

Ephesians 6:10-20

Week 1

Introduction

“There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.” –C.S. Lewis

The Passage

I. Reality of the Battle

A. Paul uses lots of battle imagery

- “Fight the good fight of faith”
- “Endure hardship, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ”
- “Put on the full armor of God”

B. Do we have a “wartime mentality” or a peacetime mentality?

1. Wartime mentality

- a. Seriousness that comes from having an appropriate sense of danger
 - 1 Pt 5:8: Devil prowls around like a lion
- b. Focus on the task at hand
 - Eph 6:18: keep alert
 - 2 Tim 4:5: Keep your head at all times
- c. Discipline
 - 1 Peter 4:7: Be clear-minded and self-controlled so that you can pray.
- d. Sober expectation on life
 - 2 Tim 3:12: Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted

2. Peacetime mentality

Casual, less focused, less disciplined, more expectations
of getting desires met here and now: comfort, entertainment, fun

C. The American Church has developed a peacetime mentality when it comes to faith

- 1. We are incredibly casual, unfocused, undisciplined
- 2. Example: our approach to God’s Word
 - a. If something spiritual takes considerable time we don’t do it
 - b. If something spiritual is hard we stop:
 - c. If something doesn’t give us an immediate emotional result

D. We are living with a peacetime mentality when the situation calls for wartime mentality

II. The Nature of the Battle

A. The enemy is a spiritual enemy (v. 11-12)

- 1. Satan (v. 11)
- 2. Other spiritual forces that are part of Satan’s evil empire (v. 12)
 - They are powerful, evil, and cunning, and we are outmatched on our own

B. The battle is spiritual

- 1. You can’t see it and touch it
- 2. Yet the ground of battle is our daily, concrete circumstances

3. So behind our daily, concrete circumstances, there's a spiritual battle going on
4. If we are only focused on the concrete, surface issues, we may be missing the more important reality and fighting the less important battles

Examples: In each example, what are the surface battles and what are the spiritual battles?

- a. A young man trying to make his way in the world and provide a standard of living for his family
- b. Parents working hard to get their children to be good students in school
- c. Someone going through health crisis, trying to get healthy

III. The goal of the battle

A. The goal of the battle is to "stand firm" (v. 11-14)

B. Notice the goal is not to charge, nor is it to flee

1. Because Jesus has already won the decisive victory in this battle. He has taken enemy territory and he now occupies that territory. And we are called to simply maintain that territory and stand firm so that Satan cannot reoccupy territory (see Col 2:14-15, Eph 2:1-3, Eph 2:4, Col 1:13)
2. Ephesians 1-3 are about the victory Christ has already accomplished
= salvation, forgiveness, freedom, Holy Spirit, hope of eternal life, a community reconciled, good works God has prepared
3. Ephesians 4-6 are about walking in that victory
= living in gratitude, worship, focusing on our eternal hope, loving one another
4. Ephesians 6: Stand firm in that victory
 - a. The armor is primarily defensive armor
 - b. The armor is simply putting on the salvation we have in Christ
 - c. So the key issue is: am I living each day in light of my salvation? Am I standing firm in the victory Christ has won on my behalf?

Discussion Questions

1. Opening questions: What struck you most about the sermon/the passage? What surprised you? What confused you? What did you disagree with?
2. Of the two errors mentioned by C.S. Lewis in the Introduction, which error do you think you tend to fall into? Which error do you observe most in the Christians around you?
3. When it comes to pursuing your own faith, what evidence do you see of a peacetime mentality and what evidence do you see of a wartime mentality? In what specific way would you like to grow in taking on more of a wartime mentality?
4. What are the dangers or shortcomings (if any) of using the battle metaphor to think about our faith?
5. As you look at the circumstances of your life right now, where are the spiritual battles? Where are you aware of a struggle that is going on, and how are you being called to faithfully walk through that struggle?
6. Paul talks about “standing firm” in our faith and salvation. Where are you most tempted to deny or to forget some key aspect of our salvation in such a way that you are not able to stand firm? (for example: forgetting God’s forgiveness, holding onto things of this world rather than focusing on eternal life, forgetting that we are reconciled to each other, etc)