

# CHOSEN TO LIVE STRONG

## LEARNING HOW TO WIN LIFE'S BATTLES

October 7, 2018 | PASTOR CRAIG SWEENEY

**OUR GOAL!** "...able to stand firm..."

(Every bit of ground that we have freely given to God)

**One BIG THOUGHT:** We have a lot to lose.

**Ephesians 6:10-14** "A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup> Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm. <sup>14</sup> Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth..."

**Text: Luke 4:1-13 The Temptations of Jesus**

**THREE COMMON DECEPTIONS AND LIES:** These have devastating effects when we BELIEVE them.<sup>1</sup>

1. 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!**

2. "If I act like it never happened, the memories and emotions will eventually go away." **Truth Tells Us: Memories and emotions do not just go away, BUT these wounds can be HEALED.**

"If you will listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his sight... I am the Lord who heals you." (Exodus 15:26)

"He heals the brokenhearted and bandages their wounds." (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)

3. "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.**

"So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure that you stay free..." (Ga. 5:1)

"For you have been called to live in freedom... But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love." (Ga. 5:13)

"And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death." (Romans 8:2)

"Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise." (Phil. 4:8)

"We are human, but we don't wage war as humans do. <sup>4</sup> We use God's mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. <sup>5</sup> We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

### Escapism

#### THREE STEPS THAT CAN LEAD TO TRANSFORMATION:

1. **Ask, "What is my reality?"**

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

2. **Begin restoring what is broken.**

What is in my CONTROL? What is out of my CONTROL?

Give it to God. Expect God to lead you to HEALING and FREEDOM as He changes your story.

3. **Ask, "How can my schedule help me?"**

People, Events, Life Group, Church gatherings

#### CHALLENGE:

- STEP OUT of the deceptions and into the TRUTH.
- Review the three steps that can lead you to transformation.

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

### Life Group Homework

For the week of October 7, 2018

#### MY STORY

1. What do you love to do to rest?
2. What was your takeaway from last week's study?

#### QUICK REVIEW

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

#### DIGGING DEEPER

Over the last several weeks we have had a few questions about Satan and what he can and can't do. We wanted to bring some clarity to the confusion about what he is actually able to do. The following verses address these.

#### Genesis 3:1 (NLT)

The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, "Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?"

4. (In this passage the serpent is Satan.) Who made the serpent according to this verse?

5. If Satan is a created being, does he have the same powers and abilities as God?

### Revelation 12:9 (NLT)

<sup>9</sup> This great dragon—the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world—was thrown down to the earth with all his angels.

6. (In this passage Satan is referred to as the dragon.) What is Satan doing in this passage?
7. What does the verse say happened to Satan and his angels?

Remember Satan is a defeated enemy. He is not all-powerful, he is not ever-present (he can't be everywhere at the same time), and he is not all-knowing.

### Ephesians 1:19-23 (NLT)

<sup>19</sup> I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power <sup>20</sup> that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. <sup>21</sup> Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. <sup>22</sup> God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. <sup>23</sup> And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

8. Who is the only one who holds complete power?

### TAKING IT HOME

We are going to shift gears back to last week and unpack more about the belt of truth and wrestle with the lies we have believed.

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 the last two Sundays, 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 this 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.<sup>i</sup>**

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?
16. What is my reality?
  - What is BROKEN? What is GOOD? What is GOD-HONORING?
17. Begin restoring 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 and tell your LIFE GROUP!
18. Ask, "How can my schedule help me?"
  - People
  - Events
  - Life Group
  - Church gatherings

### CLOSE IN PRAYER

- Pray for God to open your group up to new levels of trust and unity.
- Pray for your neighbors and the 916.
- Pray for God to reveal the lies you have believed.
- Pray for the church. God would continue to move in a mighty way.
- Pray that God will get all the credit and glory in your life.

### CHAIR TIME TOOL

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

### FAMILY RESOURCES

21. How can I model truth to my family?

<sup>i</sup>Material used in these notes are taken from Mercy Multiplied, Keys to Freedom Study Guide (Nashville, TN: Published by Mercy Multiplied)