

THE BATTLE

DEEP DOWN, WE AVOID BATTLES WE SHOULD BE FIGHTING, BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN TOLD THAT FIGHTING IS WRONG.

Our favorite movies involve war, superheroes, or the eternal fight between good and evil. As boys, the games we play involve action, conflict, and victory. A stick is a sword or a gun. A pillow is a battering ram or a shield. Every couch is our trusty steed, and every floor is made of lava.

But early on, the warrior within the boy is told to settle down. Temper your temper.

Boys are _____x more likely to be diagnosed with ADD than little girls. The unspoken message? The masculine heart is bad, our warrior essence is evil, so cut it out and fall in line.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS PART 1

Some argue that the Christian faith is a faith of peace, so we should always avoid conflict and war.

John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.”

Matthew 5:9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Philippians 4:7 “...the peace of God, which transcends all understanding.”

1 Peter 3:11 “Seek peace and pursue it.”

Colossians 3:15 “Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.”

Matthew 5:38-41 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’
39 But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.”

The same Jesus who spoke these words also said:

Matthew 10:34-36 “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
36 a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.’”

Jesus was the Prince of Peace who also got angry.

Matthew 21:12-13 “Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of

those selling doves. 13 “It is written,” he said to them, ““My house will be called a house of prayer,’ but you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’”

Craig Groeschel “Sometimes you need to turn a _____ and sometimes you need to turn a _____.”

Ephesians 6:10-12 “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. 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 forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

Our struggle, our battle, is not primarily against flesh and blood. It’s against the enemy.

You are not a _____ looking for a _____. Pick your battles.

Ecclesiastes 3: “1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

2 a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

3 a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;

...7 a time to tear, and a time to sew;

a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 a time to love, and a time to hate;

a time for war, and a time for peace.

Charles Baudelaire “The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn’t _____.”

We know the enemy exists, and we even know his strategy.

John 10:10: “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.”

THE STRATEGY OF THE ENEMY

1. THE ENEMY COMES TO STEAL YOUR _____.

A divided mind is easier to conquer, and the enemy knows it.

John Mark Comer: “Often your strongest desires are not your _____ desires.”

The battles we are tempted to fight are mere skirmishes or dust-ups when compared to the real war.

2. THE ENEMY COMES TO KILL YOUR _____.

He wants to change your identity away from being a fighter, a warrior, a battle-tested son of God.

3. THE ENEMY COMES TO DESTROY YOUR _____.

The lesson of Job is that the enemy can take your family, your health, and your wealth, but you will win as long as you don't lose heart.

John Maxwell: “Many of the Psalms were born in difficulty. Most of the Epistles were written in prisons. Most of the greatest thoughts of the greatest thinkers of all time had to pass through the fire. Bunyan wrote Pilgrim’s Progress from jail. Florence Nightingale, too ill to move from her bed, reorganized the hospitals of England. Semiparalysed and under constant menace of apoplexy, Pasteur was tireless in his attack on disease. During the greater parts of his life. American historian Francis Parkman suffered so acutely that he could not work for more than five minutes at a time. His eyesight was so wretched that he could scrawl only a few gigantic words on a manuscript, but he contrived to write twenty magnificent volumes of history... Bury a person in the snows of Valley Forge, and you have a George Washington. Raise him in abject poverty, and you have an Abraham Lincoln. Strike him down with an infantile paralysis, and he becomes a Franklin D. Roosevelt. Burn him so severely that the doctors say he will never walk again, and you have a Glenn Cunningham, who set the world’s one-mile record in 1934. Have him or her born black in a society filled with racial discrimination, and you have a Booker T. Washington, a Marian Anderson, a George Washington Carver, or a Martin Luther King jr. Call him a slow learner...—writing him off as uneducable—and you have an Albert Einstein. “

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS PART 2

Ephesians 6:13-17 “Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. 14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, 15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. 16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. 17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

DEFINING THE FIGHT

1. WE HAVE SOMEONE TO _____.

Nehemiah 4:14: “Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes.”

Our families should always feel physically and emotionally safe with us.

2. WE HAVE A KINGDOM TO _____.

Luke 9:1-2: “And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal.”

3. WE HAVE A BATTLE TO _____.

Psalms 144:1-2: “Blessed be the Lord, my rock,
 who trains my hands for war,
 and my fingers for battle;
 2 he is my steadfast love and my fortress,
 my stronghold and my deliverer,
 my shield and he in whom I take refuge,
 who subdues peoples under me.”

The battle is raging, but we know who wins. The question is whether we will enlist.

1 Peter 5:8-9: “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS PART 3