

Basic Training Workbook

PART 1 – DO YOU WANT TO WIN?

Introduction

Part of winning any game is the mindset of the players. I think this may be one reason that coaches give “pep talks” and use cheerleaders; they want to keep up the morale of the team. I’m sure that a similar quality is needed for soldiers going into battle. If a military has a low morale or a defeated outlook, they will not fight well, and they will probably not win the war.

We also must enter spiritual warfare with a desire to win. But this desire is not obtained through fleshly or worldly means. I can’t simply give you a good “pep talk” or teach you some cheers to make you want to win. It is a *spiritual* war, and it is going to take *spiritual* means to awaken that desire in your heart.

Now, you probably already have a certain measure of desire, or you wouldn’t have picked up this workbook. Nevertheless, I’m convinced that one reason I fail in spiritual battle is that I’ve lost sight of my longing to win. The devil’s temptation often looks more appealing than the struggle and fight that will be necessary to win the battle. I would suspect that you have felt that way, too.

We need to have our minds renewed (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23), and the Scriptures have provided numerous motivators to keep us active in the fight. My prayer is that by the end of Part 1 in this workbook, you will say, “I want to WIN!”

As you work through these simple lessons, let me encourage you to meditate earnestly on what they say. It is also imperative that you read and do *everything* that the devotionals urge, or you will short circuit your basic training. Answer every question in writing—even if it is simply copying words from the Bible or this workbook. Think of it as your drill sergeant demanding that you repeat your orders back to him. Most importantly, ask God to awaken in you a **DESIRE TO WIN** like you have never had before!

Day 1

The Holiness of Your God

“Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.”
(Habakkuk 1:13)

The Bible teaches us that our God is pure and holy. According to this verse, how much sin does He want to see in your life?

“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.”
(Hebrews 12:14)

What pursuit does God want from you? (In other words, what are you to be following after?)

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.” (Revelation 21:27)

How much sin is God prepared to allow into His heaven?

It is for this reason that we need Jesus to save and cleanse us from all sin by His blood. Our God will not tolerate sin in Heaven, and He does not wish to see it in our lives here on earth. His holy character ought to motivate us to pursue holiness; it ought to motivate us to win each spiritual battle.

Read Isaiah 6:1-7.

When Isaiah caught a glimpse of the holiness of God, he was ashamed of his own sin and cried out for mercy. What particular sin came to the forefront of his mind (v. 5)?

As you meditate on the holiness of your God and see your own shortcomings, what sin comes to your mind as something that God wants you to deal with?

Read 1 John 1:9.

Confess the sin you have just acknowledged, and experience His promised cleansing.

Day 2

The Ruin in Defeat

If we don't have a desire to win our spiritual battles, we will probably experience defeat. But do we understand how serious defeat can be?

Read Proverbs 1:20-33.

In this passage, the Lord personifies wisdom as a woman who cries out in the streets, calling to all who pass by, begging them to listen. But sadly, it seems many ignore her pleadings. List the words describing their refusal to hear (vv. 24-25):

As a result, Wisdom warns that they will experience ruin in their personal lives (vv. 26-32). It could come in different forms: a ruined marriage, ruined health, ruined business, ruined testimony, ruined children, etc. What must you do if you wish to avoid that ruin (v. 33)?

Where is that wisdom to be found (v. 29b; see also Proverbs 1:7)?

Have you been listening to the Lord's wisdom recently?

By attending church?	YES	NO		
By reading your Bible?	YES	NO		
By yielding to the inner voice of the Spirit?	YES	NO		

Victory can only be achieved by hearing and obeying God's wisdom. If you reject it, you can expect ruin. Which do you choose?

Circle your choice: RUIN VICTORY

And understand that to choose victory means you must choose to listen to God's wisdom.

Day 3

The Death of Christ

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2:24)

Jesus Christ took your sin upon Himself and then died in your place at Calvary. Have you meditated upon that lately? Have you thought about the pain, agony, and suffering that your Lord endured for you?

Read John 19:1-30.

The story of Christ's death is so familiar to us that we are often calloused to the tortures that He endured. This kind-hearted man, who had done nothing wrong, was shamed, mocked, beaten, and finally crucified.

"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." (Isaiah 50:6)

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not." (Isaiah 53:3)

But His suffering and death was not a martyrdom. He died as a sacrifice.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." (John 1:29)

The greatest agony of our Savior was bearing our sin in His sinless body and thereby being separated from the Father.

"And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, ... My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Jesus suffered all of this so that you could win the war! Think on that today. Let it spur you on to personal victory.

Day 4

The Grace of God

Grace is a popular topic, but do we really understand what it is? A common definition is “unmerited (undeserved) favor.” That is true, but before we can really appreciate God’s grace, we must see how truly undeserving we are.

Simply put, our problem is sin.

“For the wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23a)

What do you deserve because of your sin? _____

The Bible also calls this the “second death” (Revelation 21:8), which is hell. Because of our sin, we deserve hell—nothing better. On the line below, write: “I deserve hell.”

Such an admission doesn’t make you feel good, does it? But that was our real state, and no amount of good works could change it. That’s where God’s grace comes in.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

When you put your faith in Jesus Christ, God bestowed His favor (grace) on you, saving you and giving you a home in heaven. You didn’t deserve these gifts; they came by grace.

Now, read Titus 2:11-12.

God’s grace has appeared not only to save you but also to teach you how to live a godly life. Think about where you would be today without God’s grace and where you would be heading after death. If God had not interjected His grace into your life, you would have no motivation for godliness. The absence of grace would encourage continuing in sin; therefore, the presence of God’s grace should motivate you to turn your back on “ungodliness and worldly lusts” and fight for victory in your spiritual battles. God’s grace is amazing! Let that grace propel you towards a life lived for God.

Day 5

Your Claim on Christ

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” (2 Timothy 2:19)

There are many people today who claim to be a follower of Christ; they call themselves “Christians.” But to take that title to oneself means that you are naming the name of Christ. The verse above assures us that God knows those who are truly His, and those who are truly His ought to demonstrate it by the way they live, particularly by departing from iniquity.

“Who [Christ] did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.” (1 Peter 2:22)

Jesus Christ lived a sinless life. He was “holy, harmless, undefiled, [and] separate from sinners” (Hebrews 7:26). He was “in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). If you are His follower, then this should be the life for which you are striving.

You will not be sinless on this side of eternity, but as someone has once said, “You should sin *less*.” It ought to be part of your daily life to win the victory over temptation. If Christ is your example, you ought to be imitating Him by pursuing holy living.

Answer the following questions. Most require a simple “yes” or “no,” but fill in every blank.

Do you name the name of Christ? _____

Did you actively try to depart from iniquity yesterday? _____

What temptation do you expect to meet today or tomorrow that will create a struggle within you for holiness? _____

Do you want to win in that struggle? _____

You must strive for victory to be true to the name of Christ!

Day 6

The Return of Christ

“And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.”
(1 John 2:28)

Did your mother ever speak those ominous words to you: “Wait until your father gets home”? You probably heard them because of something you did *wrong*; they were meant to instill fear in you. They were meant to make you think about what you had done. They certainly did not make your father’s coming a happy one on that day.

The Bible affirms that Jesus Christ is coming back for us (John 14:3). There is no question that that ought to be a happy occasion. In fact, Paul refers to it as the “blessed hope” of the church (Titus 2:13).

Read the words of Jesus in Revelation 22:12. These are among His last recorded words to His followers.

Jesus comes to reward you according to your works. In 1 John 2:28 (above), the Apostle John cautions that we do not want to be ashamed when Jesus returns. In the next verse, he declares, “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him” (v. 29).

The coming of Christ should awaken a desire for righteousness within you. It should make you want to win the war against sin. It should motivate you to abide in Christ and His righteousness so that you will not be ashamed at His coming.

What if Christ returned today? Would you feel confidence or shame? _____

If there is something you are ashamed of, name it.

Now, confess it, and ask God to give you victory for Jesus’ sake. *Read Proverbs 28:3.*

Day 7

The Pleasure of God

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”
(Matthew 3:16-17)

Jesus enjoyed the constant smile of His Father upon His life and ministry.

“And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.” (John 8:29)

Jesus enjoyed God’s pleasure because He sought always to please Him. Only once did the Father have to turn away from His Son, and even in that, it was because the Son was doing the will of His Father—paying the price of man’s sin.

Do you long to have the pleasure of God on your life? _____

Read Jesus’ words in John 15:9-11.

Jesus also said, “If ye love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). Here is a truth that is often neglected: **love and obedience are brothers**. They go hand-in-hand. True love obeys, and true obedience stems from love.

Do you love God? _____

Then, foster that love so that it will grow into full obedience, doing the things that please God. Then shall you know the smile of God upon your life.

“And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.”
(Mark 12:29-30)

Love God today by your actions!

Basic Training Workbook

PART 2 – GAINING YOUR STRENGTH

Introduction

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”
(Ephesians 6:10)

As Paul describes basic training for spiritual warfare, he defines a soldier’s necessary strength. These words are so familiar to us that they almost have become a cliché, but it is a serious mistake to overlook them.

No soldier will survive long in war who is not strong and fit. That is why men and women in the armed forces must go through some rigorous physical training. They must gain their strength. Often times, such training is called “conditioning.” The body is conditioned through physical exercise for the ruggedness of the battlefield.

As a soldier of Christ fighting a spiritual battle, you must also gain strength, but Paul makes it clear that this strength is not found in the flesh (obtained by *physical* conditioning). This strength is found in the Lord; it is a *spiritual* strength. Gaining *spiritual* strength requires *spiritual* conditioning.

The following lessons are designed to help you gain your strength from the Lord for battle. As with the first part, let me encourage you to meditate earnestly on what they teach. Read and do *everything* that the devotionals urge. This is all part of conditioning. If you were training to run a marathon and your coach required you to put in so much time on the track and at the gym, would you be ready for the big run if you did only half of what he said? Probably not!

“For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”
(1 Timothy 4:8)

It’s time for some spiritual strength building. Don’t be afraid to “pump on these irons” until the muscles hurt!

Day 8

The Right Source

“Since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you still belonged to it, do you submit to its rules: ‘Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!’ These are all destined to perish with use, because they are based on human commands and teachings. Such regulations indeed have an appearance of wisdom, with their self-imposed worship, their false humility, and their harsh treatment of the body, but they lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence.”
(Colossians 2:20-23, NIV)

It is so easy to rely on fleshly strength when dealing with fleshly temptations. This can include:

- ❖ Increasing your resolve or willpower to do better
- ❖ Creating self-imposed rules to keep you from being tempted or to help you overcome temptation

For example, if you have a problem with anger, you might *resolve* to control your temper and then create a *new rule* for yourself, “When I start to feel angry, I will count to 10.”

There is nothing inherently wrong with using such a tactic in spiritual battle, but if *that* is what you are *relying* upon, you will eventually fail.

“For the weapons of our warfare are not [fleshly], but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.”

(2 Corinthians 10:4)

Spiritual battles must be fought with spiritual weapons and in spiritual strength. Relying solely on man-made rules to curb the desires of flesh are sure to fail (Col. 2:22). So while there is nothing wrong with strengthening your willpower or establishing certain standards (rules) to live by, you cannot rely on them for victory. You must gain your strength from the Lord.

Think of a recent time you gave in to temptation. Certainly, you lacked spiritual strength. Why do you think that was so? Did you rely on fleshly strength rather than God’s strength? Did you allow yourself to become so enamored by the temptation that you lost sight of God? Write your thoughts.

Day 9

Importance of Faith

“But without faith it is impossible to please [God]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”
(Hebrews 11:6)

Read the first phrase of the above verse again. Is there any way in which you can please God without faith? _____

The word “impossible” is a strong term. The underlying Greek word means literally “**without power**” or “**without strength**.” Here is the first lesson that you must learn in gaining your strength for spiritual battle. Write it as an equation:

WITHOUT FAITH = WITHOUT _____

“And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient? So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.”
(Hebrews 3:17-19, ESV)

The first generation of Israelites who came out of Egypt were not allowed to enter the Promised Land. The writer of Hebrews says that God was angry with them because they had sinned. They had been disobedient. But according to verse 19, what was the bottom line—the ultimate cause of their rebellion?

Unbelief is the ultimate cause of all sin. Adam and Eve disobeyed by eating the fruit, and when you get right down to the reason, it was because they failed to believe God. They believed the lie of the devil instead.

When you worry, it is because you don’t trust (believe) God to take care of you. When you become angry, it is because you don’t believe that the bad circumstance is for your good. This thought process may be new to you, but it is good for you to learn. Think of a spiritual battle you lost recently. Now, trace it back to your unbelief. How did you fail to exercise faith?

Day 10

Relying on God’s Wisdom

Read Proverbs 3:5-8

Another way of describing *faith* or *trust* in God is **reliance**—relying on God. Solomon assures us that we need to rely completely on God. We know this is true for salvation; we cannot save ourselves. We must put our faith completely in Jesus Christ; only He can save us (cf. Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

But the believer is not just *saved* by faith; he must *live* by faith. We need to rely upon God completely in *all* aspects of our lives, including our own thinking. Solomon adds, “Lean not unto thine own understanding.” The man who is relying on God recognizes that God’s wisdom alone is safe. He does not trust his own wisdom.

So far, you are probably agreeing with me, but sadly there is sometimes a disconnect in our lives. We say, “God knows best,” but we live differently. We live as if we know best. The man who lives by his own thinking is “wise in his own eyes.” That means that he chooses his own knowledge over God’s.

Have you ever sat through a sermon, read a Christian book, or received biblical counsel and your thought was, “But you just don’t understand my circumstance”? Or did you respond, “That won’t work”? _____

If you did that, you were being wise in your own eyes and leaning on your own understanding rather than trusting God. Faith in God is not tested in the easy times but the hard times. You must learn to rely on God’s wisdom even when it doesn’t seem right, even when you think it won’t work.

Identify an area in your life in which you have trouble trusting God’s wisdom. Write it below, and then ask God to give you more faith.

Day 11

Relying on God’s Provision

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart...Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. (Proverbs 3:5a, 9-10)

The Lord knows that we are material creatures living in a material world who must have certain material provisions if we are going to survive. Or to put it another way, you have to eat. You have to be clothed. You need a job. And whether you like it or not, you will need money to live.

But the problem with money is that it can lure us away from God, and the Lord doesn’t want us trusting in money or our own ability to get it. He wants us to trust *Him* for our needs.

Therefore, one test of your reliance on God is what you do with your money. Do you honor Him with it? That includes many things. Consider these by answering each one:

- Do you earn your money honestly? YES NO
- Are your business dealings always honest? YES NO
- Do you give the Lord His tithe (tenth)? YES NO
- Do you help others less fortunate than you? YES NO

Many people have the idea: “What I do with my money is my own business!” But the Lord doesn’t see it that way. The Lord says, “What you do with your money is a reflection of your heart.”

“For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matthew 6:21)

So where is your true treasure today? On what are you really relying? If you are relying on the Lord, you know you can be honest; you do not need to be dishonest to meet your needs. If you are relying on God, you know you can tithe because you are confident that God can meet your needs even with less money than you had before you tithed. This is a faith exercise, and gaining strength from the Lord requires exercising the “faith muscle” in specific ways!

Day 12

Accepting God’s Discipline

“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart...My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.” (Proverbs 3:5a, 11-12)

Solomon provides another test of our complete trust in the Lord: how do we accept His correction? The Bible acknowledges that it is not enjoyable to be corrected.

“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous.” (Hebrews 12:11a)

Our trust in the Lord is demonstrated by the way we accept it.

First, you must believe that it springs from God’s love for you: “whom the LORD loveth he correcteth.” Therefore, you should not doubt God’s love when going through a time of chastening.

Secondly, you need to recognize that God does it for your good.

“Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” (Hebrews 12:11)

According to this verse, what good is God trying to work in you by His discipline? _____

Finally, you must learn from it. You must change your ways—forsake your sin and follow righteousness.

“Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.” (Hebrews 12:12-13)

How well do you accept God’s correction? Using a scale with 1 as the *least likely* and 5 as the *mostly likely* for you, honestly evaluate yourself in each area:

- Believe in His love 1 2 3 4 5
- Believe the trial is for your good 1 2 3 4 5
- Change your ways 1 2 3 4 5

Day 13

Receiving Grace

“And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”
(2 Corinthians 12:9)

This is a remarkable verse when you think about it. Not only did the Lord Jesus tell Paul that His grace was sufficient for him (enough no matter what circumstance he had to face), but Jesus equated His **grace** with **strength**. Write that equation:

GOD’S GRACE = _____

That means that one of the ways in which you will receive God’s strength for battle will be in the receiving of His grace. That leads us to an important question: what must you do to receive God’s grace?

Read James 4:6.

According to this verse, whom does God resist? _____

Do you think the proud will receive grace if he continues in his pride? _____

To whom does God give His grace? _____

“God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”
(1 Peter 5:5b-6)

Humbly receiving God’s grace means that you acknowledge that you cannot fight your battle alone; you need His help. Humbly receiving God’s grace means that you recognize your lowliness before God and your utter dependence upon Him.

Jesus said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches...without me ye can do nothing.”
(John 15:5)

Are you ready to receive God’s grace? Write a prayer of humility below, asking God for His gracious strength.

Day 14

Yielding to the Spirit

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”
(Galatians 5:16)

If you have trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have the Holy Spirit living within you. But that does not mean that you will automatically obey God. In fact, what it means is that you are assured of a struggle within.

“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”
(Galatians 5:17)

Therefore, you must CHOOSE to yield to the Spirit of God. That’s what Paul means when he says, “Walk in the Spirit.” To say “Yes” to God’s Spirit means that you must often say “No” to your flesh.

Jesus said “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.”
(Luke 9:23)

Any good soldier will tell you that self-denial is critical, and it is usually a very significant aspect of basic training. It is also true for your spiritual basic training. Did you notice the important word that Jesus inserted? DAILY. Self-denial is a daily choice; it will be a daily struggle.

Name an area in your life in which you are having trouble denying self and yielding to the Spirit. _____

Possible Examples: reading Bible faithfully, attending church regularly, controlling your temper, guarding your words, controlling your thoughts

Now, develop a *specific* plan to help you yield to the Spirit of God in that area. Be explicit; you must be able to put it into action. This will take some prayerful thought. If you need help, ask your pastor or a mature Christian friend.

Example: I will read my Bible before I allow myself to eat breakfast.

Basic Training Workbook

PART 3 – RESISTING THE ENEMY

Introduction

“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.” (2 Corinthians 2:11)

“So that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.” (2 Corinthians 2:11, ESV)

When you are in combat with an enemy, it is helpful to know the types of tactics he may use. If you are not aware of his tactics, you may be taken by surprise. Such an understanding is also important in spiritual combat. In the above verse, Paul acknowledges that if we are not ignorant of Satan’s devices, he will not get the advantage on us easily.

The devil is a devious foe. Jesus called him a liar—the “father of lies,” in fact (John 8:44). It is very important that you have an understanding of how he works so that you will not be “outwitted” by him. Understanding the enemy is part of your basic training for spiritual warfare, and the Bible gives us ample instruction.

For the next four lessons, you will be introduced to four “devices” (schemes) that the devil often uses in warfare. Surely, you have already experienced these tactics, but it will help you to identify them in the Scriptures.

The last three lessons of this section will help you plant your feet firmly on your spiritual ground so that you can resist your enemy. You must carry out the orders of the Commander-in-Chief. He said you need to STAND!

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” (Ephesians 6:13)

Day 15

The Devil’s Wiles

“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” (Ephesians 6:11)

The word translated “wiles” comes from a Greek word speaking about deceit, craftiness, and trickery. In other words, behind all of the devil’s attacks, you can expect lies and deception.

Read Genesis 3:1-6.

What form did Satan assume to tempt Eve? (v. 1) _____

You may wonder why Eve didn’t run when she saw the serpent, but you must remember that this happened *before* any animal was a danger to man. It is also possible that the serpent was a very beautiful creature. He may have been pleasant to look upon. The point that must be remembered is that Satan did not appear as himself but as something non-threatening and possibly beautiful.

Name a temptation in which the devil uses this tactic today—where sin appears beautiful and non-threatening. _____

In Genesis 3:1, Satan asked Eve a question. *Read Genesis 2:16-17* (the actual command of God). What subtle deception did Satan introduce in his question?

In verses 4-5, Satan speaks to Eve a second time. This statement is an outright lie (compare Genesis 2:17). What was the lie?

You need to realize that the devil is deceitful. He will not tell you the truth nor show himself as he really is. Think back to a recent temptation and identify his deception.

Day 16

The Devil's Accusations

"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his

Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." (Revelation 12:10)

Satan is also called the "accuser of the brethren." In fact, the word "devil" means slanderer or false accuser. And that's exactly what Satan does.

Read Job 1:1-11.

What was God's assessment of Job's life (v. 8)? _____

What was Satan's accusation against Job (vv. 9-11)? _____

Whose opinion was correct? _____

Satan is a liar, and as a liar, he is a false accuser. He accuses us before God of sin that we did and did not commit.

Read 1 John 1:9; 2:1-2.

If we have trusted in Jesus Christ as our Savior, is Satan right to accuse us of sin? _____

Satan will also accuse your own heart of your past sins—sins that have been washed away by the blood of Christ. Since Jesus has forgiven you of those sins, and since God does not listen to the devil's accusations against you, should you listen to the devil's accusations? _____

Finally, Satan will accuse God to you. He will try to tell you that God has wronged you. He will try to tell you that God is withholding something good from you (e.g., his words to Eve, Genesis 3:5). Will he tell you the truth about God? _____

Identify an incident in your life in which you felt the devil's lying accusations. _____

Day 17

The Devil's Sifting

Read Luke 22:31.

Jesus was speaking directly to Peter, but His words were meant for all the disciples (notice the plural "you"). Satan had asked permission to "sift" them. Farmers sifted their grain after the harvest to help separate the kernel from the chaff. It involved shaking the grain vigorously in a sieve—possibly a container with a screen or rough board.

The picture here is that the disciples would be violently shaken by the devil that night. Their faith would be put to the severest test of all. Peter would be sifted the hardest. These men, who all vowed that they would willingly die with Jesus, became cowards in the Garden of Gethsemane and ran for their lives. Peter actually denied the Lord three times out of fear. And the devil probably laughed.

Read Luke 22:32.

What did Jesus say He had already done for Peter? _____
Jesus knew Peter would fall (v. 34), but in spite of that fall, He prayed that Peter's faith would not _____ (v. 32).

The devil will sift every believer from time to time. He will shake you in hopes of toppling your faith. Name a time in your life when he sifted you. _____

Maybe you like Peter stumbled. Maybe your faith wavered for a time. But we must not let Satan get the "last laugh." Peter stumbled. Peter wavered. But Peter's faith did not ultimately fail. The prayer of Jesus was answered, and Peter came out stronger. In fact, Peter one day fearlessly died for his Lord.

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:7)

If you are being sifted today, don't lose heart. Christ has prayed for you and desires to bring you forth as gold! Keep trusting!

Day 18

The Devil's Devouring

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." (1 Peter 5:8)

How would you feel if you were alone on the African Savannah being stalked by a hungry lion? How alert would you be if you heard his roar or, worse, felt him breathing down your neck? None of us would want to be caught unarmed and face-to-face with a wild lion.

Peter describes Satan as a lion—a roaring lion. That speaks of ferocity. It creates a picture of serious danger. And there is great danger because Peter says that he walks about looking for someone to "devour." That word carries the idea of swallowing up. Do you understand the picture? The devil is fierce. He is stalking you. He is intent on devouring you completely!

Yet, the situation is not hopeless if you take the right actions. At the beginning of the verse, Peter calls you to be...

_____ and _____

Sober means "to be calm in spirit." This is not a time to panic, which usually leads to foolish acts. *Vigilant* means "to give strict attention to, to be cautious or watchful." In other words, because the devil is prowling, we need to remain calm and self-controlled while we are cautiously watching.

When temptation comes to you, how are you more likely to respond? SELF-CONTROLLED GIVING IN

When trials come upon you, how are you more likely to respond? WORRIED PANIC CALM FAITH

When watching TV, which describes your typical attitude?
AWARE OF SIN DISENGAGED SPIRITUALLY

When you got up this morning, did you begin your day remembering that the devil was prowling for you? _____

Read James 4:7. What must you do to the devil? _____

Name a specific area in which you need to develop more sober vigilance. _____

Day 19

Standing Firm

10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

14 Stand therefore... (Ephesians 6:10-14a)

In the passage of Scripture above, underline the four occurrences of the word "stand." (HINT: One of them is in a compound word in verse 13.)

Since the Lord stated this so many times in a short amount of verses, do you think He considers this important? _____

These are our military orders. You have been called to stand. The Lord knows that the devil is going to come after you. He knows that the devil is going to shoot at you. But you must stand firm.

The word "withstand" (v. 13) means "to stand against" or "resist." That means that your mindset must be that you are not going to give in to the devil or back down. Is that the way you face every day?

Did you begin this day with a determination that you were going to stand? YES NO DIDN'T THINK ABOUT IT

Did you go to work yesterday or today with that determination?
YES NO DIDN'T THINK ABOUT IT

What do you need to change in your thinking or actions to prepare you to stand firm every day?

Day 20

Standing Ready

“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”
(Ephesians 6:13)

One hot summer day, a little boy asked his mother if he could walk down to the lake. She said that he could but told him he was not allowed to go swimming in the lake. An hour later, his mother came by and found him in the water. “I thought I told you not to swim in that lake,” she scolded. “I didn’t mean to,” the little boy said, trying to excuse himself. But the mother was smarter than that. “If you didn’t mean to go swimming, why did you bring your swimsuit along?” The boy replied, “Just in case I got tempted.”

So many times, we are like that little boy. We send “invitations to temptation” rather than taking all necessary precautions to avoid it. In Ephesians 6:13, Paul said that before you are ready to stand firm, you should have done all. That verb means “to work out to results,” and with the addition of “all,” he means you need to do whatever is necessary to assure your victory.

Read Matthew 5:27-30.

Obviously, Jesus is not teaching self-mutilation in these verses. By using a type of exaggeration, he illustrates a critical step for gaining victory over sin. Sometimes you must engage in radical amputation; you must eliminate the thing in your life that causes you to stumble.

Think of your most stubborn sin habit—the one that trips you up the most. What precautions should you take to help you stand the next time that temptation comes?

Examples: eliminate a bad TV show, give up a friend who is a bad influence, spend less time on the computer, set up “Parental Controls” for your computer, ask a godly friend to keep you accountable.

Day 21

Standing Humble

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”
(Proverbs 16:18)

Standing against the devil is important, but you must stand humble. Pride is a sure way to fall. Beware of pride; guard your heart against it. It is one of the devil’s more subtle tactics.

Pride can creep into your heart when you have been victorious. You begin to think you’re doing well; you say, “I can handle this temptation.” WHAM! You’re down again. Why? Pride.

“Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”
(1 Corinthians 10:12)

Pride can creep into your heart when you hear of another person’s fall. You say to yourself, “I would never do a thing like that.” WHAM! You may not have done his sin, but you fell into your own.

“For I say...to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly.”(Romans 12:3)

And pride can creep into your heart in a myriad of other ways, too. You must always be on your guard against it. It was the sin of the devil, so he knows how to use it against you.

How are you most tempted with pride?

The only cure for pride is proper humility before God.

“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time.”
(1 Peter 5:6)

“He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”
(Micah 6:8)

Right now, confess any pride in your heart and humble yourself before the Lord again.

Basic Training Workbook

PART 4 – PUTTING ON YOUR ARMOR

Introduction

*“Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day.”
(Ephesians 6:13a)*

Whether you like it or not, the evil day is upon you. The enemy is out to get you, and he is a powerful foe.

*“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.”
(Ephesians 6:12)*

This is not a children’s game. This is war—spiritual war. So you had better be armed for battle.

The Lord does not leave us in the dark about the pieces of armor that we need. He has clearly defined them for us. They are not hard to understand either. We need truth, righteousness, the Gospel, faith, salvation, God’s Word, and prayer. The struggle for most of us is found in the command in Ephesians 6:11: “*put on* the whole armour of God.” This final book is designed to help you *put on* each piece of armor.

If you want to be successful at shooting a gun, you must do some target practicing. Shooting at a target requires being precise and specific. Likewise, if the pieces of your armor are going to be effective for you in your spiritual battle, you must get specific in applying them. That will require you to do study beyond this workbook. But it will be well worth your investment.

“And having done all, to stand.” (Ephesians 6:13b)

Day 22

The Belt of Truth

*“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth”
(Ephesians 6:14a)*

The Roman soldier wore a short tunic under his armor and next to his body. To prevent this garment from getting in the way, he strapped a belt around his waist. This belt also provided a place for him to hang his sword when not in use. After dressing himself with his tunic, the belt would have been the first piece of armor that he put on. Paul says that you need to be belted with truth.

Read John 8:44. Jesus is speaking about the devil. Why is it necessary for you to have a good hold on truth in spiritual warfare? _____

Read John 14:6. In whom will you find truth?

Read John 17:17. Where can you learn truth?

According to Philippians 4:8, what should this truth be affecting in our lives? (Hint: Look for the verb in the last four words of the verse.) _____

Evaluate your thinking: Do you know God’s truth about:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----|----|----------|
| ➤ Salvation | YES | NO | NOT SURE |
| ➤ Temptation | YES | NO | NOT SURE |
| ➤ The church | YES | NO | NOT SURE |
| ➤ Child rearing | YES | NO | NOT SURE |
| ➤ Using money | YES | NO | NOT SURE |
| ➤ Relationships | YES | NO | NOT SURE |

Look at the areas in which you answered “No” or “Not sure.” Star one or two of those areas above that you intend to study further in God’s Word in order to learn God’s truth. (Get help from your pastor or a mature Christian, if necessary.)

Day 23

The Breastplate of Righteousness

“and having on the breastplate of righteousness” (Ephesians 6:14b)

The breastplate of the Roman soldier was usually a piece of metal that was worn to protect everything between the shoulders and the hips. Typically, it was attached to the belt, which probably kept it in place and prevented it from bouncing around when marching and fighting.

The righteousness that Paul is referring to is sometimes called *sanctification*—that process in our lives where we are growing to be more like Christ.

According to 1 Thessalonians 4:3, sanctification is the _____ of God.

Putting on the breastplate of righteousness involves:

➤ **Commitment**

“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” (Psalm 40:8)

Be honest with yourself, are you committed to living a righteous life? _____

➤ **Effort**

Read 1 Timothy 4:7. If you are going to pursue godliness, what kind of effort is it going to take?

Read Ephesians 5:26. What does God use most often to sanctify us? _____

If gaining righteousness takes exercise and if growing righteousness in us requires God’s Word, you need a daily time in God’s Word.

❖ Do you spend time in the Bible every day? _____

❖ If not, what could you change in your schedule to ensure you can be in God’s Word every day? _____

Day 24

The Shoes of the Gospel

“And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” (Ephesians 6:15)

Roman soldiers wore sandals that were thickly studded with hobnails, which probably enabled them to stand their ground and get their traction as they marched forward. Paul is urging us to stand and march forward with the Gospel. That requires a “preparation” (readiness).

Read 1 Peter 3:15. What should you be ready always to do?

Are you ready to share your faith?

➤ Could you explain to someone how he or she can be saved? _____

➤ Do you ever give out Gospel tracts? _____

➤ When was the last time you witnessed to someone?

➤ Does your lifestyle reflect the Gospel that you believe?

Witnessing doesn’t always require going through the full plan of salvation. Sometimes it is only a short word of testimony. (For example: “Let me tell you what God did for me yesterday.”) But if you are going to have the Gospel “strapped on,” you must be able to explain it. Below is a simple, easy-to-learn plan. You can memorize it, or write the references down in the front of your Bible.

The Romans Road

Romans 3:23—Everyone is a sinner; he has fallen short of God’s standard of perfection.

Romans 6:23—The penalty for sin is eternal death (Hell).

Romans 5:8—God loved us enough to send Jesus to die in our place.

Romans 10:9—God’s salvation is received through faith in Christ.

Romans 10:13—Anyone can be saved.

Day 25

The Shield of Faith

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.” (Ephesians 6:16)

The Roman soldier in Paul’s day carried a large, door-shaped shield into battle (probably about 4 x 2½ ft.). It was built with an iron frame and covered with leather. Sometimes the leather was soaked in water to help extinguish the flaming arrows shot by an enemy. Paul says faith is the Christian’s shield.

“For we walk by faith, not by sight.” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

The world lives by “sight.” It makes its decisions according to what it sees and feels. It decides its values according to what it sees. We are called to live by faith (Hebrews 10:38). And God has created faith in such a way that it can give us victory (1 John 5:4). The devil will shoot his flaming arrows at you, but your faith can put them out. That’s amazing, but it’s true!

Arrows of Discouragement

Faith clings to the promises in God’s Word.

- Name something that the devil uses to discourage you.

- What promise could you claim when he shoots that dart at you again? _____

Arrows of Temptation

Faith clings to the righteousness of God’s Word.

- Name a temptation the devil uses to trip you with often.

- What does the Bible say about that sin? _____

Arrows of Doubt

Faith clings to the truth of God’s Word.

- Name a doubt that the devil often throws at you.

- What does God say about it? _____

Your faith must cling to God’s Word!

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17)

Day 26

The Helmet of Salvation

“And take the helmet of salvation” (Ephesians 6:17a)

The helmets of Roman soldiers were made of bronze. Inside they were lined with felt or sponge in order for the soldier to carry the helmet’s heavy weight. Nothing short of an axe or heavy hammer could pierce the helmet; therefore, it provided a necessary protection for one’s head.

According to Ephesians 2:8-9, can we be saved by works? _____

Read Philippians 2:12. Of course, Paul is not telling us that we must work for our salvation. Rather, he is saying that *after* we are saved, we need to follow with good works (see also James 2:17 and Titus 2:14).

Putting on the helmet of salvation involves this present, daily aspect of salvation. You must have:

1. An assurance of your salvation

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” (1 John 5:13)

You can *know* that you have eternal life (salvation). Do you know beyond any doubt that you are saved? _____

If you struggle with this assurance, you will be an easy prey for the devil. You need to get it settled. Get counsel from your pastor or a mature Christian, if necessary.

2. A commitment to “new life living”

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Name one action/attitude of your “old life” that you no longer do or have. _____

Name one action/attitude that you need to get rid of because of your new life in Christ. _____

“and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”
(Ephesians 6:17b)

The sword Paul is referring to is the short Roman sword. It was the primary weapon for a soldier in hand-to-hand combat. Your primary spiritual weapon is the “sword of the Spirit”—that is, the sword that comes from the Spirit. Paul further identifies it as **the word of God**.

“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
(Hebrews 4:12)

Read Psalm 119:9 and 11. From what can God’s Word protect you? _____

Special Study: The Temptation of Jesus

Read Matthew 4:1-11.

- ❖ Did the devil tempt Jesus when He was physically strong or weak (v. 2)? _____
- ❖ Did Jesus give into any of the devil’s temptations? _____
- ❖ When Jesus resisted him the first time, did the devil quit attacking? _____
- ❖ How did Jesus deal with each temptation (vv. 4, 7, 10)? _____
- ❖ How did the Bible verses that Jesus quoted relate to the temptations? _____

What is the most troublesome sin in your life? _____

Find a verse in the Bible that addresses that temptation. (You may need a concordance or topical book.) Write it out below and memorize it so you can use it against the devil next time!

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”
(Ephesians 6:18)

Prayer is just as much a part of spiritual warfare as any piece in our armor. Prayer can be likened unto staying in touch with “Headquarters.”

According to the verse above:

- When should you be in the attitude of prayer? _____
- How much perseverance will it take? _____
- For whom should you especially be praying? _____

Now, compare that verse with your prayer life.

- Do you always maintain an attitude of prayer? _____
- Have your prayers recently been persevering or growing slack? _____
- Do your prayers focus more on others or yourself? _____

Read Ephesians 6:19-20. Paul specifically requested prayer for himself, as a preacher of God’s truth. So while all believers need prayer, we must especially pray for those in ministry. They are on the front lines.

Create your prayer list:

- Your pastor: _____
- A missionary: _____
Their place of service: _____
- A family member who needs to be saved: _____
- Someone God has laid on your heart: _____
- Other needs: _____
- _____
- _____
- _____