

Session 7: The battle for Our Minds (Ephesians 6:11)

‘Put on all of God’s armour so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil’

Objective: To understand that, although the devil is constantly attempting to get us to believe lies, we don’t have to believe every thought that comes into our head but can hold each one up against the truth and choose to accept or reject it.

Focus Truth: The battle takes place in our minds. If we are aware of how Satan works, we will not fall for his schemes.

Review last session:

1. Since we last met, how have you got on ‘taking every thought captive’ (2 Corinthians 10:5)
2. How did you get on learning the Death story? Who did you tell it to? What did they think? Is there anything of more significance to you than it has been before? If this story is true, how does it affect your ongoing relationship with Jesus?

New Material:

1. Read Ephesians 6:11, the objective and focus truth together.
2. As we read this story, consider all Jesus overcame, and the freedom that we now have, because of His resurrection.

Jesus’ Resurrection

Based on NLT

Introduction

Jesus had an unjust trial, and he was hung on a cross to die. His body was placed in a new tomb, sealed with a large stone and guards were protecting the tomb.

John 20: 1, 11-18

Early on Sunday morning, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found that the stone had been rolled away from the entrance. Mary was standing outside the tomb crying, and as she wept, she stooped and looked in. She saw two white-robed angels, one sitting at the head and the other at the foot of the place where the body of Jesus had been lying. “Dear woman, why are you crying?” the angels asked her. “Because they have taken away my Lord,... and I don’t know where they have put him.” She turned to leave and saw someone standing there. It was Jesus, but she didn’t recognize him. “Dear woman, why are you crying?” Jesus asked her. “Who are you looking for?” She thought he was the gardener. “Sir,” she said, “if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him.”

“Mary!” Jesus said. She turned to him and cried out, “*Teacher*” ... Jesus said find my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father,

to my God and your God". Mary Magdalen *went and told the disciples all that had happened and all Jesus had said.*

John 20:24-29

Jesus appeared to the disciples and talked with them. One of the ... disciples, Thomas was not with the others when Jesus came. They told him, "We have seen the Lord!"

But he replied, "I won't believe it unless I see the nail wounds in his hands, put my fingers into them, and place my hand into the wound in his side." Eight days later the disciples were together again, and this time Thomas was with them. The doors were locked; but suddenly ... Jesus was standing among them. "Peace be with you," he said. Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and look at my hands. Put your hand into the wound in my side. Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!" "My Lord and my God!" Thomas exclaimed. Then Jesus told him, "You believe because you have seen me. Blessed are those who believe without seeing me."

Acts 1:4, 8-12, Matthew 28:16-18

Another time He commanded them "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised ... you will be baptised with the Holy Spirit."

...later The eleven disciples *went* to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him they worshiped him – but some of them doubted. Jesus ... told his disciples, "I have been given all authority on heaven and earthyou will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere – Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria and to the ends of the earth." After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching ... two white-robed men suddenly stood among them "Men of Galilee ... why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!" Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem.

Now retell this story in your own words...Use one of the ideas for 'internalising the passage'

Questions for Discussion: (Just ask the questions that didn't get covered when you 'retold' the story. Feel free to omit any questions that don't seem relevant to your situation or that feel redundant.)

1. What did you like about this story?

- a. *How do you think Mary felt hearing her name being spoken by Jesus?*
2. *What bothered you about this story?*
3. *What does this story show you about God?*
 - a. *Colossians 2:15, in talking about the cross says 'In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross'. Is there anything in your life which you don't feel is under God's authority and freedom?*
4. *What does this story show you about people?*
 - a. *What does 'Blessed are those who believe without seeing me' mean for you?*
 - b. *Read Romans 6:4-14 What does the resurrection mean for us?!*
5. *How do the truths in this story apply to your life?*
 - a. *James 4:7 says 'Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Are there any areas of your life in which you need to resist the devil? Any lies you currently hold, that you'd like to be free from believing?*
 - b. *See Ephesians 6:10-20. What does 'putting on the armour of God' practically mean for you? Is there any armour you struggle to 'put on'?*

To Take Away

1. Meditate on the following passages; Romans 6:4-14, Ephesians 2:1-10,
2. Learn the Resurrection story and practice it with at least one other person. Tell this story to yourself or read it every day and meditate on its truths. Consider if there are any ways you tend to think that are not in line with God's truth...Jesus overcame everything for you! You are free!