



## Meeting Notes: Introduction to the Armor (April 24, 2013)

These notes capture our April 24, 2013 meeting. We opened our meeting in prayer and then began our evening. Topic notes may not be in the order discussed during group, and they are not intended to cover everything discussed. They are intended as highlights to capture the essence of our evening. General notes follow each topic that was discussed. Documents used or created during this meeting are attached

### TOPICS DISCUSSED:

#### New Things for Group:

- **A new process.** During this meeting, we began a new process for renewing our minds that has the power to really transform how we think and change our lives! We're still working out the details of the process, but if we can grasp this very practical way of how to renew our minds, we can finally be set free from things that continually steal our joy!
- **Closing the loop.** Beginning this week, the current plan is, during each study, we will have a time for something new called *closing the loop*. It will afford us an opportunity to discuss our takeaway from the previous week and topics from our last study that may need to be readdressed or expounded upon.
- **Memory Verse.** Also beginning with this meeting, we will have at least one memory verse each week related to what we are currently studying. The verses will change based on the topic being studied.

#### Closing the Loop on Last Week:

- **Introducing closing the loop.** We looked back at our takeaways from the week before and discussed how we had responded to ours. In addition, I shared how the Holy Spirit revealed the correlation between Matthew 27:32 (Jesus had help carrying the Cross, but only He could go to the cross) and Galatians 6:1-5 (we can have help carrying our burden, but only we can do what must be done).

#### Revelation from the Holy Spirit:

- **As one family.** One of our sisters shared what God had revealed to her during her time of prayer and fasting for the group. The essence of the message is rooted in Romans 10 and centers around we are to be "as one family."

## Memory verse:

- **Psalm 33:4, "For the word of the Lord is right and all His work is done in truth" (NKJV).**
- **Planting the word.** We each recited the current memory verse in the version we read. We took note of the word "faithful" that is in other translations, because it helps us better understand God's nature, and it's also a fruit of the Spirit.
- **Key definitions.** We then defined some key words: *word, right, works, and truth*. The full definitions can be found in Strong's Concordance.<sup>1</sup> However, two definitions stood out: **right** means *straight*, and **truth** relates to *firmness, security, and moral fidelity*. In seeking to understand what the author was communicating so we can apply this verse to our lives, we noted God's Word is *straight (forward), because He is not the author of confusion*. We also noted, firmness takes us to the belt of truth and how the belt has to be firm to hold everything on! As a result, we captured the verse this way for our understanding: *the Word of the Lord is straight (forward) and firm, and He gives us security if we follow His Word*.
- **Takeaway.** Breaking down the key words in a verse can give us new understanding into what message the author may have been communicating so we can better apply it to our lives.

## Discussion Topic: Introduction to the Armor

- ***Dressed to Kill*, by Rick Renner:**
  - **Summarizing the first 10 chapters.** I handed out a brief summation of the first 10 Chapters of *Dressed to Kill*. This summation is not attached, because the notes were not well documented. Moreover, the summation didn't even really cover the tip of the iceberg of what Renner discussed in the book, but it gave us a starting point to be on one accord. As discussed, the first 9 chapters cover Ephesians 6:10-13, with chapter 10 covering the belt of truth. In addition to the chapter highlights, we discussed some other important aspects of verses 10-13. First, we have to remember who we're looking at is not our enemy! Even though we've discussed this in the past, it is something we need to keep stressing until we get the fullness of that revelation. Additionally, we discussed we need the whole armor! If we're lacking any one piece, we're not fully able to withstand! We also noted when the day of evil comes is referring to any trial we encounter, and in the midst of these trials, once we've done all we can, we stand. Our standing and our being in the full armor have to occur on a daily basis! Moreover, we never know when that day of evil will occur, but it will occur! However, as we armor up, we will learn how to be

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Concordance for the iPhone version 1.5.3, Copyright © 2009, Brian Thomas Webb

ready when it comes!

○ **Studying the belt:**

- **Belt of Truth. Ephesians 6:14 - "Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth" (NKJV)**
- **Definitions.** For this verse, we looked up the following key words: *stand* therefore, *loins*, *girt*, and *truth*.
  - **Standing.** This word represents the image of a Roman soldier standing confidently or as Renner describes, "with his head held high and his shoulders thrown back."<sup>2</sup>
  - **Loin belt.** This word expresses the image of the soldier's creative power being protected. Likewise, what we are able to create is determined by what is within us. Thus, we are now in the process of taking off the belt of deception (the lies the enemy has fed us that we have believed) and putting on the belt of truth. However, this means there will be a moment in time when we will not have on any belt! That is the moment of vulnerability I have been in with the Lord since last September/October time frame. It is during this vulnerable time that we truly have to trust the Lord with all that we are as He protects and prepares us to receive a firm belt of truth that will hold the rest of our armor. With our new belt, we will be given an opportunity to produce something different than we ever have before!
- **Takeaway.** Our ability to fight against the enemy rests on us having truth wrapped around us like a belt! While we only briefly mentioned **2 Corinthians 10:4-6** and **Romans 12:2**, they are important to understanding the belt of truth. The plan is to discuss these more next week.

**Renewing our Mind exercise:**

- **A practical approach.** During this meeting, we began the process of renewing our minds. Trying to convey the intent of the exercise did not go as smoothly as I had hoped, but part of that was because I had not done everything the Lord had told me to do. However, I believe things went just as they should, because we learned some things we would not have discovered otherwise. While those that were present for this meeting have already begun the process to our renew our minds, I'm not yet going to cover the details in the notes until we have a better

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<sup>2</sup>Rick Renner, *Dressed to Kill: A Biblical Approach to Spiritual Warfare and Armor*, (Tulsa: Teach all Nations, 1991), p. 259.

understanding of what this exercise needs to look like. However, I will say the exercise is a practical way to identify a specific behavior we would like to change (preferably something we keep going around the mountain on), identify key thought processes that produce that behavior, and then identify the root cause of those thoughts. The ultimate goal of the exercise is to find Scriptures to cover the root cause of those thoughts. Those Scriptures will then become part of a daily prayer we will pray over ourselves until we get a breakthrough in that behavior.

- **Takeaway.** In order to change what we do, we need to know what we think and why. As we complete this exercise, we will change for the better with a goal of being able to walk in a new dimension with Christ!

### **Taking up our cross and following Jesus.**

- **A visual experience.** This exercise was adapted from an essay I wrote for Bible school. I've sent out the essay before, but this time, I updated the essay so the person reading it could experience it from a first-hand perspective. The adapted version is attached. As I read the adapted version, I had everyone close their eyes and imagine themselves in the positions I described. If you missed this meeting, I encourage you to have someone read the essay to you while you close your eyes and experience the words it describes. **Takeaway:** This exercise loops us back to Galatians 6:1-5 and Matthew 27:32, which helps us understand we must each go through our own cross experience in order to learn how to choose God's will over our will.

### **Next week's assignments:**

- **Memory Verse.** Please continue planting **Psalm 33:4** within your heart through memorization and application
- **Preparing for group.** When you come to group next week, know what one behavior you want to change, and, if possible, have a few of the thoughts associated with that behavior written down on the sheet provided.

### **Closing:**

- **New leaders.** During closing prayer, I laid hands on two sisters, and prayed over them to recognize them as leaders in the group. My husband has approved of and supports each of these women assuming leadership positions. Therefore, going forward, if you're not comfortable talking to me about something, please talk to one of them. This helps facilitate our ability to resolve problems in the group in a way that is decent and in order. Also, the two new leaders are extra eyes and ears to help assess the pulse of the group, because when we're engaged in a discussion, and especially when I'm teaching, I can easily miss something happening within our midst. This includes the leaders catching something I may say or do that changes the spiritual atmosphere of the

group. Consequently, they have full freedom to bring correction my way!

*If you have questions, comments, or concerns about information contained in this document, or would like to be added to or removed from the email distribution for the meeting notes, please email us at [wow2@wow2women.com](mailto:wow2@wow2women.com) or complete a Contact Form on our site, [www.wow2women.com](http://www.wow2women.com).*



## **ATTACHMENT: TAKE UP MY CROSS<sup>1</sup>**

You are faced with a decision. You are having a Cross experience. Your body is the stake; the choice you must make is the Cross. God's will is on the right side of the Cross; your will is on the left side of the Cross. The fire that tries man's soul burns beneath you. Your spirit reaches with one hand and grabs God's will. Your soul reaches with the other hand and grabs your will. As you hang above the fire, you find yourself having a hard time holding onto both ends. Your muscles begin to burn from the pain. The suffering begins. You are not willing to let go with either hand, so the pain intensifies. How do you make it stop? You release the grip of one hand.

You choose to hold onto your will. God's will is still there attached to the Cross. Wait. What else do you see? There is a slide that goes down into the flames. You get on and travel to the bottom. The fire begins to consume you. Your flesh begins to burn. The pain increases. You can stand it no longer. You must escape this suffering. You search and search, but there is no way out. You look up. You see a rope. You grab hold and climb back onto the Cross seeking some relief from your circumstances. You continue to do this, time and time again, thinking, sooner or later you will find the path out. It never happens. Each time, your strength fades. One day, you decide you must make a different choice.

You are back on the Cross. You let go of your will to choose God's will. Your will falls to the ground and is consumed in the flames. You realize you had to sacrifice it to God in exchange for His will. All of a sudden a ladder appears before you. You place your hands and feet on the ladder. You climb higher and higher, further and further

away from the flames. When you reach the top, you find rest with the Lord. He tells you to look down. He shows you others on their Cross. He has you watch as they go from the Cross to the flames and back again. As you watch, your heart begins to burn with compassion. You hurt for them, because you understand what they are going through. You cry out to the Lord, "Help them, Jesus! They are suffering so. It hurts. I know. I was there. Please, Jesus. Help them." He looks to you and tells you, "That is what I commissioned you to do." "I understand now, Lord."

So, what does it mean to take up our Cross and follow Christ? It means understanding the purpose of our Cross experience is to get rid of what is in us that hinders our relationship with God. That is our sacrifice. But, the experience does not end there. It is not just for us. It is also for others. Jesus did not go to the Cross for Himself. He went so we could be reconciled to our heavenly Father. We should not go to our Cross for ourselves. Our purpose should be reconciliation! That is our gift - helping others to reconcile their relationship with Jesus. Ultimately, it cannot be about what we can get, but about what we can give. And, we cannot give a gift worthy of our Father until we have taken up our Cross to follow Christ.

What choice will you make today?

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<sup>1</sup> This document was originally created as an essay for a class I took at Biblical Life College and Seminary. However, while studying the armor, I felt led to reformat the essay and turn it into a personal experience for a WoW<sup>2</sup> bible study. It was read while studying the belt of truth. Everyone who reads this document is encouraged to personalize it so you can experience what it means to take up your cross and follow Jesus!