



FOR FACILITATORS

- ✓ **PRAY** for insight as you begin to prepare for leading your group. Ask for God's wisdom, that the Holy Spirit will be the teacher and that you will be God's instrument. ***Prayer should be your primary source of personal preparation for leading your group!***
- ✓ **PLAN** where you want to take your group during this series. Participate and read through the weekly resources for preparation. Visualize what your time together should look like and plan in such a way to make it into reality. Hospitality and environment can help people feel comfortable and engage more freely. Provide snacks, something to drink, or organize a potluck.
- ✓ **EVALUATE** after each session and at the end of a series. Reflect on what went well and what didn't. How are you doing with facilitating the discussion: is it stimulating, challenging, and meaningful? Are you able to keep the group on track? Do you need to make some changes?

Using This Discussion Guide

- Review the discussion guide and sermon notes for this week, materials will be online, available to leaders through the Church Center App, and at the Welcome Center. You can also view the sermon from our website, www.faithunitedepc.org. As the discussion leader, you should preview and evaluate the questions based on the needs of your group.
- Feel free to adapt the format as needed. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, consider using additional Scripture and resources. Remember this is only a guide and you don't have to complete all of it. It is a tool to promote healthy discussion. The goal is good dialogue not necessarily getting through every question.
- The questions with Bible verses associated with them are there to encourage Bible literacy. Encourage different people to open their Bibles and read selected verses if they are willing and able.

WEEK 1: September 29, 2024
SERIES – STAND FIRM: 40 Days of Spiritual Warfare
TITLE - “The Spiritual Struggle”

Notes and questions adapted from “Spiritual Warfare: Armor of the Believer” by David Jeremiah, “When the Enemy Strikes” by Charles Stanley, and “The Devil in the Back Pew” by Joe Kovalcik

SUMMARY – “There was a day in our society when the population in general had a greater sense of good versus evil in the world. The population at large believed God and heaven were good and Satan and hell were bad and that most conflicts could be traced back to that larger division. Today many Christians live without any awareness of the great spiritual conflict taking place all around them and how it might be impacting their personal life. The Bible tells us Satan loses and we win in the end. But in the interim, Satan is on the attack. All we have to do is be alert and wear the armor God has provided in order to make it safely through.” – David Jeremiah

OPEN WITH PRAYER

REVIEW FORMAT FOR YOUR TIME TOGETHER

- Go over scheduling and expectations for your time together
- Location and time of meetings? Are different people going to host? Will food be involved or not?
- You will need to bring to each meeting: A Bible, Sermon Notes, and Life Group Questions

LIFE GROUP COVENANT: Read aloud and discuss together

- For Life Groups to be one of the best experiences about this 40 Day Campaign and potentially one of the best experiences about our church, our time together needs to be a safe place to share. Relationships are built upon trust.
- Anything said in this group is considered confidential and will not be discussed outside the group unless specific permission is given to do so.
- We will provide time for each person present to talk if he or she feels comfortable doing so. No one will be made to talk.
- We will talk about ourselves and our own situations, avoiding conversations about other people – also known as gossip.
- We will respectfully listen to each other; be careful to laugh, cry, comment, and/or give advice only when appropriate.
- We will honor group leaders as they guide group discussion.

HOPES & DESIRES FOR LIFE GROUP

- Q: What are some of your concerns and/or hopes for this Life Group?
- Q: What is a spiritual break through that you would like to see happen over the next 7 weeks? Make sure to write these down somewhere and to pray regularly for these over this series.

WEEKLY SERMON DISCUSSION

- Read Ephesians 6:10-18.
- Q: Is there a point or illustration that was meaningful to you from the sermon this week? (sermon outlines can be downloaded from the church website)
- Q: From where does our strength come from as mentioned in verse 10?
- Q: How many times are we told to “stand” in this passage?
- Q: Discuss what you know or understand about spiritual warfare and why it is vital for us to stand our ground against Satan’s attacks.

PRAYER REQUESTS AND CLOSING

- Share prayer requests. I encourage you to have someone write down the requests for review each week. It will be encouraging to see how God answers prayers and leads us through spiritual break throughs.
- Leader can close the time in prayer or if you feel comfortable, each person pray for the person on your right.

WEEK 2: October 6, 2024

SERIES – STAND FIRM: 40 Days of Spiritual Warfare

TITLE - “The Enemy”

Notes and questions adapted from “Spiritual Warfare: Armor of the Believer” by David Jeremiah, “The Bible Reader’s Companion” by Lawrence Richards

SUMMARY

Five times in Ephesians 6:12, Paul uses the word “against” in describing our spiritual warfare. That is the nature of spiritual warfare – real beings pushing against one another, Satan against Christians. Paul’s exhortation to the Ephesians to “be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (v10) is so that they can enter this very real spiritual battle that is ongoing for all who follow Christ. There is a real “devil” (v11), a “wicked one” (v16), who shoots “fiery darts” (v16), at Christians. Those who believe what the Bible says on this point can learn to defend themselves against the devil.

-David Jeremiah, “Identifying the Enemy” pg29

PRAYER

After a time of checking in with each other, open up with prayer

WEEKLY SERMON REVIEW

- Read together Ephesians 6:10-18
- Q: Is there a point or illustration that was meaningful to you from the sermon this week? (sermon outlines can be downloaded from the church website)
- Q: If knowing your enemy is important to victory, how would you rate your knowledge of the Devil?

BIBLE & DISCUSSION:

- Read Together Isaiah 14:12-15. BACKGROUND: This passage is referring to the king of Babylon. The “law of double reference” from students of prophecy, implies that there is a shift from proud Babylon to a more arrogant being, Satan. As a reference to Satan it is indirect, but Jesus uses similar language to describe Satan in Luke 10:18. If the focus does shift to Satan, we get 5 “I will” statements that provide insight into the original fall.
- Q: What are the 5 “I will” statements Satan made against God? How does Satan’s last statement summarize what was at the heart of his rebellion against God?
- Compile a list of names given to Satan in the following Scriptures: Genesis 3:4; Matthew 4:3; John 8:44; John 17:15; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Ephesians 2:2; Revelation 9:11; Revelation 12:9-10.
- Q: What do these names teach us about Satan’s strategy against us?
- Read Genesis 3:1-6. Satan misrepresents God’s word (v1), then denies the truth of God’s word (v4), causes doubt over God’s motives (v5), then leads Eve to trust her own human physical senses and understanding (v6).
- Q: In what ways do we see Satan deceiving Christians today? Describe how a current, common temptation we face is similar to Eve’s experience.
- CLOSING: Martin Luther had a deep understanding of Spiritual Warfare. He wrote a powerful and moving hymn laying out his theology. “A Mighty Fortress is our God. For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe; his craft and power are great and armed with cruel hate, on earth is not his equal. Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing; were not the right Man on our side, the Man of God’s own choosing; dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus it is He; Lord Sabaoth, His Name, from age to age the same, and He must win the battle.”

PRAYER REQUESTS AND CLOSING

Review previous prayer requests and share new ones.

Leader can close the time in prayer or if you feel comfortable, each person pray for the person on your left.