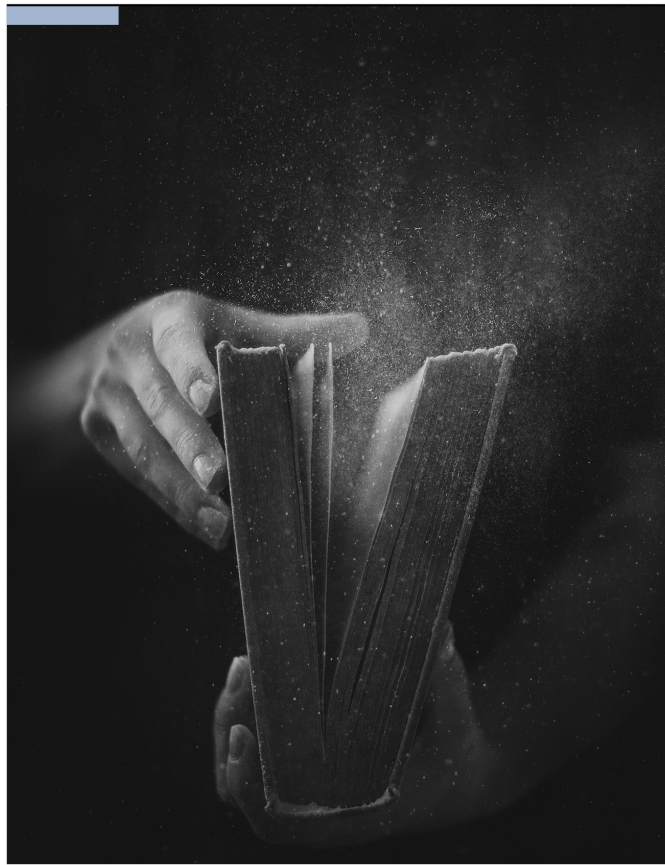


SESSION 2



A MAN AND HIS SWORD

1. The Fight

A. Every man is engaged in a lifelong spiritual battle.

Ephesians 6:11-12: “Put on the full armor of God, so that you can stand against the tactics of the devil. For our battle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world powers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”

B. The three battlefronts we face:

- The fight to grow with Jesus

Romans 13:14: “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.”

- The fight to overcome the flesh.

Galatians 5:16, 19-21: “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh ... Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing and things like these ...”

- The fight to overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:17, 21: “Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. ... Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good.”

C. No man, by himself, is able to win these fights.

Romans 7:18 (NLT): “And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. I want to do right, but I can’t.”

D. We need God for sure! But we also need a special weapon to fight with. God has given us His sword.

2. Getting to Know our “Sword”

A. Our sword is the Word of God.

Ephesians 6:17: “And take ... the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.”

B. The Holy Spirit inspired the word of God when it was written and applies it to our lives today.

2 Timothy 3:16: “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

C. Some amazing facts about the Bible.

- Written in three languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.
- Written across three continents: Africa, Asia and Europe.
- Written over a span of 1500 years.
- Written by forty different authors, many of whom lived centuries apart, in different cultures, in different countries, and in different settings.

- And yet, in spite of all the above, when the books they authored finally came together as One Book, it did so with what can only be described as with miraculous unity and purity! No contradictions. No errors. Telling ONE amazing story!
- Everything in the Bible points us to Jesus. The Old Testament prepares the world for Jesus. The Gospels declares Jesus to the world. The rest of the New Testament explains Jesus to the world.

D. Personal benefits the Bible offers.

- Feeding on it is key to experiencing real life.
Matthew 4:4: “Jesus answered and said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”
- Obeying it is key to experiencing God’s love.
1 John 2:5: “But if anyone obeys His Word, God’s love is truly made complete in Him.”
- Knowing it is key to experiencing freedom.
John 8:32: “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
- Following it is key to finding God’s will.
Psalm 119:105: “Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”
“If you are ignorant of God’s Word, you will always be ignorant of God’s will.”
– Billy Graham
- Reading it is key to having wisdom and joy.
Psalm 19:7-8: “The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart.”
“Within the covers of the Bible are the answers for all the problems men face.”
– Ronald Reagan
- Delighting in it is key to living a fruitful, prosperous life.
Psalm 1:1-3: “Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.”

3. Drawing Our Sword

- A. We need to understand the purposes of the Bible so when we read it, we know how to apply it to our lives.**

“A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education.”
– Theodore Roosevelt

B. It's relational purpose: To help us know Jesus and grow in our relationship with Him.

- The Pharisees read the Bible but did not come to know Jesus through it. Jesus challenged them saying:

John 5:39-40: “You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”

- When we rightly engage the Bible, we meet Jesus on His terms!

C. It's internal purpose: to help us overcome the flesh

- God wants His Word to work in us so that we become increasingly obedient to him and holy in him – so that we become more and more like Jesus.

1 Peter 1:14-16: “So you must live as God’s obedient children. Don’t slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn’t know any better then. But now you must be holy in everything you do, just as God who chose you is holy. For the Scriptures say, “You must be holy because I am holy.”

- God gives us His Word as a weapon to overcome anything that inhibits the work He wants to do in us.
- God uses His Word to reveal to us who we really are and to transform us into who we need to become.

Hebrews 4:12-13: “For the Word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”

“The object of the Bible is not to tell how good men are, but how bad men can become good.” – Dwight L. Moody

D. It's external purpose: to help us overcome evil with good.

- God wants His Word to help us stand against evil, and unleash his love and good works on others.

1 Thessalonians 5:15: “See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.”

Ephesians 2:10: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

4. Using Our Sword

A. Let's look at how two men used their swords.

- Adam.
 - Adam was in the Garden. God told him not to eat of one tree.

- The devil comes and questions and twists God's words. He tempts Adam to break with God and fulfill himself by striking out on his own.
- What should Adam have done? Draw his sword! Use it! He should have remembered, quoted, and trusted in God's Word.
- Instead he trusts in himself, believes the devil's lies, and brings death to himself and the world.

Romans 5:12: "Adam sinned, and that sin brought death into the world."

- Jesus.
 - Jesus was led by God's Spirit into the wilderness to meet the devil. **Matthew 4:3-4:** "Then the devil came to him and said, "If you are God's Son, tell these stones to turn into bread." Jesus answered, "The Scriptures say: 'No one can live only on food. People need every word that God has spoken.'"
 - Notice how the devil questions Jesus's deity as God's Son, and then tempts him to prove it by striking out on His own to meet His hunger needs rather than trusting God's Word for His life.
 - And what does Jesus do? He draws his sword and uses it! He refuses to strike out on His own, but rather trusts in God's Word to give Him life.
 - He stands firm with God's Word and the devil gives up and departs.

B. Like Jesus, God wants us to step forth and draw and use our swords! He wants us to bring the Bible to bear in our everyday lives.

James 1:22-25: "Obey God's message! Don't fool yourselves by just listening to it. If you hear the message and don't obey it, you are like people who stare at themselves in a mirror and forget what they look like as soon as they leave. But you must never stop looking at the perfect law that sets you free. God will bless you in everything you do, if you listen and obey, and don't just hear and forget." *"When you read God's Word, you must constantly be saying to yourself, 'It is talking to me, and about me.'"* – Soren Kierkegaard

C. Stepping forth will take courage. God may show you that you need to...

- Apologize to someone you wronged.
- Forgive someone who wronged you.
- Confront a sin in your life.
- Be more generous.
- Lay down your life for your wife.
- Work harder.
- Prioritize your kids over your job.
- Share your faith with someone far from God.
- Serve in a way that makes you uncomfortable.

D. Drawing and using our sword is how we win the fights of this life.

E. Our battle cry:

“This is my Sword,
Where God is met,
Where men are made,
Where the enemy is defeated,
Rak Chazak!”

Your Table Discussion Questions

1. Which one of the personal benefits the Bible offers, listed under 2/D is most exciting to you? Choose one and tell why.
2. We learned in this session that God uses the Bible to reveal to us who we really are and who we need to become. When has God used the Bible to do that for you? What specifically did He show you? Explain. How have those revelations impacted your life?
3. In what area of your life has God been recently challenging you to courageously draw your sword and use it? Explain. How do you plan to do that? What help do you need?

Your “BetterMan” Question

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: What possible action step could I take from this session that could make me a better man? Write your answer in the space below.