

Jesus is disappointed that Peter does not see things from God's point of view. Is that expecting too much? How does a person learn to do that?

How is Peter's desire for Jesus to reign without suffering similar to the third temptation Jesus faced in Matthew 4:9?

What does Jesus reveal about the nature of the Christian life in Matthew 24-26? What evidence do you see that most people in church understand and accept this?

Has Satan ever tempted you through another person's wrong ideas about what it means for you to follow Jesus? How did you handle that?

What have you learned from this account about how Satan operates and how to effectively resist his treachery?

#### REFLECT

How could seeing life as a spiritual battle be helpful as you face struggles and challenges?

#### RESPOND

What will you do this week to prepare yourself more effectively for spiritual warfare?



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#### Ephesians 6:10-18

<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then...

#### THE DEVIL IS REAL AND IS A SCHEMER.

Neither underestimate nor overestimate him, our enemy is real and powerful, but he is not omniscient, omnipotent, nor omnipresent

**Devil = Diabolos** a malicious false accuser, a slanderer

**Satan = Satanas** adversary (one who opposes another in purpose or act)

- your enemy, the devil (1 Peter 5:8)
- the evil one and an enemy (Matthew 13:19)
- a murderer and the father of lies (John 8:44)
- been sinning from the beginning (1 John 3:8)
- the tempter (1 Thessalonians 3:5)

Dr. M. Scott Peck in *Glimpses of the Devil*  
To most in our culture the subject of Satan seems esoteric indeed. But then I am not sure how seriously most take God either, beyond a touch of superficial piety. The problem is that ours is a materialistic culture. Materialism is a philosophy or attitude that holds that what you can see and touch and measure is all you get, and anything else is not worth serious consideration... For some, myself included, the notion of Satan is far from esoteric.

## WE ARE INVOLVED IN A SPIRITUAL STRUGGLE.

Spiritual warfare is a way of describing the Christian's struggle against dark, evil forces.




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Clinton Arnold in *Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare* The Bible from beginning to end highlights this theme of conflict with the powers of evil. It is integral to the biblical worldview. Those of us who see the Bible as our authoritative and reliable guide to faith and practice need to take this aspect of the biblical message seriously.

1 Thessalonians 2:18

For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan blocked our way.

Luke 22:31

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat.”

## WE EACH MUST TAKE OUR STAND.

This word “stand”, a military metaphor for those victorious in battle, is used four times by Paul in our passage. We are able to stand victoriously because of the great power God gives us, as Paul repeatedly emphasizes in Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:18-21

his incomparably great power for us who believe

Ephesians 3:16

he may strengthen you with power

Ephesians 3:20-21

according to his power that is at work within us

Ephesians 6:10

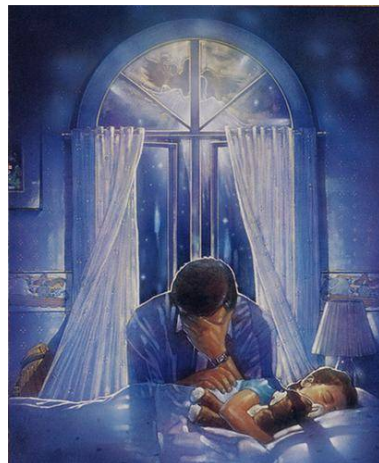
be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power

Prayer and Scripture are our primary and most powerful weapons.

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*Spiritual Warfare* by Ron DiCianni

# TAKING OUR STAND

## LIFE GROUP STUDY

### RELATE

Who do you rely on to tell you the unvarnished truth about yourself?

What evidence for the existence of Satan is most convincing to you?

Jesus believed in Satan

Biblical teaching

Existence of evil

Personal experience

Stories of demonic influence

I am not sure

What principle, insight, idea, or quote was meaningful to you from this week's sermon?

### READ

Matthew 16:21-28; Matthew 4:9; Hebrews 2:14-15

Satan often works to weaken our faith by confusing us about who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him. When we are disappointed or confused about God, we need to examine whether our expectations are in line with Scripture.

Have you ever struggled in your faith because you held a wrong idea or expectation about the Christian life? How did you find out it was wrong?

What new information did Jesus give his followers at this time about Himself (Mt. 16:21)? What does Peter's response reveal about his expectations for Jesus' kingdom?

Why did Jesus come against what Peter said so strongly? What was at stake if Jesus had entertained Peter's alternative for his future (Hebrews 2:14-15)?