

MYTHBUSTERS

The Devil Made Me Do It • November 29, 2009

ICEBREAKER:

Take some time to get to know each other with some open sharing:

- Name a unique or quirky habit of yours.
- If you had to describe yourself using three words, it would be...?
- If someone made a movie of your life would it be a drama, a comedy, a romantic-comedy, action film or science fiction?

INTRODUCTION:

Define spiritual warfare. What is it? What outward evidence can you attribute to the reality of spiritual warfare?

Do you tend to err in overemphasizing or underemphasizing the devil's existence? What are the dangers of landing on either extreme?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. **Read Ephesians 6:10-13.** In what way is the Christian life like a battle? What does it mean to be in spiritual warfare? Where is the battle fought? Why is it important to know your enemy? How has Christ already won the victory over the devil?
2. **Read Ephesians 6:13-18.** Why do you think the Apostle Paul used the parts of a Roman soldier's armor to explain spiritual warfare? What does wearing the armor of God enable us to do? (vs.13)

Each piece of armor is descriptive of what Christ has already accomplished for us. In your own words, describe the truth represented by each piece of armor?

Are you missing or under using any pieces of armor? How does this make you vulnerable to the enemy?

What role does God's Word play in spiritual warfare? (17) What is the only offensive piece of armor mentioned?

Jesus fought off the devil by quoting Scripture three times in Matthew 4:1-11. Read the story. How is the enemy tempting you or trying to lure you away from dependence on Christ? What Scriptures are you using to fight the enemy today?

3. Read James 4:6-8. What steps do you need to take to defeat the deceptive attacks of the devil? Who is behind the pride that shows up in our thoughts and attitudes? Why is humility important when resisting the devil? How are you learning to resist the devil? In what areas do you need to humble your self?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

1. In what areas of your life are you vulnerable to the enemy's attack? What pieces of the armor do you need to engage to fight the devil?
2. What personal sins have made you vulnerable to Satan's attack? Are you ready to come clean with God so that God's power can be more available to protect you?
3. What specifically will you do to resist the devil this week?
4. How might you use prayer against the schemes of the devil? What Scriptures might you use to defend yourself against those vulnerable areas where Satan attacks you most?
5. Read over the attached sheet on preparing for battle. You might want to consider using this for your personal devotions each day in preparation for defending yourself against the schemes of Satan.
6. **My very next step is to....**

THINK ABOUT IT (Something to memorize or chew on)

James 4:6-8 (NIV) *But God gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

PREPARING FOR BATTLE

Start each day by spending time with the Lord, putting on each piece of armor (Eph 6:11-18). As you think through the significance of each truth, agree with God (out loud). By doing this you are renewing your mind and standing firm in your faith; faith in what God has done and what He promises to do, for you and through you. The following is an example:

Good morning, Lord. Thank you for a new day and the adventure that awaits me. I surrender my day to you and rest in your promises, which assure me of victory, as I depend on you. To prepare myself for the battle ahead, I put on the spiritual armor (in my thoughts and beliefs) you have given me. Today, I exercise the power and authority that is mine in Christ to defeat the schemes of the devil. I trust your Holy Spirit to give me discernment to recognize Satan's temptations, his attacks and the lies he presents to my mind.

By faith I put on the BELT OF TRUTH.

The TRUTH about You, Father—You are infinitely wise, strong and loving. You are good all the time and you have always loved me. You knew me and chose me before you created the world. You sent Your Son to rescue me from darkness and death. You have made me your child and given me the privilege of sharing your love with others. Thank you for loving me even when I was still a sinner. I yield my life to You because You alone are worthy of my trust and worship.

The TRUTH about You, Jesus — You are my hero. You have rescued me from the hand of the enemy, forgiven all my sins and redeemed my life. At the cross You paid the price for *all* my sins and by this you defeated Satan and abolished death. Now, You are alive in me and the devil can never separate me from You again. I give you freedom to do *with* me or *through* me anything that will bring honor and glory to You. Thank you for making me a new person and giving me eternal life. I declare my dependence on you, today, and trust You to work all things for my good. Thank You that you will never leave me nor allow me to be tempted beyond what I am able to bear.

The Truth about You, Holy Spirit—You are my helper, counselor and teacher. You give me supernatural power and direct my steps. Apart from you, I can do nothing. I surrender my life to you (my time, my family, my finances, my job, my thoughts, etc.). Fill my soul today, renew my thoughts and give me clarity. Motivate and empower me to do the Father's will and to bring glory and honor to Jesus. I declare that my life is not about *me*, but about Christ *in* me. Allow me to reflect His character and love today with everyone I encounter. Holy Spirit, open my eyes to the spiritual battle going on all around me. Guide me and warn me when danger is near.

The TRUTH about me, — Lord, I am Your child, and nothing can separate me from Your love. Jesus, I live in You and You live in me. Thank You for giving me a new heart and spirit, which are good. I am a new person, a lover of God who still battles sin, Satan and the world system, every day. I choose, today, to walk by faith and I claim the victory over _____, victory which is already mine through Christ.

Lord, by faith, I put on the BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Thank you for making me righteous, holy and blameless in my spirit. I will guard my heart and my emotions from receiving any self-righteous thoughts or desires. Jesus, You are my righteousness. I put no confidence in my flesh. I will walk by faith, trusting in You to live through me. I will not allow my heart to attach itself to anything that is impure. I will not allow my emotions to rule in my decisions. I will set my thoughts on what is right and good and just. I will live today by what is true, not by what I feel.

Lord, this morning I put on the SANDALS OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE.

You have made me a peacemaker and a minister of reconciliation. I choose to pray for my enemies and forgive those who have sinned against me. I am available to You. Send me where You will. Guide me to those who need encouragement or physical help of some kind. Use me to resolve conflicts whenever they may arise. Make me a calming presence in every circumstance in which You place me. I will not be hurried or rushed, for my schedule is in Your hands. I will not leave a trail of tension or strife. I will leave tracks of peace and stability everywhere I go.

I now take up the SHIELD OF FAITH, Lord. My *faith* is in You and You alone. Apart from You, I can do nothing; with You, I can do all things. I choose to walk by faith and not by sight. With every temptation, You will make a way of escape. I will not be afraid of man or anxious about the future; for You are going with me throughout this day. Whatever I encounter, Your grace will be sufficient. When I am tempted, I will declare victory, out loud, ahead of time; for You have promised victory to those who walk in agreement with Your Word and purpose.

Lord, by faith, I am putting on the HELMET OF SALVATION.

Thank You for Your free gift of salvation and all its benefits. Through Your grace I have been blessed with every spiritual blessing. Because Satan bombards me day and night with lies, doubt and fear, I put on this helmet to protect my thoughts. I may feel the impact of his attacks, but nothing can separate me from You. I choose to stop every impure and negative thought at the door of my mind. I will take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ and I will dwell only on what is good and right and pleasing to You.

Last, I take up the SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, which is Your Word.

Thank You for the precious gift of Your Word. It is strong and powerful and able to defeat even the strongest of Satan's attacks. Your Word says that I am not under obligation to the flesh, to obey its lusts. Your Word says that He that is in me is greater than he that is in the world. Your Word says that I am dead to sin and alive to God. So, *by faith*, I take up the strong and powerful sword of the Spirit, which is able to: defend me in times of attack, comfort me in times of sorrow, teach me in times of meditation, and prevail against the enemy on behalf of others who need the TRUTH to set them free.

So, Lord, I go now, rejoicing that You have equipped me to defeat the devil and to reach out to others who are lost and dying. *May they see Jesus in me*, and may Satan and his hosts shudder as Your power is displayed in me. In Jesus' name I pray.

AMEN