b. Can you think of battles in your own life and mind that you downplay or ignore the demonic spiritual root of the battle? Why is this so dangerous?
   c. If we downplay or ignore the demonic spiritual root of the battles we face, will this always result in us fighting to battle on our own strength and failing to truly rely on God's spiritual power for victory? Explain your answer.

2. Whether on the battlefield or on the sports field, we understand the concept that the best defense is a good offense. In spiritual battle, we need to be able to not only defend ourselves against the enemy's lies and temptations, but we also need to counterattack and state and claim the truth of God's word.
   a. In your own "spiritual battles" can you think of times when you felt that you were on the defense, defending yourself against Satan's lies and temptations? What do you remember about those "spiritual battles?"
   b. Can you think of times when felt that you were able to go on the offense stating the truth of God's Word, and claiming it in your life? What do you remember about those "spiritual battles?"
   c. Looking back, what differences do you see between the times that you were defensive in your spiritual warfare in contrast to the times that you were able to take of offense?

3. If we are unprepared with God's word, Satan will try to take the sword that God has given us and to try to use it against us, quoting passages out of context or with a twisted meaning to get us to believe something wrong about God and his plan for our lives.
   a. Can you think of a time when you personally saw or heard someone misquote and/or misapply Biblical teaching to justify a wrong belief and/or a wrong action?
   b. Has this ever happened to you?
   c. This is one of those areas that is far easier to see in others than it is to see in ourselves. How should we evaluate our own hearts, and how can we know when our understanding and/or application of the Bible's teaching is wrong?

4. The sword of God's word is not only unique in that it is the only offensive peace of armor, it also is the only piece of armor that requires training and practice to use it. Our ability to effectively use the Bible in the moment of battle will depend on how much time we have spent studying it and learning to apply it to our life at times; Only a person who has spent time training with the sword will be able to use it effectively in the heat of battle.
   a. Are there any exceptions to this principle? Can a person successfully handle God's word in the stress of trail and/or temptation if they have not developed disciplines of regular Bible study?
   b. How much time have you spent studying the Bible this week? This month? This year? Do you feel that this has been enough to prepare you for Satan's inevitable attack? If not, what needs to change?