I. Objectives of Phase 2, Session 4 - Forgiveness

1. Demonstrate that forgiveness is part of our identity in Christ.
Luke 23:34
Acts 7:59-60
Colossians 3:1-3
Colossians 2:6

2. Prove that God is forgiveness.
Genesis 3:15,21-24
Mark 10:45
John 3:16-17

3. Demonstrate that the Lord is the only One who heals.
Isaiah 61:1
Luke 4:17-19
Philippians 2:13
Psalms 103:3-4
1 Peter 2:24,
1 Peter 5:6-8

4. Prove that there is no love if there is no forgiveness, and without forgiveness we can not receive the love of God.
1 John 4:20
Matthew 6:14-15

5. Encourage the participants to practice forgiveness daily, to learn how to cast out their cares to the Lord and to guard your heart because it is the source of life.
Do the exercises listed below.

6. Demonstrate that our sins have been forgiven (Hebrews 8:12). However, sin has a physical effect (Romans 6:23) in us. There is something that dies in us, peace, joy, a friendship, etc.

7. Prove that Jesus came to heal our hearts.
Luke 4:17-19 NKJV and Isaiah 61:1

8. Explain how a broken heart is more susceptible to the actions of the devil.
1 Peter 5:5-8

9. Invite participants to discover events that have broken their hearts using the questions included in the text of the email

II. Email to be sent to participants before session 4

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Listen to Pastor Brian Clark's sermon on June 12th, 2016 and explain how our attitude relates to how well we guard our heart.

https://archive.org/details/June12201611amDr.BrianClarkAudacity

During our next session we will talk about forgiveness. We will revisit some of the issues that we discussed during Part 1, but we will go deeper both in understanding and practice.

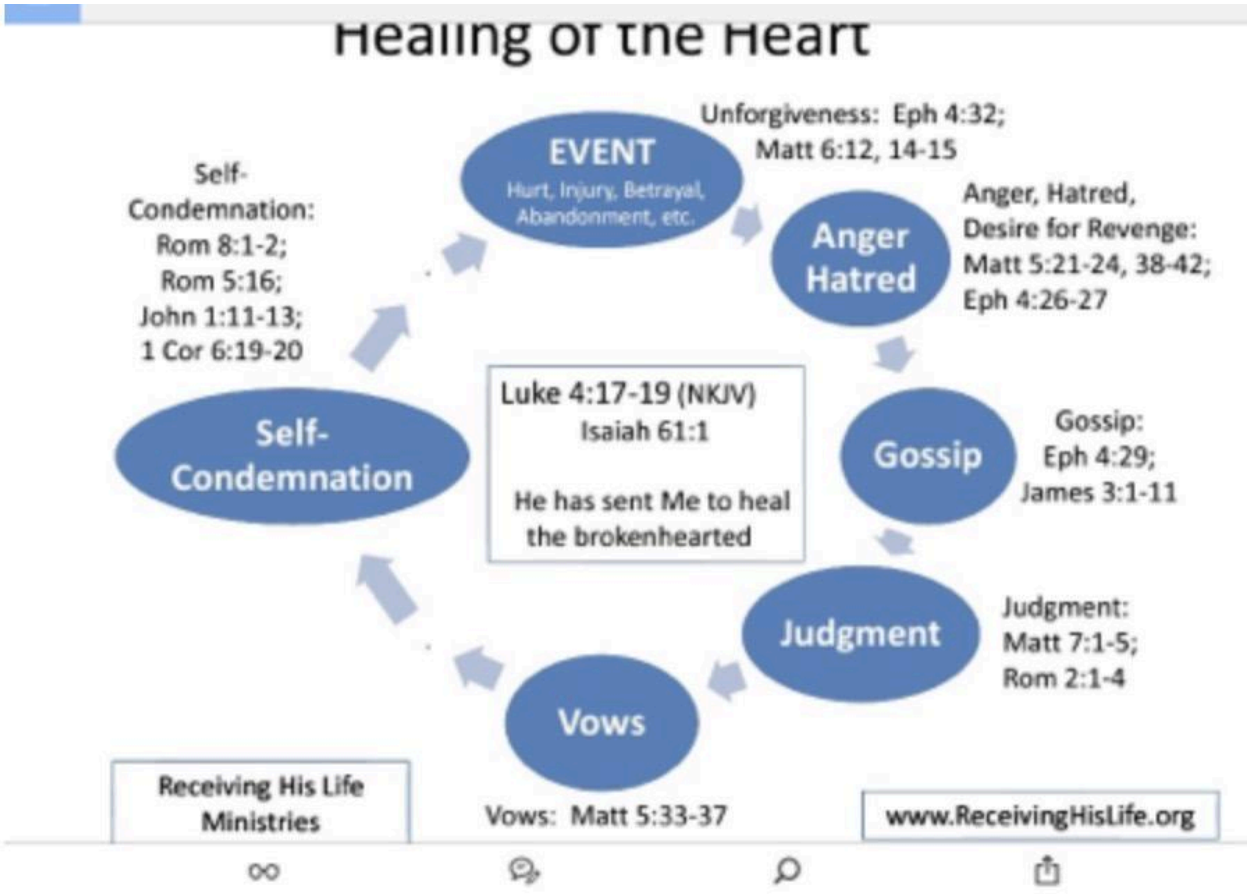
Forgiveness is part of God's identity and of our new identity in Christ; He has created us in His image. God is forgiveness so are we when we are in Him.
Colossians 3:12-17 "*Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful*."
Ephesians 4:32 "*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you*."
Hebrews 8:12 "*For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.*"
Psalm 103:1-4 "*Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies*,"
Palm 103:8-12 "*The Lord is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us*."

https://archive.org/details/November82015Dr.BrianClarkAudacity

Unless we forgive others, we can't love God and we can't receive His love. The words in Matthew 6:14-15 are an act of compassion towards us to let us know that unless we forgive others, we can't receive God's love.
Matthew 6:14-15 "*For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses*.
Luke 6:31-37 "*And just as you want men to do to you, you also do to them likewise. "But if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. And if you lend to those from whom you hope to receive back, what credit is that to you? For even sinners lend to sinners to receive as much back. But love your enemies, do good, and lend, hoping for nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is kind to the unthankful and evil. Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.*
Do Not Judge "Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.
Romans 12:14-21 "*Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore*
"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."
Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."
Ephesians 4:32 "*And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you*.
I John 4:20 "*If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen*?"
1 Samuel 24:1-22
2 Samuel 22:1-7,9,13,18

https://archive.org/details/November22201511amDr.BrianClarkAudacity

Unforgiveness is not the only consequence of an event in which we are hurt by somebody else's actions. Examining the ways in which we reacted to others in response to what they did to us is as important in the healing process as is examining what was done to us. Anger, desire for revenge, Gossip, Judgement, Vows and Self condemnation must also be addressed and be given to the Lord in prayer when we ask Him to heal our hearts.



The Lord is the only healer.
Philippians 2:13 "*for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure*."
Psalm 103:3-4 "*Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies*,"
1 Peter 2:24 "*who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness—by whose stripes you were healed*."
1 Peter 5:6-8 "*Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for*
"God resists the proud,

But gives grace to the humble."
Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

Continuously seek the healing of your heart and from this point on to guard his heart and not let the light of day go down in anger.
Proverbs 4:20-23 "*My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For they are life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life."*
Ephesians 5:26-27 "*that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish*."

Read, pray and meditate on the following verses, **after you dissect them** (go phrase by phrase particularly on Luke 4:17-19 NKJV, Isaiah 61:1 and 1 Peter 5:5-8. Also look for sequences and patterns in relation to other verses in the Scriptures.

Proverbs 4:23 "*Keep your heart with all diligence,*
For out of it spring the issues of life."
Ephesians 4:26-27 "*Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil*."
Proverbs 3:34 "*Surely He scorns the scornful,*
But gives grace to the humble."
James 4:6-7 "*But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you*."

Questions
What type of events brake our hearts?
Is there always someone who is responsible?
Whom do we blame the most?
Have you blamed God?
Can your heart be broken even after you learn that you misunderstood what someone else did to you?
If you think that you are not angry, bitter or sad, anymore does that mean that your heart has been healed?

What role does sin (pride, fear, guilt, shame, condemnation, gossip, etc.) play in the braking of our hearts?

If you have the chance, in addition please read the following verses and explore their connection to the healing of the heart:
Luke 19:1-10
John 8:12
John 1:4-5
1 John 1:5,7
Luke 1:25.
John 3:16-17
John 12:46-50
Matthew 6:22-23
John 3:18-21
Ephesians 5:13

Exercises
A. Use an event in your life that led you to unforgiveness and explain how you reacted to that event.

B. Give your cares to the Lord, ask Him to reveal His love for you and heal your heart.
1 Peter 5:5-8
Do this for every major event that you recall. The Holy Spirit will reveal those that you have forgotten.

C. From now on guard your heart and do not let the sun go down with anger in your heart
Proverbs 4:23
Ephesians 4:26-27

In Christ,

Hernando
Receiving His Life Ministries

III. Practice Session

These are suggestions for group discussion after the session on forgiveness and healing of our broken hearts.

The main objective of the exercises is for participants to practice how to give their burdens to the Lord and receive His love so that their hearts will be healed. Once they experience the benefits of 1 Peter 5:7 and Luke 4:17-19, the expectation is that they would bring those benefits to others in their congregation under the guidelines that the Lord gives us in Matthew 7:3-5 and Matthew 28:20.

To teach, use Phase 1, Session 5 and Phase 2, Session 4 materials.

Prayer to begin
Ephesians 4:31-32

A. Group exercises for after the session

1. Questions

Is it easy or difficult to forgive? Why?
When was the last time you forgave someone? Has it been impossible to forgive someone? Why?
Have you forgotten to forgive someone?
Are you waiting for someone to ask you for forgiveness? Do you think that you should only forgive those who ask you to forgive them?
Have you received and accepted God's forgiveness?

2. Discussion in groups

Talk about what (1) means having a broken heart; (2) define what type of events cause harm to our hearts (something that requires forgiveness and any painful event in life) and (3) finally evaluate why it is important to heal your heart and what or who really heals it.

B. Individual exercises during the next weeks

1. Heal your heart in reliance on the Lord

Bring up an important event that had a negative effect on your life and give it to the Lord.

Healing our broken hearts. Read and meditate on Luke 4:16-19 NKJV and Isaiah 61:1

Make the prayers of giving your cares and pains to the Lord.

1) Declare your sorrow to the Lord, what you did wrong and what broke your heart (only one event for each exercise for 3 to 5 minutes)
2) Repent of what you did
3) Accept and receive God's forgiveness regarding what you are repenting
4) Thank God for His forgiveness
5) Throw (give) your grief to the Lord. See all that dirt and garbage coming out of your heart in the direction of the Lord
6) Ask the Lord that where this grief was in your heart, fill those gaps with His love and ask Him to let His love heal your heart
7) Never pick up what you already gave to the Lord

2. Forgive those whom you have not forgiven

We will have a few weeks blessed by forgiveness.
Read, pray and meditate on James 1:22
Do not be content just to hear the word, for you deceive yourselves. Take it to practice.

Forgive at least one person per day and receive and accept God's forgiveness every day. Also try forgiveness in advance at least once, particularly with those who are constantly bothering you, and see what happens.

Blessings,

Hernando
Receiving His Life Ministries

IV. Email to be sent to participants after session 4

Spiritual Warfare

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Many Christians are either unaware of the spiritual warfare that they are in, or they believe that it is just a matter of personal attack against each individual believer—which requires no more than a defensive action.

Weather you are aware or not, if you are a Christian, you are at war; attacks must be expected. Jesus told us in many different ways that we would be persecuted (Matthew 5:10-12, John 15:18-19, John 17:14-16). This has been the case for the people of God since the beginning due to the constant efforts of the devil to destroy the works of God (Genesis 3:15). There are two kingdoms: the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan.
Matthew 12:28 "*But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you*."
The casting out of demons indicates that the kingdom of God has arrived, for Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8, Hebrews 2:14, Revelation 1:18). There is a war between these two kingdoms. It doesn't matter if you are unaware, you are at war!

When Jesus gave us the great commission, He sent us to war. This is what the making of disciples of all nations is about: Rescuing prisoners of war from the enemy camp and training them how to go out and fight and rescue others. It is also about tearing down the strongholds and conquering the enemy's territory, claiming it for the kingdom of God. *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love*, Colossians 1:13. Then, He empowers us to go to all nations. *When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen*. We are to make disciples, and *Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men*." Matthew 4:19. We make disciples; He makes the disciple makers.

This is how Jesus engaged in spiritual warfare; He preached and cast out demons while He was making disciples.
Mark 1:39 "*And He was preaching in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and casting out demons*."
Luke 13:32 "*And He said to them, "Go, tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected*.'
All throughout His ministry He healed the sick and cast out demons.
This was what He told His disciples:
Matthew 10:7-8 "*And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give*."
Mark 16:15-18 "*And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to*

every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

We are to do this throughout the world until what is written in the following two verses has been fulfilled.
Matthew 23:39 "*for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say,* ***Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!****'* "
And
Matthew 24:14 "*And* ***this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come***."

We are to preach Christ and the gospel of the kingdom of God, for we are engaged in spiritual warfare to bring those who are a part of the rebellion into the kingdom of God.

Acts 8:4-8 "*Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.* ***Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them****. And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.* ***For unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many who were possessed; and many who were paralyzed and lame were healed.*** *And there was great joy in that city*."

Revelation 12:10-12 "*Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come,* ***for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down****. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea!* ***For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time****.*"

Some may say that spiritual warfare is simply maintaining the victory that Jesus has already won for us, as stated in 1 John 3:8, Hebrews 2:14, Revelation 1:18 and James 4:7.
1 John 3:8 "*He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested,* ***that He might destroy the works of the devil***."

Hebrews 2:14 "*Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil*,"

Revelation 1:18 "*I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death*."

James 4:7 "*Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you*."

When we submit to God, we can resist the devil and he will flee from us because he has nothing in us—as he had nothing in Jesus, according to John 14:30 "*I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, **and he has nothing in Me***.

The devil has nothing in us either; as believers in Jesus, He reconciled us with God, took all our sins and made us the righteousness of God in Him. All our sins have been forgiven.

2 Corinthians 5:18 "***Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself** through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation*,"
2 Corinthians 5:21 "*For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him*."

Hebrews 8:12 "*For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, **and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more**.*"

As we said above, spiritual warfare is about maintaining the victory that Jesus has already won for us. This is correct from the view of a defensive posture, but it is not enough; **spiritual warfare is about <u>advancing</u> under the victory that Jesus has already won**.

The view of spiritual warfare as only a personal defensive issue is a distortion created by looking exclusively at the armor of God and forgetting about the army of the Lord. The emphasis is placed on Ephesians 6:13-17, rather than considering the whole passage of Ephesians 6:10-20. In other words, it's like looking at a tree and ignoring the forest.
This fixation on the armor of God and not the army of God can cause many Christians to perceive spiritual warfare as only a personal defensive action against the attacks of the devil. Listening to brothers in Christ who have been in combat situations brought me to understand the true nature of all warfare:

1. Soldiers are not on their own; they must rely on each other and on the power of the army as a whole.
2. Soldiers are expected to sacrifice their lives, if needed, for their fellow soldiers and for victory.
3. Battles are won by attacking and by conquering territory, not by simply maintaining a defensive position.

These points are often missed when considering spiritual warfare. The armor of God is simply the gear that is issued to every Christian soldier. It is definitely needed in our warfare, but it is not the be all and end all of our spiritual war.

Philippians 3:8-11 "*Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;* ***that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead***."

His sufferings and resurrection were for the purpose of saving that which was lost (Luke 19:10).

Collectively as Christians, as members of the kingdom of God on earth, spiritual warfare is discipleship. It is our fight to bring those who are in the rebellion into the kingdom of God.

Pray Psalm 2:8-9 "*Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel.*'"

Jesus gave us the power to bind in heaven what we bind on earth.

Matthew 18:18-20 "*Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.*"
Jesus asked us to move forward because the gates of Hades shall not prevail. This is why there is no protection for the back in the armor of God. We must move forward to

conquer the rebellion, never retreat.

Matthew 16:15-19 "*He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church,* ***and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it****. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*"

Matthew 12:25-30 "*But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges.* ***But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you****. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.* ***He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad***."

2 Timothy 4:17 "*But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear. Also I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion*."

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 "*For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "****Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me****." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "****This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me****."* ***For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes***."

We are here for the word of God (our new identity) and for the testimony of Jesus Christ (what we do when we resemble Him). This happens when we eat His flesh (Matthew 4:4 and John 4:34). When we eat the bread, we are proclaiming and celebrating the gospel of the Kingdom of God. When we drink the cup, His blood, we are proclaiming the gospel of forgiveness of sins (1 John 1:7, Revelation 7:14, 1 Corinthians 15:1-5) and eternal life in Him (John 6:54).

Revelation 1:2 *"who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus*

Christ, to all things that he saw."

Revelation 1:9 "*I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."*

Revelation 6:9 "*When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held."*

Revelation 12:11 "*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."*

Revelation 12:17 "*And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."*

Revelation 19:10 "*And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."*

Revelation 20:4 "*And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years."*

1 Corinthians 11:26 "***For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes***."

Why do we proclaim His death? We find the answer in these Scriptures:
John 12:24
Galatians 2:20-21
2 Corinthians 5:14-15
John 15:13
John 3:16

When we proclaim the Lord's death, we proclaim His Love, and His love compels us to do as He did—to bring those who are in the rebellion into the kingdom of God. It is a proclamation of the Great Commission, a call to war against the kingdom of darkness, a

call to engage in spiritual warfare.

These are some of the issues that we should not miss when we talk about the armor of God.

1. The armor passage actually starts in Ephesians 6:10. *Finally, my brethren,* ***be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might***. When the attention is placed on the armor alone, we miss the context. We see the trees but miss the forest. Paul is talking to the church, the army of the Lord on earth, not to an individual. This is not about how an individual can defend himself but how we all should be equipped to protect everyone who is part of His army. Obviously, when we put on the whole armor, we also protect ourselves.

It is all about being in the army of the Lord and relying on Him. This is the environment or the context in which we put on the **whole armor** of God. We put on the whole armor not only to protect ourselves but to also protect others and to move forward to defeat the kingdom of Satan. This is how we can serve the Lord.

2. Verses 19 and 20 confirm that the objective of the armor is that we can serve the Lord and His Kingdom boldly—knowing that we are protected by the armor.
Ephesians 6:19-20 "*19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak*."

In possession of the whole armor, we can be bold. However, that boldness doesn't come from the whole armor alone; it also comes from our reliance on the Lord and our interaction with the other members of the army of the Lord through prayer.

3. Verse 18 addresses not only the issue of communication with the Lord—prayer—but also our concern for, and dedication to serving, our fellow combatants.
Ephesians 6:18 "*praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit,* ***being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints***—"

We are told to be praying always in the Spirit and be watchful for all the saints. This should eliminate any doubt that we are in His army to serve (love) one another. We are there to sacrifice our lives in the service of others. This is why Jesus died, that we would live no longer for ourselves but for Him (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). This is what true **humility** is about. When we live for Him, we live to serve others (Mark 10:45, John 13:34-35; 15:12-13).

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 "*For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again*."
Mark 10:45 "*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*"
John 13:34-35 "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another*."
John 15:12-13 "*This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends*."

4. We ought not to miss the attitude of standing firm that comes from reliance on the Lord and His armor. Also note:
What is it that we stand against?
The wiles of the devil, powers, rulers of darkness and spiritual hosts of wickedness, and all the fiery darts of the wicked one.
When?
In the evil day.
Does that mean **everyday**?
Yes (Ephesians 5:16, Galatians 1:4).
How?
We are to put on, or take up, the **whole armor** of God. He says this twice. If you miss any piece of the armor, you are vulnerable to attack, so the whole armor is required to be safe. Note that leaving yourself open to attack also endangers your fellow soldiers; you become a weak link in the army. For example, if you leave yourself open to false teaching, you may pass that false teaching on to other believers.
Ephesians 6:11-14 "***Put on the whole armor of God**, that you may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil. For we do not **wrestle against** flesh and blood, but **against principalities, against powers**, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore **take up the whole armor of God**, that you may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, **and having done all, to stand**. **Stand therefore**, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness*,"

There are 4 different angelic realms, according to Colossians 1:16, *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether **thrones or dominions or principalities or powers**. All things were created through Him and for Him*. The demonic powers are only in the two lower levels: principalities and powers. Jesus defeated the realm of the demonic according to Colossians 2:15 ***Having***

disarmed principalities and powers*, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it*. The realm of the demonic is still operating and doing damage, but now we have power against it. This is why Jesus tells us "***Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven****. "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.*" Matthew 18:18-20. This is the meaning that **spiritual warfare is advancing under the victory that Jesus already won**.

5. We should also compare the following verses and observe some additional details about the armor:
1 Thessalonians 5:8 "*But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the **breastplate of faith and love**, and as a **helmet the hope of salvation***."
Ephesians 6:14-17 "*Stand therefore, having **girded your waist with truth**, having put on the **breastplate of righteousness**, and having **shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace**; above all, taking the **shield of faith with which** you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God***;"

A. Consider the difference between 1 Thessalonians 5:8 (*putting on the **breastplate of faith and love***) and Ephesians 6:14 *(having put on the **breastplate of righteousness***). There is actually no contradiction here. Looking at these sections of scripture together, we can better understand that our righteousness In Christ is the end result of the love of God for us and of our faith in Jesus as our Savior.

B. Also, look at the difference between 1 Thessalonians 5:8 (a ***helmet the hope of salvation***) and Ephesians 6:17 (the ***helmet of salvation***). Again, there is no contradiction. We are to wear the "helmet of salvation" and be assured that our spirits have already been saved through Justification and our souls are currently being saved through Sanctification. That helmet, however, is also "a helmet the hope of salvation" which relates to the promise of the Lord for Glorification, the Spirit of adoption, as stated in Romans 8:15 *For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, **but you received the Spirit of adoption** by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father.*" It is a sure and certain "hope"—the assurance that God will fulfill His promise of adoption and save our bodies through Glorification.

C. "Above all" is the shield of faith. Faith is our key to the spiritual world; it is how we make a physical reality of what the Lord has provided for us in the spiritual realm. Faith

requires an action, for faith without works is dead (James 2:26). We may mentally believe, for example, that we can overcome the world—according to 1 John 5:4-5. However, If we haven't acted and taken steps to actually overcome the world in some area of our life, it means that we believe that spiritual truth—but don't have faith in it.

D. The shield of faith not only covers most of our body but also the right shoulder of the soldier to our left.

6. Observe that all the six components of the armor cover the front.
-girded your waist with truth
-breastplate of righteousness
-shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace
-shield of faith
-helmet of salvation
-sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

There is no need for protection to the back, because the Lord is with us. He “has our back.” Also, our direction is to move forward, so the gates of hell will not stand against us:
Matthew 16:18 “*And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church,* ***and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it***.”

7. Take note that there are both offensive and defensive pieces of armor and some that are used to stand firm and provide mobility. The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God (Jesus) and prayer, is clearly a weapon to move forward (offense). The helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness and the shield of faith are defensive weapons. These are protective elements that are necessary so we can move boldly against the enemy. The shoes are both to stand firm and to provide mobility for the proclamation of the gospel of peace. The belt of truth not only supports the sword of the Spirit and keeps it at hand for us to use, but it also is useful for tucking up robes to gain greater mobility and to run (how Roman soldiers used their belts). Regarding this last point about the belt of truth, we can consider using it to take anything that might encumber our actions for God’s kingdom and lifting it out of the way by focusing on and using God’s truth. With His truth we break strongholds that raise against the knowledge of God. 2 Corinthians 10:5 *casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*,

8. In summary, spiritual warfare is about acting upon the Great Commission. It is about discipleship, breaking down strongholds that raise against the knowledge of God, and becoming like Jesus.
2 Corinthians 10:3-6 "*For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.* ***For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,*** *and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled*."

We do this by relying on the word of God, the name of Jesus and the blood of Jesus and by having a burning desire to be like Jesus.
2 Timothy 3:16-17 "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work*."

Philippians 2:9-11 "*Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*."

Revelation 12:11 "*And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death*."

John 8:31-32 "*Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "I****f you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed****. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free*."

John 13:34-35 "*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.* ***By this all will know that you are My disciples****, if you have love for one another.*"

John 15:8 "*By this My Father is glorified,* ***that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples***."

Blessings,

Hernando
Receiving His Life Ministries