Fighting for Your Family – Devotion Week 1
We're Under Attack!
by Walter Mullican

Tuesday, September 11, 2001, started out usual enough. I was sitting at my mom’s table eating breakfast with her getting ready to spend the day in the library at OBU doing research on my doctoral dissertation. We were watching one of the morning news shows report that a plane had crashed into one of the World Trade Center towers. It all seemed like a tragic accident, when suddenly the television screen showed a second airplane crash into the second tower. It suddenly dawned on me, “We’re under attack!” Everything changed when the nation realized we were under attack.

We must realize that our families are under attack from our arch enemy, Satan. Listen to the apostle Peter in 1 Peter 5:8, “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.” Jesus said in John 10:10, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. . .”

1. In what ways do you see the enemy attacking you, your family? Think of each of your family members and write down how you think the enemy is desiring to devour them.

2. How would you respond if an armed robber were breaking into your house to steal from you and harm your family? Does it enrage you that a spiritual robber is wanting to break into your family?

3. What are you willing to do to prevent Satan from stealing from your family?

4. What is one thing you could begin to do today to protect your family from the enemy?

5. Read Luke 11:21–23 “When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. But when someone stronger than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder. He who is not with Me is against Me; and he who does not gather with Me, scatters.” Satan, the strong man has been overpowered by someone stronger, Jesus. Spiritual warfare begins with knowing and trusting Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Do you know for sure that you are “with Jesus?” When did it happen for you?
Listening to just a few refrains of Kenny Loggin’s “Danger Zone” will have your adrenaline pumping as you think about the movie, *Top Gun*, and cocky pilot, Maverick and his side kick RIO, Goose. Maverick is a gifted, but arrogant pilot but loses his confidence when his RIO, Goose, dies when ejecting from their plan when it goes into an unrecoverable flat spin. Maverick loss of confidence causes him to not engage in air-to-air combat. The final battle scene finds pilot, Ice Man, engaged with multiple enemy MIG aircraft and in deep trouble when Maverick is called upon to engage in the battle and save Ice Man. He hesitates and withdraws from the dog fight to hear Ice Man plead with him to “Engage, Engage!” Maverick is able to exorcise the demons of the past and at the last moment engages the enemy to save Ice Man and to win the victory.

As men, we must be ready to be engaged in battle by our enemy, Satan. Paul says in Ephesians 6:11, “Put on the full armor of God, so that you might be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.” One of the Satan’s schemes is to try to create a crises of confidence in men, but Jesus said, “Greater is He who is in you, than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4). Because Jesus is greater than our enemy we can, “therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm” (Eph. 6:13). We can engage the enemy because Jesus has equipped us to victorious in the battle.

1. Why is it difficult for men to engage in the battle?

2. What are some of Satan’s schemes to keep men from engaging in the battle?

3. According to Ephesians 6:11, 13 what resources has God provided for men to engage in the battle?

4. Is “taking up the full armor of God” a one-time act, or does it need to repeated? If it needs to be repeated, how often and when? Discuss.

5. According to 1 John 4:4 Jesus is greater than Satan. Why is He greater? Where does the “greater one” desire to take up residence?
The 2009 film *Blindside* tells the story of Michael Oher, a kid from the projects of Memphis who is adopted by the Tuohy family. Michael becomes an outstanding left tackle playing for the University of Mississippi and was later drafted by the Baltimore Ravens of the NFL who last year won the Super Bowl. An outstanding left tackle is one who protects his quarterback’s blindside if that quarterback is right-handed. He must be able to “stand firm” against the onslaught of the defensive line to protect his valuable quarterback.

In Ephesians 6:11, 13, & 14 the apostle Paul tells us as believers that we should “stand firm” against the onslaught of our enemy Satan. Three pieces of armor will make us able to “stand firm.” They are belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, and the shoes of peace. These three pieces of armor come at salvation. The truth of the gospel sets us free. Jesus said, “You shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:32). The breastplate of righteousness is not our goodness, but the righteousness that comes from what Christ did for us on the cross, and the shoes of the gospel of peace (v. 15) provide the peace and confidence we need to “stand firm” against the enemy because we know that we are loved and accepted by Christ. You can only “stand firm” if you have trusted Christ in a real and personal way having become a serious follower of Jesus Christ.

1. When did you put on the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, and shoes of the gospel of peace? When did you become a serious follower of Jesus Christ trusting Him only for your salvation?

2. Do you believe you have been letting Satan push you around? If so, what will you do about it? You are not standing alone. Who wants to stand with you so that you “stand firm”?

3. In what ways has the enemy blindsided you, your spouse, and your kids? How important is it that you “stand firm” on behalf of your family?

4. Read John 14:5-6. How did Jesus answer Thomas’ questions? Has that same truth impacted your life?
5. Read John 14:27. How is Jesus’ peace different from the world’s peace? Does Jesus’ peace replace Satan’s fear? How? Would you ask Jesus to replace your fear with his peace right now?

Fighting for Your Family – Devotion Week 4
Equipped for Battle
by Walter Mullican

A Roman legion was comprised of about 5,000 soldiers. It was a well-trained and equipped fighting unit. It was no wonder that the legions of Rome conquered the then known world. The Apostle Paul used the armor of the Roman soldier to illustrate how God has equipped believers for battle against our spiritual enemy. In Ephesians 6:16 he says, “in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.” A Roman legionnaire carried a large 2’ x 4’ curved shield called a Scutum which had materials placed on the front of it to extinguish flaming arrows launched by the enemy.

Paul uses the Roman shield as an illustration of one way we are protected from our enemy. He calls it, “the shield of faith.” The “flaming arrows of the evil one” can be doubts, evil thoughts, deviant sexual thoughts, and accusations about our salvation, just to name a few. Faith is an action. To extinguish the enemies flaming arrows, we must act upon our faith. We must take God at His Word and claim that Word for our lives. We must trust in the truth of God’s Word and apply its truths daily when the enemy attacks. In the letter of James he explains how we use the shield of faith, “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). You resist with the truth of God and repel the attacks of the enemy.

1. Think about some of the “flaming arrows” the enemy has launched against you and your family? What are they?

2. In the past, how have you tried to defend against Satan’s “flaming arrows”? What worked and what didn’t work?

3. Discuss why God’s Word is so vital in strengthening your faith so that your “shield of faith” will extinguish the attacks of Satan.
4. Read Matthew 4:1-11. How did Jesus “resist” the devil in all three temptations?

5. Let’s say you were tempted with lust. Read the following verses: 1 Corinthians 6:18; Matthew 5:27-29; 1 John 2:15-17. Now based on truth of God’s Word write out a prayer to God to quench the “flaming arrows” using your “shield of faith.”

Fighting for Your Family – Devotion Week 5
The Greatest Sword of All
by Walter Mullican

What is your favorite sword fighting story or movie? Perhaps, Pirates of the Caribbean with Captain Jack Sparrow or maybe it’s Lord of the Rings with Aragorn, the rightful King of Gondor, who wields the powerful sword Anduril into battle to protect Middle Earth. Maybe you enjoy the adventures of the Three Musketeers by Alexandre Dumas. No sword in literature or on film is more powerful than the one the Apostle Paul mentions in Ephesians 6:17, “and take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

We are called to “take” the sword of the Spirit as part of our armor in defending ourselves from the attacks of Satan, our enemy. We can feel weak and inadequate for the battle just as Paul did when he said, “for when I am weak, then I am strong” (1 Cor. 12:10). How could Paul be strong in weakness? The Lord said to him, “my grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness” (1 Cor. 12:9). Where our flesh is weak, His Holy Spirit is strong. And Paul also says the sword of the Spirit is the word of God (v. 17). How did Jesus overcome the tempter? As you read Matthew 4:1-11, you find that He did so with the Word of God. Satan will twist God’s Word, but God’s Word will twist Satan. You must hide His Word in your heart (Ps. 119:11). When you trust and rely on the Holy Spirit and God’s Word in your life you will find victory over the enemy for you and your family.

1. A good swordsman would spend a lifetime perfecting his skills. How skilled are you in God’s Word?

2. Read Hebrews 4:12 and list at least three things you learn about the Word of God.

3. Read 2 Timothy 3:16. Who is the author of Scripture? What are four things the Word of God does in our lives?
4. Psalm 119:11 (NIV) says, “I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” What is your plan for hiding God’s Word in your heart? If you no plan of reading or memorizing Scripture, will you commit to find a plan and follow it?

5. Praying Scripture is powerful. Find a verse to pray over each member of your family.

**Fighting for Your Family – Devotion Week 6**

**Prayer Binds It All Together**

by Walter Mullican

John Paton was a missionary to the New Hebrides Islands in the late 1800s. The islanders were hostile to the new missionary and his family and one night surrounded their mission station with torches threatening to burn it down and kill them. Paton and his wife went to their knees in prayer asking God to deliver them. At daybreak, Paton looked out the window to find that all the hostile islanders were gone for no apparent reason. A year later the tribal chief was converted and when Paton asked him why they left that night the chief told him they were afraid of the men with Paton. “What men?” asked Paton. The chief replied, “There were a hundred tall men around the compound that night whose clothing shined with light and they each had swords. We knew they would not let us harm you, so we went back to our village.”

As men we must see the vital connection between the armor of God and prayer. The enemy wants to destroy your family! It is not sufficient to just put on the armor of God, we must also pray. Likewise, it’s not enough to just pray, we must also put on the armor of God. The two must go together. But also note the order in Ephesians 6. Put on the armor first, then pray. This is warfare praying for your family, for yourself. This is no, “Now, I lay me down to sleep” type prayer. Read Paul’s words carefully as found in Ephesians 6:18 “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints . . .” The greatest kind of fighter you can become for your family is to become a prayer warrior. You’ll never stand taller than when you are on your knees praying for your family.

1. On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being Wimpy Prayer and 10 being Warrior Prayer, where would you rate your personal prayer life? Are you ready for that to change?

2. Do you agree that the Armor of God and Prayer go together? Why or Why not? Why do you think it is important that we put on the armor of God before we pray?

4. Take time right now to powerfully pray God’s protection over each member of your family.

5. Would you ask Jesus to teach you how to pray? Will you commit to becoming a powerful prayer warrior for your family?