

Missing In Action!

Opening thoughts:

- By God's design, men in the home are to act as “**provider**”, “**protector**” and “**pastor**,” not that mom can't provide these things, but it is the main role and responsibility (and blessing) for the man to take this position. (See the prior study handout for “Provider, Protector, Priest in the marriage section)
- When men are removed from their post in the family, what happens?
- It is critical that we as men step back into that role for our family; and in the lives of others who are in need of a father figure in their lives when their's is not available.

Question (first read **Judges 2:8-11 and 17:6**):

Just as the Israelites **changed in just one generation** after Joshua and that generation died, how is our nation changing and why? What or who is behind it?

Consider satan's schemes (also, see prior study on “**Satan**” in the general section):

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| ♣ to destroy the family by removing the man
(physically, spiritually and emotionally) | ♣ that destroys our cities |
| ♣ that destroys the church | ♣ that destroys the state |
| ♣ that destroys the community | ♣ that destroys the nation |
| | ♣ that destroys the world |

Read **1 Peter 5:8-9** and **John 10:10**.

- How do you think Satan is trying to take down the family? Be specific.
- How have you seen this play out in the family you grew up in?
- How might this be playing out in your present family?
- How has this affected our communities and our culture?

Our response:

Now that we know Satan's intent, how should we prepare for and respond to his schemes?
(read Ephesians 6:10-18)

Describe the effectiveness of putting on the armor of God.

How does it compare to times when you have failed to put it on and keep it on?

(Discuss the elements of the armor in more detail and how to use it):

- Belt of truth; don't lie (verse 14) - Used to tuck in the cloak (to move quickly - Exodus 12:11); and it also supports the sword (the Word of God).
- Breastplate of righteousness; doing what is right (verse 14) - Protects the heart (Proverbs 4:23).
- Feet fitted with the gospel of peace (verse 15) - Go and tell the good news (Proverbs 4:23), and avoid going to places where we do not belong!
- Shield of faith (verse 16) - Protects the whole body against Satan's flaming arrows (Psalm 3:3). We must remain faithful by following through on our commitments to God and to others.
- Helmet of salvation (verse 17) - Protects the mind (1 Corinthians 2:14,16).
- The Sword of the Spirit (Word of God) (verse 17) - The offensive tool of the armor. Jesus replied to Satan's temptations three times with the Word of God; “It is written” (Matthew 4:4,7,10).
- To go along with the armor of God, always pray and stay alert (verse 18).

Final challenge:

*What is one thing you are willing to do this week
to strengthen your position as the man in your home?*