

07.12.14 SPIRITUAL WARFARE – STUDY QUESTIONS

PASSAGE: 2 CORINTHIANS CH10 vs 1-6

2 Corinthians 10:1-6 New International Version (NIV)

Paul's Defence of His Ministry

10 By the humility and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am “timid” when face to face with you, but “bold” toward you when away! ² I beg you that when I come I may not have to be as bold as I expect to be toward some people who think that we live by the standards of this world. ³ For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴ The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵ We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. ⁶ And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, once your obedience is complete.

DISCOVERY & LAUNCH

Can you think of leaders from history who have led through self-confidence and assertiveness in contrast to those who have led through humility and gentleness? What style do you prefer and why?

UNDERSTANDING

Can you think of some situations in Christ's life where he deliberately chose to be meek instead of bold? Equally can you think of scenarios where he was bold but might have benefitted personally from a greater degree of caution?

John Ortberg suggests that the reason Jesus was able to be so gentle in some situations and tough in others was that he was not addicted to the approval of those around him as we can be (sometimes known as people pleasers). Do you agree with this? How can either over toughness or over softness be evidence that we are people pleasing?

On which end of the meek – bold spectrum do you find yourself? Why do you think that is?

In the Corinth church the legalistic Jews were attempting to control Paul's behaviour by accusing him of being worldly (because he spent so much time with pagan Gentiles). What is legalism? Why is it so dangerous to the message of the gospel?

Do you think we can be in danger of tipping into legalism or is our problem rather at the other end of the scale (cheap grace & freedom to sin)?

What are some of the similarities and differences between real warfare and spiritual warfare?

What are the most effective weapons that we should be using in spiritual warfare? Which weapons might be somewhat ineffective? (remember the Custer story)

What are the most influential thoughts in our culture that are raised up against the knowledge of God?

Sometimes the battle for Christ submitted thoughts occurs just as strongly in our own minds. What repetitive thoughts can creep into your mind that in some way contradict the Lordship of Christ?

APPLICATION

- Pray that we follow Christ's example in combining meekness with strength
- Pray for opportunities to have meaningful discussions with people over the Christmas period. Pray for the ability to demolish opposing strongholds and help establish people in the truth of Christ.
- Please also pray for important events over the Christmas period including our carol service on the 21st of December.