

TEARING DOWN SATAN'S FORTRESSES

2 Corinthians 10:1-6

PASTOR PAT NEMMERS

November 7, 2016

The questions below are designed to be used by Saylorville Church Cell Groups as they meet during the week following the Sunday morning message at Saylorville. The intent is not for groups to answer every question, but for leaders to use the questions as a guide as they tailor the discussion to the needs of their unique group.

CONNECT WITH YOUR GROUP (10-15 MINUTES)

- Who is your favorite musical artist/group? Recite some of the lines from your favorite song. Better yet, sing them!
- What are some of your favorite songs that we sing in our worship services?
- On Sunday morning, we sang Martin Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." Why do you think this has been such a powerful song throughout its history? (See reverse side of this sheet for more info.)

APPLY THE BIBLE (45-60 MINUTES)

Intro:

A. Read 2 Corinthians 10:1-6

- B. In his message, Pastor Pat shared **four reminders for Christ-followers in our fight against Satan**. What is your one thing from Sunday? What stuck out to you about what you heard (a new idea, an application, a challenge, a question, or a new way of thinking)?

#1 - *We've got a bigger fight than with each other (vs. 3)*

- A. Soldiers can only fight the enemy effectively when they are unified. Talk about a time when you needed to restore unity by resolving an issue between yourself and another believer. Do you need to do that right now?
- B. How does verse three change your perspective on struggles you have as a spouse, a parent, a child, a co-worker, a citizen, etc?

#2 - *We need better weapons than the ones our flesh provides (vs. 4)*

- A. What are some examples of weapons you have used in the past to try to defeat Satan and his schemes?
- B. Explain how using weapons with "God-power" can help you have victory over sin, addictions, and apathy:
- A. God's Spirit
 - B. God's Word
 - C. God's people

#3 - *We need biblical minds to capture bad thinking (vs. 5)*

- A. Bad thinking always leads to bad behavior. On a normal day, what are you filling your mind with? How might those things be affecting your behavior?
- B. What are some "good" things in your life that Satan might use to distract you from knowing God? Why are those distractions so effective?
- C. How can we help each other biblically refute the world's arguments that are wrong, but seem to make sense?

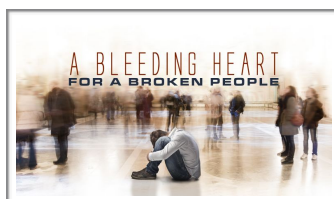
#4 - *We need bolder willingness to confront disobedience (vs. 6)*

- A. How does accountability within our Cell Groups (caring for, confronting, and challenging one another toward Christ-likeness) help us battle Satan's strongholds? Are there reasons why accountability might fail?
- B. Other than people in your Cell Group, who have you given permission to speak truth into your life? Name them.

PRAY FOR EACH OTHER (5-15 MINUTES)

- Pray Scripture out loud for each other today. Start with these passages, then add your own:
 - Proverbs 4:23
 - Philippians 4:8-9
 - Ephesians 2:10-20

Paths lead to places. What paths are my thoughts leading me down?



The Weak Man Behind A Mighty Fortress

By Mark Galli

Accessed at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-39/weak-man-behind-mighty-fortress.html>

It was the worst of times—1527—one of the most trying years of Luther’s life. It’s hard to imagine he had the energy or spirit to compose one of Christendom’s most memorable hymns.

On April 22, a dizzy spell forced Luther to stop preaching in the middle of his sermon. For ten years, since publishing his 95 Theses against the abuse of indulgences, Luther had been buffeted by political and theological storms; at times his life had been in danger. Now he was battling other reformers over the meaning of the Lord’s Supper. To Luther, their errors were as great as those of Rome—the very gospel was at stake—and Luther was deeply disturbed and angry. He suffered severe depression.

Then, on July 6, as friends arrived for dinner, Luther felt an intense buzzing in his left ear. He went to lie down, when suddenly he called, “Water ... or I’ll die!” He became cold, and he was convinced he had seen his last night. In a loud prayer, he surrendered himself to God’s will.

With a doctor’s help, Luther partially regained his strength. But this depression and illness overcame him again in August, September and late December. Looking back on one of his bouts, he wrote his friend Melancthon, “I spent more than a week in death and hell. My entire body was in pain, and I still tremble. Completely abandoned by Christ, I labored under the vacillations and storms of desperation and blasphemy against God. But through the prayers of the saints [his friends], God began to have mercy on me and pulled my soul from the inferno below.”

Meanwhile, in August, the plague had erupted in Wittenberg. As fear spread, so did many of the townspeople. But Luther considered it his duty to remain and care for the sick. Even though his wife was pregnant, Luther’s house was transformed into a hospital, and he watched many friends die. Then his son became ill. Not until late November did the epidemic abate and the ill begin to recover.

During that horrific year, Luther took time to remember the tenth anniversary of his publication against indulgences, noting the deeper meaning of his trials: “The only comfort against raging Satan is that we have God’s Word to save the souls of believers.” Sometime that year, Luther expanded that thought into the hymn he is most famous for: “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God.” This verse, translated by Frederick Hedge in 1853, comes from one of more than sixty English versions:

*And though this world with devils filled
should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God has willed
his truth to triumph through us.
The prince of darkness grim? We tremble not for him.
His rage we can endure, for lo! his doom is sure.
One little Word shall fell him.*

Mark Galli is associate editor of Christian History.

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