

Community Groups are used extensively as the primary vehicle for discipleship at The Gathering and run on a quarter system. There is one in the fall, one in the winter and one in the spring. During the summer weeks we don't meet in Community Groups but we still offer the Growth Guides as a tool to help you grow personally. The Growth Guides are designed to help you dig deeper into the weekly sermon on your own or with your family and are available each week along with the note sheets at church as well as online.

COMMUNITY GROUPS ARE BETTER WHEN MEMBERS COME PREPARED. THIS GUIDE HAS BEEN PROVIDED AS A TOOL FOR THAT.

Consider...

Use the summary and discussion below to review and apply this week's message:

Message Summary

For the first 3 weeks of the Battle Ready series a lot of ground work was laid for the battle at hand: recognizing there is a battle (and that we're in it), looking to our battle leader, our King-Jesus, and acknowledging our enemy, Satan, who might not have authority, but has plenty of power and is set against us.

The final 4 weeks of the series will look at the tools we have at our disposal to fight the battle well. This week was a call to go from **acknowledging** the battle to **engaging in** the battle.

We answered 3 questions this week that will help us engage in the battle:

1. **Who do we fight?** **Ephesians 6:12** says we are NOT wrestling against flesh and blood (people). We are wrestling against spiritual forces. We must remind ourselves this fact daily so we don't end up making enemies out of the very people God has sent us to minister to!
2. **Why do we fight?** Our battle isn't against flesh and blood but it is a battle FOR flesh and blood. We don't fight against people we fight for people. They are eternal beings just like us, and we fight for them to be reconciled to God through Jesus just like we have been! (**2 Cor. 5:18-20**)
3. **How do we fight?** We fight FEARLESSLY, even though we know following Jesus means we will have real troubles in this life and it will cost us potentially everything. We take heart in the fact that everything we stand to lose is TEMPORARY and we are fighting the good fight for the sake of all things ETERNAL. So our affliction is momentary but it is sooooo worth it! (**2 Cor. 4:16-18**)

Discuss

Use the following questions to review and apply the points learned in the message.

1. What takeaway – if any – did you have from the message this week?
2. **Ephesians 6:12** reminds us we don't fight against people. Read through **Luke 23:33-37**. Jesus recognized the real enemy and even prayed God would forgive the people who were presently murdering Him. How can we follow His lead at our jobs and schools, in our families and homes?
3. Some people just seem to be set against us, determined to wreck each and every day. Has the Holy Spirit ever helped you to see through this to someone's soul, allowing you to minister to them and tear down barriers?
4. Read through **2 Corinthians 4:4-6**, then **Matthew 5:14-16**. The enemy is blinding people of the light. We are called to BE light by Jesus. How can we combat Satan's plot against people?
5. **2 Corinthians 5:16-21** tells us that God reconciled US to HIMSELF through the work of Jesus and now makes His appeal to unbelievers THROUGH us as His ambassadors. That seems like a very heavy weight, but can we reflect for a moment on 2 verses: **5:17** and **5:5**. Be a confident ambassador because God has re-created you for that very role, and given you ALL the power (Holy Spirit) you need to do it well! ****Breathe, Exhale, Smile, Engage, Repeat****
6. The Bible is clear about one thing: Believing on Jesus for salvation and the forgiveness of sins is a FREE gift of grace, but FOLLOWING Jesus will cost us. Just ask any book of the New Testament. Jesus Himself says in **John 16:33** that we WILL have trouble. He also reminds us that this trouble is just in

THIS world and that He has already overcome the world. Sunday's message focused a lot on having an ETERNAL perspective rather than a TEMPORAL one. Why is this so important and powerful?

7. Wrap up by reading **Philippians 1:20-21** and **3:7-8** and praying God would give us that kind of resolve!
#Engage!