

Messes and Masterpieces: Winning Spiritual Battles
Ephesians 6:10-20
6-23-19

2 Corinthians 11:3 - "But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ."

I. Spiritual Battles have existed from the Beginning:

Genesis 3:1 - ...(Satan) said to the woman, "Did God actually say...?"
Deception about God's goodness and authority.

Genesis 3:4 - "...the serpent said to the woman, 'You will not surely die.'"
Deception about sin and consequences.

Genesis 3:5 - "...God knows that when you eat...your eyes will be opened...you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
Deception about self-reliance and freedom.

Genesis 3:8 - ...they heard...the Lord God walking...(they) hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.
Deception about the effect of shame, guilt and hiding.

Genesis 3:10 - "And he said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden... I was afraid, because I was naked...I hid myself.'"
Deception leading to fear, self-protection and self-promotion.

Genesis 3:12-13 - "The man said, 'The woman whom you gave me...gave me fruit...' The woman said, 'The serpent deceived me...'"
Deception leading to blame and ungratefulness.

Genesis 3:16 - "Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."
Deception about relationships and our God-given roles.

Genesis 3:19 - "By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground...."
Deceived about the reality of death.

Genesis 4:5 - "...Cain was very angry, and his face fell."
Deceived about the effects of anger, unhappiness and strongholds.

Genesis 3:15 - "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."

1. Strongholds are layers of deception that lead to defeat and death.
2. Satan attacks us in our past wounds, present difficulties and future fears.

Ephesians 6:10-20

II. In Christ we are strengthened to stand:

1. Strong against the enemy. (Ephesians 6:10-12)

2 Corinthians 10:4-5 - "For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ."

Joshua 1:9 – "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

2. Secure in spiritual battle. (Ephesians 6:13-18)

3. Boldly praying while proclaiming the Gospel. (Ephesians 6:19-20)

2 Thessalonians 3:1 - "... pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored..."

To Go Further This Week:

1. Why can it be so tempting for us to take the fight to other people instead of the true enemy?
2. How does practicing spiritual disciplines help you walk in the power of His might? Discuss the value of fasting, prayer, reading the Word, encouragement, confession, solitude and practicing sabbath rest.
3. In what ways does your daily life show that you believe yourself to be engaged in spiritual battle? In what ways does it not?
4. How should understanding prayer as weaponized weakness shape the way we pray for ourselves and others? (2 Corinthians 12:9)
5. How can a failure to pray and proclaim the gospel indicate a refusal to believe we are at war with spiritual forces? Pray for one another to be on mission with the Gospel and fight well in Christ.