

Fall Cultivate Bible Study: The Armor of God

Week 5 Discussion Guide
Rebecca Boganwright – Faith

Hello friends! We've turned a corner in our fall bible study, and we're headed toward the finish line! We hope you've experienced the power of the armor of God as you have cultivated truth into your life over the past four weeks. We're cheering you on as you continue the work of REAL growth that God is doing in you.

Watch our week 5 teaching video, then use this discussion guide – either in a group or on your own – to reflect, respond and pray. Remember, your goal is not to get through the content, but to get the content through you. Be REAL, give the Holy Spirit room to move and respond to God as you study.

| Cultivate Wholeness |

Faith is essential to wholeness because it is the foundation of our salvation and our protection in the battle.

| Key Verses |

“By grace you have been saved through faith.” Ephesians 2:8 NIV

“Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil...put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in time of evil. Then after the battle you will be standing firm. In addition to [the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, and shoes of peace] hold up the shield of faith to put a stop to the fiery arrows of the devil.” Ephesians 6:11 NLT

“Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see.” Hebrews 11:1 NLT

“You don't have enough faith,” Jesus told them. “I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed...nothing would be impossible.” Matthew 17:20 NLT

“I do believe, but help me overcome my unbelief.” Mark 9:24 NLT

| Video Notes |

Fill in the blanks following the on-screen prompts:

1. The enemy wants to _____ your faith.
2. Your faith is your _____ of defense in battle.
3. Our shield of faith protects us in battle because it forces us to _____ that God is the one to _____.
4. God wants to _____ your faith.
5. The test of the _____ of our faith is the way that we _____.
6. Your faith doesn't have to be _____ because God is.
7. Our faith becomes _____ when we are together.

| Reflect & Discuss |

1. Reflect on a time (past or present) you experienced the enemy trying to steal your faith. What did that feel like? What did you learn about yourself? About the enemy? About God?
2. What does your faith mean to you? Try to describe how you have gained that perspective – e.g. God proved himself, you grew in understanding, had a pivotal experience, etc.
3. To the world, faith can feel like a crutch, but as followers of God, we are invited to rely on His strength in our weakness. Is there anything or anyone else you turn to or rely on in the face of a battle? How does that either encourage your faith or distract you from it? How would turning to God first impact your faith?
4. Is there any area of your life where you are relying on your own strength [control, effort, energy] rather than believing that God is enough? What would it look like for you to have less fight and more faith?
5. Who is someone in your life you count on to encourage your faith? What about their faith makes yours stronger? Make it a point to reach out this week and tell them what their faith means to you.

| Pray & Journal |

Be still before God, inviting Him to search your heart. If you'd like, journal your thoughts and prayers so that you can later look back on the REAL growth you experience this season.

The enemy wants to steal our faith by distracting us from living the life God has called us to. **Be REAL with self.** Where has your faith wavered? In what ways is the enemy trying to distract, divide or destroy your faith? Consider your habits and choices, the way you spend your time and energy, your thoughts toward yourself and others. In what ways do you want to commit to cultivate faith? Be specific – I will commit to _____ [read my bible, pray, share my faith, worship, bring my thoughts captive, cast my cares, etc.]

Your faith is your firm, unshakeable belief in the promises of God. That means that when [not if] battles come, we run toward God and rely on [depend, lean, rest] on His truth. **Be REAL with God.** Does the faith you live align with the faith you proclaim? Are you living like God is big enough to handle your battles? What is something you need God to help you believe He can do – whether that is a battle around you or within you? Ask God to help you with any unbelief you're experiencing and invite Him to strengthen your faith.

While God wants to be our first line of defense, there is strength in community. How do you need others to link arms with you in faith? **Be REAL with others** and invite someone you trust to walk alongside you as you pursue faith. Share specific ways they can pray for/with you, encourage you and/or hold you accountable.

| Dig Deeper |

Choose any of the dip deeper opportunities to cultivate more of God's word into your life. Consider looking up the verses in a different bible translation/version for added perspective.

- Read Hebrews Chapter 11 known as the Hall of Faith.
 - Whose story stands out? Why do you connect with them?
 - According to v6, what do we need to please God? How do we accomplish that?
 - What does v39 say the reward for their faith was?
 - How does the faith of these saints encourage you to cultivate faith in your own life?
- Read Matthew 17:20 NLT: How much faith does Jesus say we need? Reflect on Jesus' reference to a seed. What do seeds do when planted? What do seeds need to thrive? What practical things can you cultivate into your life so that your faith is active, healthy and whole?

| References & Resources |

- KIND Table is coming! Save the date for Friday, November 20 as we invite you to serve as an ambassador of kindness by setting a table in your home, gathering the women in your life around it and together remembering the goodness of God. Learn more at cultivate.sc/kindtable.
- If you or your group watch our weekend message at Sandals Church, incorporate one question from our weekly reflection guide at cultivate.sc/discussion to live out what you're learning on the weekends.