
God's New Humanity:
"Battling Well When the War is Won"
Ephesians 6: 10-20

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

"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. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight." - C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*

"Though sin wars, it shall not reign; and though it breaks our peace, it cannot separate from his love. Nor is it inconsistent with his holiness and perfection, to manifest his favor to such poor defiled creatures, or to admit them to communion with himself; for they are not considered as in themselves, but as one with Jesus, to whom they have fled for refuge, and by whom they live by faith." - John Newton

"My friend, if you think of your Christian life ... with this sense of grudge, or as a wearisome task or duty, I tell you to go back to the beginning of your life, retrace your steps to the wicket gate through which you passed. Look at the world in its evil and sin, look at the hell to which it was leading you, and then look forward and realize that you are set in the midst of the most glorious campaign into which a man could ever enter, and that you are on the noblest road that the world has ever known." - M. Lloyd-Jones

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered or rabbit trails to be followed for you?
- Looking at the quotation from CS Lewis, which error about the devil seems most close to home for you, for our church, or for the American church? Why do we often resort to battling against flesh and blood (what Lewis calls being a materialist) and perhaps discount the unseen spiritual realities?
- Why is the prospect of going on spiritual autopilot so attractive? Where in your life are you looking for a silver-bullet that will end the battle?
- When and where do you experience the reality of the battle against evil in your life, your family, your work, and our culture? Do you feel equipped to engage or too overwhelmed? When have you sensed that you were battling well?
- Paul list in detail the various pieces of the armor of God. Which seems most valuable and personally needed for you? Why? Which pieces are elusive and not-so-well-used?
- What is the comfort and motivation for you in the fact that the war with evil is won? When are able to trust that and act upon it? When does it seem distant to you?
- Looking back over the study of the entire book of Ephesians, what has made an impact on you - either for the first time or a timely re-discovery?