

ENGAGING GOSPEL DOCTRINE (EPISODE 165)

LESSON 39

“For the Perfecting of the Saints”

Hook	Since we don't wear armor anymore, should we say “put on the dress clothes of God?” ;)
Manual Goal	To help class members understand that the process of “perfecting ... the saints” (Ephesians 4:12) requires us to increase our faith in Christ, follow the teachings of the apostles and prophets, and protect ourselves from the wickedness of the world.
EGD Goal	To motivate class members to foster those traits that enable them to “stand firm” for their principles and use their strengths to draw closer to their divine potential.

- I. Sunday School
 - a. Framing
 - b. Two-minute take home
 - i. Armor of God (6:11-17. Goal: stand firm. Traits: truth, righteousness, preparation, faith, salvation, Spirit)
 - ii. Hierarchies in relationships (structure is necessary, but leaders should be as “one who serves”, Jesus challenged these)
 - iii. Reading gems:
 1. Chapter 2: reconciliation
 - iv. Being transformed by focusing on our strengths (chapter 4)
 - c. Reading commentary
 - d. Lesson
 - i. “Household codes” and cultural influence (husbands and wives) “equal partners”
 - ii. Transformation through focusing on strengths and positive
 - iii. Armor of God (What *does* strengthen us with the ability to make good decisions? Might want to talk about symbols we can use in our every day lives to better remember these principles
 1. Belt of truth
 2. Breastplate of righteousness
 3. Shoes of preparation (to share the “gospel of peace”)
 4. Shield of faith
 5. Helmet of salvation (“sowterion” wholeness, maturity)
 6. Sword of the Spirit
 - e. Full Reading
 - f. Conclusion (good advice for relationships, love other as yourself, but doesn't need the husband/wife distinction)

II. Scripture Study

- a. To Whom? the Ephesians? (textual variant)
- b. From Whom? Authorship of Ephesians
- c. A letter?
- d. Book Recommendation: Raymond Brown's Introduction to the New Testament (read section on why Ephesians was written)

III. Study Notes

- a. Implications of pseudepigraphy in the New Testament. (challenge and be challenged by!) Ephesians is pretty great. I was inspired as I read it. So how can a "lie" be inspiring?
- b. Is the world really so "wicked"? (Steven Pinker, Better Angels of our Nature)
- c. In groups, out groups, and Mormons (the sociology of this "wicked world" talk)
- d. Armor of God II: behavioral economics and good decisions (Dan Ariely and Nudge, Thinking Fast and Slow) (making decisions and following through on decisions, Haidt's rider and elephant idea, mediation, link to Phil McLemore)

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/1990/10/no-more-strangers-and-foreigners?lang=eng>
https://speeches.byu.edu/talks/william-g-eggington_therefore-ye-are-no-more-strangers-and-foreigners/