

CHALLENGE(s) = take aways/action steps from the book that you can incorporate into your weekly Seize the Summer challenge. Pick one a week to focus on and just see if you're not more free, more fulfilled and more like Jesus by the end of this Summer!

Have everyone introduce themselves and share a 1-2 sentence synopsis of what life looks like for them in this season.

Intro and Section One: Declare War on What You Think

If you have a book fill out the declaration of war in the intro. If you don't have a copy fill this out:

In what ways do you need to get out of your own way?

THE THINGS HOLDING ME BACK:

I DECLARE WAR
ON THIS DAY _____
AT THIS TIME _____
SIGNED _____

Read Psalm 27:13 and 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 out loud

“Opposition is table stakes for living the life you were born to live. Of course, there is an easy way to make the critics go away: do nothing, contribute nothing, stand for nothing, *be* nothing. When you live out your calling, you will always face potshots from people who have given up on theirs. “

Do you recognize this in your life? If not, why might that be?

Do recognize any of the defense mechanism he lists from your own life? How about the lives of those around you? *See pages 55-58 for examples.*

Read the middle section of page 58. Where or around whom do you wear a mask? What is the cost of wearing a mask?

You may be like young Levi, showing up empty, looking to others to “fill his cup.” What would it be like to look to Jesus instead and live with a cup-overflowing so that you have something to offer to those around you?

Discuss what it takes to live that way. *Hint: the battle is within*

Read Philippians 4:8

CHALLENGE: Apply this verse to every thought that comes into your mind. As if you’re the TSA don’t allow a single thought to stay in your mind that doesn’t meet the Phil. 4:8 standard. Replace wrong thinking with truth from God’s word about who you are.

Close with prayer. Then have each person share what their take away/action step is for this section.

Have everyone go around and say their names and share one thing that's on their bucket list for the summer.

Section 2 Declare War on What You Say

Look up the following verses and read them outloud:

Proverbs 18:21, James 3:3-10, Proverbs 25:11, Ephesians 4:29, Proverbs 15:1

Which one of the following phrases from section two jumps out at you the most? Why do you think that is?

- "You can alter how you feel through changing the way you speak."
- "You don't have to say everything you feel like saying."
- "The words you speak over people can change the course of their lives."
- "The person you talk to more than anyone is yourself."
- "If Jesus is Lord of your life he must be Lord of your lips too."

"If you have given your life to Jesus, then death isn't *leaving* home; it's *going* home."

If you've given your life to Christ, do you live like this is not your home?

If you haven't given your life to Christ, what holds you back?

CHALLENGE

On pages 87-89 Pastor Lusko talks through how he "suits up" for the day. Read through it and think about what suiting up and going to war needs to look like for you.

If you need to change your routine, write down your plan before leaving this section and put reminders in your phone or ask someone to hold you accountable to make a change.

Have you thought about the privilege that it is that God has given us the power of speech?

CHALLENGE

“Use your words to bless God’s heart, increase faith in those around you and make life better for those around you.”

Can you think of a situation where someone used their words to breathe life into you or to call out your best/true self? What kind of impact did that have on you?

Close with prayer.

Then have each person name their take away/action step for this section.

Have everyone go around and say their names and one prayer request. Someone else claim the prayer request to personally pray over in the time before your next session.

Section 3: Declare War on What you Do

Which one of the following phrases from section two jumps out at you the most? Why do you think that is?

- “The habits you allow in your life today are going to determine who you become tomorrow.”
- Read the C.S. Lewis quote on the bottom of 137 - top of 138
- “A lack of self-control now sets the stage for a future in which your emotions get the best of you. It won’t be easier to win the war within when if grow up on the outside but not on the inside.”
- “People who do the right things only when they feel them never enter into the victorious life. “
- Pastor Lusko talks about how most of life is “pre-game,” mundane daily tasks. “The real bulk of our lives is made of unglamorous unsexy unspectacular opportunities to keep our eyes on Jesus.”

How much weight have you been placing on the mundane and “inconsequential” decisions of your life? How does this section challenge you in that?

Read the large paragraph on page 139. What things have you (or do you) turn to to distract yourself?

Have you tried taking that discontent to the Lord? What difference did it make?

Pastor Lusko recites these truths before getting on stage:

I am a son of the king

I have the spirit that raised Christ from the dead

I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength

I am as bold as a lion

Read the 2nd paragraph from the bottom of page 162. What truth do you need to “preach” to yourself in order to win within?

Write it out here:

Close by praying for each other’s prayer requests.

Start by having each person share what action step from this study has had the biggest impact on their life so far?

Section 4 The Help You Need to Win This War

Read the following verses out loud:

2 Peter 1:3, 1 Cor. 10: 3-5, Zechariah 4:6, Psalm 3:5-6, 1 John 1:9, Isaiah 26:3

Which one of the following phrases from section two jumps out at you the most? Why do you think that is?

- “We are not to wage war according to our own resources. The power that leads to victory is not in us or from us; it is with God and comes to us from his hand.”
- “One of the biggest mistakes you could make is to try and do God’s work without God’s power.”
- [Read the paragraph on the bottom of 175 and top of 176.]
- “The Holy Spirit is the secret to victorious living.”
- “We should be so reliant on the Holy Ghost that were he to leave we would instantly feel like an astronaut without an oxygen supply.”
- “We don’t just need the forgiveness that comes at salvation; we need help, power from on high. Today too many believers are saved, but do not enjoy the empowerment.”

Would you say your life more reflects someone trying to live for God or someone letting God's life *live through* them?

Pause right now and pray, asking for forgiveness for relying on your own power instead of God's. Ask to be filled with fresh power to maintain what He's given you and to enter into what He has for you.

"A stronghold is an area in your life where you've become entrenched in believing something that isn't true, or in doing something you shouldn't be doing, as a result the enemy has a heavily fortified position in your life. Simply put: it's a constant pull in the wrong direction."

Identify any strongholds in your life:

As a group read through the five steps to overcoming a stronghold on page 179

Matthew 7:24-27 MSG "But if you just use my words in Bible studies but don't work them into your life, you are like a stupid carpenter who built his house on the sandy beach. When a storm rolled in and the waves came up, it collapsed like a house of cards."

CHALLENGE

"It will never be convenient to obey. But when you do what God has said, you'll experience power and blessing and peace. Decide to obey God and then let him work out the details."

Do you practice regular confession before God?

CHALLENGE

You can even make taking out the actual trash in your house a spiritual exercise; every time you grab a bag and head for the garbage cans, run through a checklist about what needs to get tossed out of our soul. Let God search your heart and get rid of whatever he brings to light. Give it to God.

CHALLENGE

Move from consumer to contributor. If you aren't serving at the Naz already (or serving somewhere where you feel fulfilled) visit www.ffnaz.org and under the ministries tab click 'serve' for a list of ways you can get involved right now.

"Whoever or whatever sits on the throne of your heart is what controls your life." Is there anything that competes with Jesus for your heart?

Pastor Lusko gives the following examples: "Our love of attention makes us value other people more than we value Jesus. Our love of stuff means we worship possessions more than Jesus. Our struggles with boldness cause us to worship comfort more than Jesus. And on and on it goes...It is a daily battle to continue to put God on the throne and banish the would-be kings. It's also the only way... to lay hold of victory."

CHALLENGE

"Put nothing above God in your heart."

“Filling your heart with truth causes it to be inhospitable to terror. When it is soaked in praise and steeped in Scripture, the enemy cannot gain traction.”

“Everytime the devil attacked Jesus in the desert, he responded by quoting God’s word. He confronted lies with truth.”

See Appendix A for a great list of verses to work with. How often do you work to memorize scripture so you’re ready to defend yourself from an attack? If you don’t know God’s word (study it) you won’t be able to recognize a lie from the truth.

Intimidated by reading the Bible? Check out the following resources:

www.thebibleproject.com (Or look it up on Youtube)

YouVersion app (download and subscribe to a Bible reading plan)

“Everytime the devil fights against something he’s tipping his hand so you can see what matters to him...It’s because you’re precious that he tries to make you feel worthless. It’s because you’re meant to choose life that he would try and suggest you should choose death. Whatever he says, it’s the opposite because he’s a liar...Let your fear help you sniff out what he’s trying to snuff out.”

CHALLENGE

If there are specific lies the devil assaults you with, do a Google search for verses that relate to that topic and do the work of memorizing those so you have an arsenal to defend yourself with.

“You can do this. It won’t be easy or fast or pain free, but you *can* do this. “

To close, revisit your declaration of war from session one. Resolve to apply what you've studied over the last four sessions. Discuss means of accountability or following up to help everyone stick with it.

Close by praying for each other and the fight that God has called you to.