



Introduction

In the Biblical book of Ephesians, Apostle Paul wrote many instructions and encouragements to the Christians in the ancient city of Ephesus. In Chapter 6 of the book, Paul wrote about what is called the Armor of God. These are metaphorical examples of the tools we have as Christians to stand against the enemy's attacks. This game was inspired by these teachings and provides an engaging experience for players that forces cooperation in the midst of competition.

Components and Requirements

1 deck of 72 cards | 2 players, ages 12 and up | 30-60 minutes

9 Lost Souls | 12 Armor | 20 Ammunition | 20 Gospels | 4 Demons | 7 Sins

Overview

In this game, two players act as both allies and opponents as they try to save as many Lost Souls as they can, but be the first one to save 7 total. Utilizing Biblical Ammunition, the Gospel, and the Armor of God, players dispel Demons and Sin so as to release the Lost Souls from the traps which bind them. They must work together in order to get through the barriers, but they are competing against each other to be the one to free the final Lost Soul.

Setup

To set up the game, shuffle the deck, which is shared between both players. Once shuffled, the other player draws 7 cards. Any Lost Souls in this first draw must be put in the playing area immediately. Keep drawing and playing this way until you get a hand of 7 that does not include Lost Souls. This helps set up the playing area in a random way every time you play. If you don't draw any Lost Souls, it's okay to start the game with an empty playing area. When playing Lost Souls, imagine a line that separates both players – a

horizontal equator between players. Play Lost Souls on this line, right in the middle of the playing area (see reference image below). Now, the player who shuffled will repeat this process for their own hand. The second player (non-shuffler) will start the game.

Gameplay

At the beginning of each turn, you will refill your hand to 7. As you draw, all Lost Souls that come into your hand are played *first*, before you take any normal actions. After you start the game, you do not redraw cards after playing Lost Souls. Next, any Sin cards you possess are played on top of any available Lost Souls immediately. If there are no Lost Souls in play, skip this part and play them on your next turn when Lost Souls are in actually play. You will play *all* Sin cards in hand in one turn. So if you have 4 Sin cards in hand and your opponent just played 1 Lost Soul on their turn, all 4 get placed on that Soul at the start of your turn. If there are more than one Lost Souls played, play as many Sins on whichever Souls you choose until you've played all Sins from your hand. If, for example, 3 Lost Souls were played, you could play 2 on a Lost Soul, then 1 on each of the others; 3 on a Soul, 1 on another; All 4 on a Soul – however you want to distribute them.

After Sin cards, any Demons in hand are played. When playing Demons, play between the Lost Souls and you. This represents Demons getting in your way of helping the Lost Souls. This also represents the messages of Matthew 7:5 and Ecclesiastes 4:9,10. After this, players can choose what to play next: Armor, Ammunition, or Gospel cards – any order. This is when the automatic element of the game is over and you implement your strategy.

Armor cards are played between where Demons sit and your edge of the playing area. There are six pieces of Armor. When you collect and play all six, you are able to discard all six pieces at once on your turn to



automatically discard all Demon and Sin cards in play. Duplicates of Armor in hand are discarded immediately after you draw them because you don't need them.

Ammunition cards are played on Demons and Sin. It takes 1 Ammunition to clear a Sin card. It takes 2 to clear a Demon card. Note, however, that you cannot clear the Demons in front of *you*. *Your opponent* must play on *your* Demons and *you* must play on *their* Demons. When a Demon is in *your* way, you can still play on your opponent's Demons (Eccl. 4:9,10) and may play Armor cards on yourself, but you must wait until your path is cleared by your opponent before you can play on the Lost Souls (Matt. 7:5). When your path is finally clear, you can continue to play Ammunition on Sin cards to get them off the Lost Souls.

When a Lost Soul is clear of Sin cards and Demons are not in your way, you may play Gospel cards on the Lost Souls. It takes 4 Gospel cards to save a Lost Soul. You and your opponent work together to be able to play the Gospel cards, but compete to be the one to play the 4th one. This is where a lot of strategy and timing come into play. (*On the one hand, you may want to be nice and clear their Demon. On the other hand, maybe you want to wait just one more turn and claim that Soul and then clear their Demon.*) When you save a Soul, discard it and add 1 point to your score.

Here is a summary of the cards and how many of each card are played per turn:

Lost Souls, Sin, and Demons: You may play any number, but you must play them all at the beginning of your turn. These are the automatic ones that you don't control and that add obstacles to the game. There is no limit to how many Sin cards can be on one Soul. There is no limit to how many Demons are in front of you, but you may only play them on you and you can't play on the Lost Souls until your opponent clears your Demons.

Armor: You may play only 1 per turn on yourself. Collect and then discard all 6 to clear all Sin and Demon cards from play (this does not clear any Sin or Demons from your hand, but at this point of your turn, there shouldn't be any in either player's hand), anyway.

Ammunition: You may play only 1 per 'target' (Sin or Demon) per turn. You can play several Ammunition cards, so long as they are each on a different target.

Gospel: You may only play 1 per 'target' (Lost Soul) per turn. You can play several Gospel cards, so long as they are each on a different target.

All discarded/cleared cards must be placed in a single Discard pile next to the Draw pile. These will be reused throughout the game. When the Draw pile is empty, shuffle the Discard and make a new Draw pile.

Winning the Game

It will take time and cooperation to get there, but finally one of you will be able to play the final Gospel card and rescue that elusive Lost Soul #7. The first player to claim that 7th point wins the game!

Note on Application

On most cards, there are Scripture references. You can use these cards as Bible study aids or conversation starters. Look up these verses (compare between versions) and determine how they can be applied to our lives and in our specific cultures and environments. This also provides great opportunities for memorization and discussing how we can help each other wear the Armor and walk as Christians. We hope you enjoy Ephesus!



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