



DAY ONE

2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-6



Stories of war make up much of human history. We learn about many of them in our history classes. Nations have battled over land and power and sometimes, over just causes. There is a time and place to fight—to take a stand. As believers, we're called to fight our battles differently; we're called to use different weapons.

This passage reminds us that our battle isn't against other people. We have a real enemy: Satan. But if we are going to battle against him successfully, then we can't depend on the weapons of this world. For instance, if someone gossips about you, you may be tempted to view that person as your enemy; you may want to fight back by slandering them too. These verses show us that fighting back with the weapon of gossip—or any worldly weapon—is useless. This passage commands us to take captive every single thought we have, to hold it prisoner until God shows us if it needs to be released. This means we surrender our will to the Lord and fight back with the weapons He gives us: the fruits of the Spirit, the Word, the armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17). When we feel hurt by the world, we might be tempted to fight back against it using the world's weapons, but when we do so, we're fighting the wrong enemy. Our true enemy is Satan and the powers of darkness (Eph. 6:12). Waging war against anyone else is a distraction.

- **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO TAKE EVERY THOUGHT CAPTIVE (V. 5)?
WHAT THOUGHTS DO YOU NEED TO TAKE CAPTIVE?**
- **WHY WOULD SATAN WANT TO DISTRACT US INTO THINKING
OTHER PEOPLE ARE OUR ENEMIES?**

PRAY

**GOD, HELP ME TO REMEMBER WHO THE REAL ENEMY
IS AND NOT TO GET DISTRACTED BY HIS SCHEMES.
THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME ALL I NEED TO FIGHT
AGAINST DARKNESS AND EVIL.**



DAY TWO

EPHESIANS 6:10-18

Yesterday, we read about our real enemy—Satan. We learned that we're not to fight against the enemy with worldly weapons, but if we're honest, it can be hard to know how to fight. It can feel like we're in the middle of a battlefield with no protection, but this isn't true at all. We are certainly in the middle of a battle; spiritual warfare is happening all around us. The real enemy came to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). But we aren't empty-handed—not even close.

Here's the thing: the same power that raised Jesus from the dead lives inside of us as believers (Rom. 8:11). Sometimes we fail to remember this, and sometimes we fail to live as if it's true. We walk around as if we're powerless against sin and temptation. The same power that raised Jesus lives in you! When He feels distant, it's likely because we're not doing what it takes to walk intimately with Christ: we're not spending time in prayer, reading the Word, or worshiping. To walk by the Spirit, we have to keep in step with Him (Gal. 5:25); we have to nurture our relationship with Him. Next, God supplies us with armor, which we read about in today's passage. We're encouraged to put on every piece to protect ourselves from Satan's attacks, but we're also encouraged to pick up our true weapon—the sword of the Spirit, God's Word. We're often tempted to fight with worldly ideas or with logic, but these things will fail us. When we know God's Word, we can detect the enemy's lies. We can know God's truth and walk in it. We can discern how God wants us to live, and when the enemy tries to distract us, we recognize his lies. Fighting a battle without God's Word is impossible; it's our only offensive weapon. To use it, we must pick it up daily, and we must hide it in our hearts.

- **WHEN HAVE YOU FELT EMPTY-HANDED IN FIGHTING AGAINST SIN, TEMPTATION, OR DARKNESS? WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE HELP YOU UNDERSTAND?**
- **ASSESS HOW YOU'RE FIGHTING: ARE YOU DEPENDING ON THE WORD AS YOUR WEAPON OR ON SOMETHING ELSE? EXPLAIN.**

PRAY

GOD, THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME WHAT I NEED TO DO BATTLE AGAINST SIN, TEMPTATION, AND DARKNESS. HELP ME TO DEPEND ON YOUR WORD AS MY WEAPON INSTEAD OF THINGS THAT WILL ALWAYS FAIL ME IN BATTLE.



DAY THREE

ISAIAH 8:11-13

Herd mentality is a phenomenon which says that people tend to follow the crowd instead of operating as individuals, much like a herd of animals. People will go along with the groups' beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes instead of going against them. Think about what you see each day in school, at work, or in extracurricular activities. You'll probably recognize how common it is to simply go with the crowd instead of against it. It's the easier path because we blend in and avoid being singled out from others. Sadly, this desire to be like everyone else often motivates us more than a desire to be a light in the darkness. We'd rather be like everyone else than be singled out for our beliefs, so we go along with the profanity everyone uses; we linger around gossip; we attend parties we know we shouldn't attend. We blend in with the herd—with the world.

In this passage, the prophet Isaiah spoke to God's people about a coming invasion. One day soon, Assyria would invade Judah, and this the people great fear. This fear could drive them to make impulsive decisions which were against God's commands. They feared Assyria more than they feared the Lord. Isaiah expressed God's warning, basically saying: "Don't go the same way as the people." In other words, don't fear what they fear. Fear has a similar effect on us, doesn't it? We fear what the world fears: we fear not fitting in or being made fun of for our faith. Isaiah's words hold truth for us too: "Don't fear what they fear; don't walk the same way as the world; fear the Lord." When we fear God, we hold Him in the highest respect. We desire to live the way He has commanded us to live. And this often means not walking the same direction as the world.

- **IN WHAT AREAS OF YOUR LIFE ARE YOU CONCERNED WITH BLENDING IN?**
- **WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM GOING ANOTHER WAY? WHAT DO YOU FEAR?**

PRAY

LORD, I CONFESS THAT SOMETIMES I FEAR WHAT THE WORLD FEARS. I GET CONSUMED WITH FITTING IN AND BEING LIKE EVERYONE ELSE. HELP ME TO WALK YOUR WAY EVEN WHEN IT'S DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY OTHERS WALK.



DAY FOUR

ROMANS 8:26-27

What does it mean to have someone's back? Well, that simply means you're there for someone else. It means you would do everything you could to help this person. Think about the people in your life who have your back. No matter what you face, you know these people will be there with you. They would defend you in a room where others might talk about you. They're always on your side. They give you advice when you need it. If you have people like this, then you're blessed. If you don't have people like this, then you may feel like you're sometimes fighting alone. You may feel like no one really knows you. Paul explains in this passage that believers never fight alone and that God knows us fully.

As believers, we know the Spirit of God lives within us. This means His presence is with us wherever we go, guiding us and giving us wisdom and comfort. But God's Spirit living within us means so much more. His Spirit searches us and knows our deepest needs and longings. When we are weak and don't know what to pray, the Spirit speaks to God the Father on our behalf. The Holy Spirit intercedes for us, expressing our deepest needs to God when we can't express them on our own. We can take great comfort in this truth, especially when we feel like we're fighting alone. Maybe you need that reminder now. Maybe you feel like no one has your back. The Spirit of the living God is with you, helping you fight your battles and working on your behalf. You're fully known by Him.

- **WHEN HAVE YOU FELT LIKE YOU WERE WALKING ALONE? WHAT HAPPENED?**
- **HOW DOES THIS PASSAGE COMFORT YOU?**

PRAY

GOD, I THANK YOU THAT I'M NEVER ALONE. THANK YOU FOR SENDING YOUR SPIRIT TO LIVE WITHIN ME TO GUIDE ME, COMFORT ME, AND INTERCEDE ON MY BEHALF WHEN I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PRAY.



DAY FIVE

EXODUS 14:14

This week, we learned about how David defeated Goliath with just a sling a stone. He was incredibly disadvantaged in battle. David wasn't a warrior; he was a simple shepherd. But when he surrendered to the Lord, David was so much more than he could've been on his own. David knew the Lord was with him because he could trace God's work in his life. Looking back at God's faithfulness helped David trust the Lord in battle. He simply needed to be obedient to the Lord and let Him earn the victory.

Today's passage comes from another impossible situation involving God's people. Moses was leading God's people in deliverance from slavery in Egypt. They would soon walk through the Red Sea into freedom. But first, the enemy chased them down. They stood on the banks of the Red Sea with the Pharaoh's army approaching, seemingly trapped. Moses instructed the people not to give in to fear and to simply be still—to let the Lord fight for them. In reality, the Hebrew people couldn't defend themselves there on the river bank. Sure, maybe they could've run away into the wilderness. But the only way to fight back was to allow the Lord to fight for them in His incredible power and strength. We often need to follow in their footsteps. While we may be tempted to run away or to fight back, God often wants us to be still. He is fighting for us in ways we can't see. We can look back and trace His faithfulness, and when God asks us to be still, we can trust that He'll continue to be faithful.

- **HOW CAN YOU PRACTICE BEING STILL AND ALLOWING THE LORD TO FIGHT FOR YOU?**
- **LOOK BACK AT GOD'S FAITHFULNESS IN YOUR LIFE. HOW HAS HE FOUGHT FOR YOU IN THE PAST? HOW DOES THIS HELP YOU NOW?**

PRAY

**GOD, THANK YOU FOR BEING FAITHFUL TO ME.
WHEN YOU ASK ME TO BE STILL, I KNOW I CAN DO
SO BECAUSE YOU FIGHT FOR ME IN WAYS I CAN'T
ALWAYS SEE.**