

# Week 31: "Our Battle"

## Day One: "Recognizing the Real Battle" Part I

Read: Ephesians 6:12

**Reflect:** On a day-to-day basis, how aware are you that you are in the midst of a spiritual battle?  
(Note: the true answer to this may be indicated in the habits of your prayer life)

**Dig:** According to Ephesians 6:12, characterize our struggle:

It's not against : \_\_\_\_\_ ( now apply this to your life by making it specific)

It is against : \_\_\_\_\_ ( as best you can make this specific as well)

Does it surprise you that Paul refers to "spiritual forces of evil in the "heavenly realms"?

For other places Paul references "heavenly realms," see Eph: 1:3, 1:20, 2:6, and 3:10.

Read Daniel 10:12-14 for a description of battles waged in the heavenly realms.

For another vivid account of advocates in the spiritual realm, read 2 Kings 6: 8-17, especially verses 15-17.

**Apply:** Ask God to stir up greater sensitivity within you to the real battle we are fighting -- and to open your eyes to see "those who are with us."

## Week Thirty-One: "Our Battle"

### Day Two: "Recognizing the Real Battle" Part II

Read: Ephesians 6:12

**Reflect:** What are the images that are normally associated with the incarnation (Jesus' birth)? Think of the words to songs such as "Silent Night" or "Away in the Manger".

**Dig:** Contrast those idyllic images with the account recorded in Revelation 12; in what verses do you see evidence of a spiritual battle?"

According to verses 9 and 10, what is Satan's mission? (for further reading see John 8:44b and Zech. 3:1-7)

Although the ultimate war is won (v.10), what battles are still being fought? (See v. 17)

How have you seen evidence of this in your own life or in the life of the church this past week?

**Apply:** Read Hebrews 2:14, then write a prayer thanking Jesus that he shared in our humanity and

through his death and resurrection has won the war against Satan.

## **Week Thirty-One: "Our Battle"**

### **Day Three: "A Closer Look at the Rulers and Authorities"**

**Read: Eph. 6:12**

**Reflect:** In what ways do you see evidence of the rulers and authorities of this "dark world" at work in causing/perpetuating racism, consumerism, naturalism, and other "isms"? In what ways are spiritual forces of evil infiltrating institutions such as marriage, the family, government...?

**Dig:** See what scripture says regarding some of the forces we battle:

*Read Colossians 2:8*

- What were the "hollow and deceptive philosophies" Paul refers to?
- What are some that would be true for today? (see Col. 2:20, 23)

*Read Ephesians 2:14-18*

- What was the dividing wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles? (see v. 11-13)
- What are some dividing walls we see today?

*Read Colossians 2:15 and note the triumph we have in Christ.*

**Apply:** Since our true battle is not against flesh and blood, we have to fight appropriately. Read 2 Cor. 10: 3-5 and wield one of the most powerful weapons: prayer. Specifically pray for the strongholds you identified above to be demolished.

## **Week Thirty-One: "Our Battle"**

### **Day Four: "Whom Shall I Fear?"**

**Read: Ephesians 6:12**

**Reflect:** We've spent time this week examining Satan's schemes (vs.11). In what ways has your sensitivity to the 'spiritual realm' been heightened? Some people don't want to talk about Satan or demons because it fills them with fear. Has this been your experience?

**Dig:** Read Matthew 10:28. In what ways do Jesus' words to his disciples parallel those of Ephesians 6:12?

Is he implying that we should live in fear of Satan and his demons? (Continue reading verses 29-31)

Ephesians 6:12 notes that our struggle is against rulers, authorities, powers, and spiritual forces of evil. Compare that list to the position of Christ seen in Ephesians 1:19-22, especially verse 21. Now note your position with him (Ephesians 2:6).

**Apply:** Spend some time meditating on and perhaps singing Psalm 27:1, "The Lord is my light and my salvation-whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life - of whom shall I be afraid?"

## **Week Thirty-One: "Our Battle"**

### **Day Five: "Lectio Divina"**

**Read:** Ephesians 6:12 "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 realms." Read also Colossians 2:15 "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."

Lectio divina (a Latin expression which means Sacred reading) is done in three stages:

-- *reading*: you read the passage slowly and reverentially, allowing the words to sink into your consciousness; after you have memorized the text, write down one word which strikes you and draws your attention and note why you chose that word.

-- *meditation*: you allow the passage to stir up memories within you, so that you recognize in it your own experience or that of people who have touched your life; write down memories of events or conversations or other scripture passages.

-- *prayer*: you allow the meditation to lead you to prayer -- thanksgiving, humility and petition.

Write out a prayer based on the passage.