

Warm-Up Question or Activity

Group Question

Are you a fan of war movies? Why or why not? If you are, describe your favorite war movie or scene, and explain its impact on you.

Group Activity - Two Truths and an Untruth

Choose two people from the group. Take turns sharing two truths and an untruth about your life, and have the group identify the untruth among the truths. How were you able to pick out the untruths?

Can You Relate?

In 2 Corinthians 10, Paul addresses the lingering opposition to his authority, and to the gospel in Corinth. Although his critics see his physical presence as weak and his spoken communication as unimpressive, Paul contends that the strength of his ministry lies in the power of Christ, not human strength. Paul describes the spiritual nature of his battle, the importance of employing spiritual weapons in that type of battle, and then encourages the church to boast in the LORD rather than in their own achievements. **Read 2 Corinthians 10**

Paul's Humility in Authority

1. (10:1) What are the 2 Christ-like attributes by which Paul appeals to the Corinthians? Describe each in detail. Why were these attributes of Christ important for Paul to model to the Corinthians, and why are they important for believers to practice?

Weapons and Warfare

2. In 10:2-3, Paul begins to use warfare language to describe how he will handle the situation with those who oppose him in Corinth. Explain what Paul means when he says, "though we walk in the flesh we don't wage war according to the flesh." (10:3)

Read Ephesians 6:12. Who and what is our battle against?

3. What effect does the realization that we are at war on a daily basis have on you? Are you surprised? Alarmed? More alert?
4. (10:4) What are spiritual weapons? (See Ephesians 6:13-18 for a few ideas) How does one employ them?

(10:4) Paul asserts that the weapons of our spiritual warfare carry divine power. How effective do you think they are? According to 10:4-6, what are spiritual warfare weapons able to do?

10:4b

10:5a

10:5b

10:6

5. Have you ever experienced a situation where you used worldly weapons such as deception, manipulation, and intimidation, rather than spiritual weapons such as prayer, The Word of God, and truth? How did that work out for you?
6. *According to NAS Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, ancient strongholds were 'fortified structures used for protection against enemies. They were often built on elevated ground and surrounded by walls, making them difficult to penetrate. The concept of a stronghold was well understood in the Greco-Roman world, where cities often had such fortifications for defense. Spiritually, the metaphor of a stronghold is used to describe entrenched sin or false beliefs that can dominate a person's life'.*

What does a stronghold in a believer's life look like? What strongholds are you battling in your own life? Discuss ways in which you will utilize spiritual weapons to destroy these strongholds.

Taking Thoughts Captive

7. Paul says in 10:5 that while wielding spiritual weapons: "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ." Describe what it means to take every thought captive.

Explain why practicing a healthy, Christ-focused thought life was crucial to the Corinthian church, and why it is an important spiritual discipline for us to practice as well? (Where can unhealthy thoughts lead? Where can healthy thoughts lead?)

8. Jesus teaches in John 8:44 that Satan is a liar and the father of lies, then asserts that HE tells the truth. What is a nagging negative thought you battle – an 'untruth' mingling around the truths in your mind?

With the groups help, come up with a truth from God's Word to fight this lie.

Example: **Untruth** - "I'm such an idiot!" **Truth** - "I am made in the image of God" (Genesis 1:27)

Boasting in the LORD

9. From 10:17-18, explain the right way to boast.

What is the danger and repercussions of self-promotion?

What do you need to do differently to ensure you seek God's commendation rather than toot your own horn?

Bible teacher and author Denise Glenn describes her process this way. She says that whenever anyone approaches her to compliment her teaching or writing, she simply says "thank you". Then in her mind, she pictures that praise as a rose she holds in her hand, then turns and hands it to Jesus. In doing so, she says she acknowledges the person's kindness while giving all the Glory to God,

Live it Out

Discuss how this chapter of Corinthians has impacted the way in which you view your struggles and your successes.

What changes will you make this week to ensure that you:

- remain alert to the unseen spiritual battle around you
- wield spiritual weapons that carry divine power
- pursue healing from negative thoughts
- destroy the enemy's strongholds in your life
- boast in the works of the LORD rather than your own achievements

Resources:

If you struggle with habitual negative thoughts or sin patterns, Grace offers the Freedom and Healing ministry through the Grace Prayer Center. Here is the link to the resources available to you:

<https://www.whatisgrace.org/prayer>

Neal T. Anderson's "*The Bondage Breaker*" explains "the whys and hows of spiritual warfare and exposes Satan's battle for your mind. This book shares the powerful truth that will break even the most stubborn habits or private sins."

If you enjoy Christian **fiction**, consider reading "*This Present Darkness*" by Frank E. Peretti either individually or as a group. This book tells the story of a smalltown pastor and the community he serves as they begin to realize the spiritual battle raging around them. Peretti provides a vivid depiction of the battle between good and evil, angels and demons, and their impact on us as we seek to serve God in our daily lives.