

ANGELS AND DEMONS

MESSAGE NEXT STEPS

FIGHTING EVIL

NOVEMBER 14

Poverty, injustice, corruption, violence, racism, and sexism are just some of the ways that evil manifests in our world. At the root of all evil perpetrated by humans is people's personal decision to follow a lie rather than the truth. The solution to the problem of evil isn't in changing all those people out there, it starts within us. The line between good and evil runs through every human heart. With God's help, we can live in the light of truth and fight against the evil within and the evil in our world.

Work through the following questions and scriptures on your own, and get together with your running partner, life group, or friends and family to talk through what you are learning.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How do you respond to this statement: "The ONLY power evil has over you is the power of the lie: lies telling us how we can prove our worth, or get our deep needs met, or be safe or secure, or loved or accepted." When was a time you experienced this to be true?
2. What stood out to you from the message?
3. Read **Ephesians 6:10-18**:
 - a.) Make some observations about this passage (What does the text say):
 - Who is talking?
 - What is the circumstance?
 - Any repeated phrases?
 - What surprised you?
 - What stood out to you?
 - b.) Make some interpretations (What does the passage mean)
 - What questions do you have?
 - What do you think is going on in this passage?
 - What do you learn about the nature and character of God as you read this?
 - What do you learn about yourself or the world around you?
 - How does this add to your understanding of how to fight evil?
 - c.) Now make some applications (what's my response)
 - How do you respond to what you are reading?
 - What is the central truth that you could put into practice from this?
 - Who could you share this with for the sake of encouragement?
5. Read **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** & **James 4:7**. We can demolish (destroy) places in our minds where we have believed lies that have led us to be stuck, deceived, or sin. What places in your life right now do you need to "take captive every thought" so that you aren't living deceived?

6. Read **James 1:13-17**. Do you believe that “everything good and perfect comes from God”? Why or why not? Where are you tempted right now in life to go your own way? What do you think God would say to you about that path?

KEY SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord’s people.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

James 1:13-17 When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. Don’t be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

DIGGING DEEPER

You have power over evil. You have power over lies that are told to you. Jesus defeated evil on the cross and he gave that authority over evil to you when you put your faith in him as your savior. We all have areas in our mind/ thoughts where we are tempted to believe a lie over what is true. This week spend some time thinking about things you believe about yourself and your life. Ask yourself:

- If God was sitting here with me would he agree with this thought I have about myself?
- Where did this thought come from (who told me this or what circumstances lead me to believe this)?
- Would I ever say something like what I believe about myself and my situation to someone I love?
- Where have I made other people the enemy? God says they aren’t (**Ephesians 6:12**).

Once you identify some lies, **Practice putting off those lies and putting on truth** (taking captive every thought & making it obedient to Jesus truth **2 Corinthians 10:5**).

Putting off lies – We’ve learned that last few weeks that there are spiritual forces that are either for or against God. Evil can get us to believe things about others, ourselves, and our lives that keep us stuck and unhealthy and eventually can cause us to destroy our lives or the lives of those around us. If you believe that you aren’t worthy of love, good enough, pretty enough, smart enough, or that a group of people/ kind of person isn’t equal to others you will make choices accordingly. BUT we can say no to those lies.

- When you recognize a lie you’ve been believing, say no (out loud) to that lie. The forces of evil can’t read your mind, so you must speak out. There is also power for your own mind to hear you proclaim what is true and untrue out loud.

- It looks something like this: LIE: I have to be strong and loud to get respect and love. That is a lie. So, when that comes to your mind say NO to it out loud. "NO, I don't believe that I have to be strong and loud to get respect and love, that is a lie that keeps me acting in ways I don't want to. I choose not to believe that lie anymore!"

Putting on Truth – Once you recognize a lie and put off that lie tell yourself the truth from God's word. If you don't know what God would say about that lie, ask a friend or spiritual leader here at Gateway or use a Bible app and search for God's truth in scripture.

- It looks something like this: "God I know that you have created me to be loved by you and others. I'm uniquely created by you (**Psalm 139:13**) for good things in this world (**Ephesians 2:10**). When I came to know you, Jesus, you also began making me new, so I don't have to live in the ways I have in the past (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). Show me who you say I am Jesus and help me believe you!"

This will take time. You might have to repeat these things 20 times a day, but over time the lie will fade and you will begin to walk more and more in the truth which will lead to LIFE!