

CHOSEN TO LIVE STRONG

LEARNING HOW TO WIN LIFE'S BATTLES

September 30, 2018 | PASTOR CRAIG SWEENEY

One BIG THOUGHT: We have a lot to lose.

Ephesians 6:10-14 Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. ¹⁴Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth..."

OUR GOAL! "...able to stand firm..."
(Every bit of ground that we have freely given to God)

Text: Luke 4:1-13

What's important to know?

- The enemy of our souls uses deception and lies for the purpose of:
 - Distracting
 - Derailing
 - Dividing
 - Destroying
- Our first piece of Armor is "The Belt of Truth."

Three common deceptions and lies: (Inspired from "Keys to Freedom" by Mercy Multiplied)

- My story is already so messed up, it absolutely cannot be fixed.**
Truth Tells Us: Jesus came to change "whoever's" story...that means YOURS!

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish..."
(John 3:16-21, Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV)

- "If I act like it never happened, the memories and emotions will eventually go away."**

Truth Tells Us: Memories and emotions do not go away, BUT these wounds can be HEALED.

Exodus 15:26, Psalms 147:3

"He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed."

¹ Peter 2:24

- "My coping methods are not a big deal and they don't really control me."**

Truth Tells Us: I was not chosen for COPING METHODS, I was chosen for FREEDOM.

Galatians 5:1, Galatians 5:13, Romans 8:2, Philippians 4:8,
2 Corinthians 10:3-5

Escapism

- What is my reality?**

- What is BROKEN? What is GOOD? What is GOD-HONORING?

- Begin fixing what is broken.**

- What is in my CONTROL? What is out of my CONTROL? Give it to God. Keep a record of God's hand at work around you.

- What will I do to be intentional about my time?**

Challenge:

- Will I posture my heart towards God's heart?
- How and when?

Life Group Homework

For the week of September 30, 2018

MY STORY

- What did you do with the "Four Stay-In's" from last week?
- What was your takeaway from last week's study?

QUICK REVIEW

- Upon reviewing your notes from Sunday's teaching, what caught your attention?

DIGGING DEEPER

Ephesians 6:10-14 (ESV)

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil

day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness...

Some translations have different wording for verse 12. The NLT uses the word “fight” instead of “wrestle”, but Paul is painting a picture for us. Wrestling was a common and popular sport in the first century. Let’s unpack this picture a little bit.

4. Looking at Verse 12, what does it mean to wrestle? (Not referring to WWE type but to Olympic style.)
5. Does a person commonly wrestle with armor on?
6. There is some imagery here that Paul is trying to convey. What is it?
7. Is a person more vulnerable with armor on or in wrestling garb? What does the passage tell us to do?

TAKING IT HOME

8. In Verse 14 of the passage Paul tells us to take up the belt of truth. Why is a soldier’s belt important?

The belt is symbolic of not just God’s truth but our integrity and our belief systems. If I believe one of the three lies that Pastor Craig talked about on Sunday, I am not standing in the truth. Let’s unpack these beliefs a bit.

- My story is already so messed up it **absolutely** cannot be fixed.
9. Why is this a lie?
 10. Any time we think in absolutes we are possibly believing a lie. Some examples of these are: I will never ____; I will always feel _____. Are there other absolutes that you can think of that are lies?
- “If I act like it never happened, the memories and emotions will eventually go away.”
11. Have you ever thought this? If so, are you willing to share your story?

Some say this phrase, “Time heals all wounds.”

12. Does pain ever go away on its own?
 13. What do we need to address in order to heal from our past?
- “My coping methods are not a big deal and they don’t really control me.”
14. What are some of the coping methods people usually say the above phrase about?
 15. What do we call this kind of answer? What can you do about it if it’s something you struggle with?

CHAIR TIME TOOL

16. Ask God to reveal some of the lies you currently believe about yourself. Surrender them and ask God to share with you the truth.
17. Read Ephesians chapter 6 again and think about the whole armor of God and how it applies in your life.

FAMILY RESOURCES

18. How can we model truth with our children and families?
19. What can we share with our kids to help them understand the importance of truth and integrity in our lives?

For additional information about ways Satan can deceive us through astrology, mediums, etc. go to: <http://www.dougbrittonbooks.com/resources/astrology>

Material used in these notes is taken from *Mercy Multiplied, Keys to Freedom Study Guide* (Nashville, TN: Published by Mercy Multiplied)