

Spiritual Warfare

Introduction

On the subject of spiritual warfare and the devil C.S. Lewis makes a shrewd observation in his book *Screwtape Letters*. He writes 'There are two equal and opposite errors which our race can fall into about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight.'

To consign the devil to a malevolent fairyland is just as acceptable to him as an obsessive fanaticism, which detects his presence everywhere and in everything. The important thing for us to realise is that we are dealing with reality when we speak about spiritual warfare. Evil is not a force or a concept in the world, but rather a living being, real and active.

Over 50 years ago the New Testament Scholar James Stewart wrote in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* about a neglected emphasis in New Testament Theology, 'We have lost Paul fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus, and Luther flinging his ink-pot at the devil'. He main point of the article that Stewart wrote was that the cross of Jesus is emptied of much of its power and significance if the reality of satanic power goes unrecognised.

So we turn to a study on spiritual warfare

Study 1 Our Champion

Introduction.

The reality is that in our growth in the Christian faith we have a personal Tutor, called the Holy Spirit. He is in some ways a self-effacing person. He prefers to help us understand better about our relationship with Jesus. This is something we need to remember when we are involved in spiritual warfare. The name of Jesus and the blood of Jesus are powerful weapons in our defence. We need to be reminded that Jesus is with us, and we need to remember all that he did on man's behalf at Calvary. We need to remember this when we engage in hostilities.

The Big picture

1. Can you think of a time when you have intensely needed someone's help?

2. Can you think of a time when someone has helped you through challenging you?

3. Can you think of a time when someone has helped you through reassuring you?

The Biblical picture

Read John Ch 14 vs 15-27

4. How did Jesus assure his disciples that he would continue his close daily connection with them?

5. By what means did Jesus refer to the Holy Spirit [vs 16-17, 26]?

6. What do these names reveal about the character and the work of the Spirit?

7. How are Christ's followers different from the world [vs 17-19]?

8. How will the Holy Spirit help believers [v 17, 26-27]?

9. From Jesus' words here, what would you say is the chief intention of the Holy Spirit?

Being in the picture

10. How has the Holy Spirit made Jesus more real to you?

11. In what areas of your life do you especially need the Spirit's continuing help?

12. How open are you to letting the Spirit say whatever he wants?

I try to let the Spirit guide my actions

Getting better

Sometimes I listen

Not very open

No way

13. How do you respond to the privilege of having the Spirit of God live within you?

Study 2

Our challenger

Introduction

In the film 'Jurassic Park', Dr Allen Grant and his team suddenly see an ancient skeleton appear on the screen. It is a velociraptor, one of the most cunning and deadly predators. Grant explains to someone who thinks very little of this creature, 'You stare at him, and he just stares straight back, and that's when the attack comes, not from the front, but from the side, from the other two raptors you didn't even know were there.' In spiritual warfare the most dangerous attacks come unexpectedly. The greatest threat comes not from what we can see but what we cannot see.

The big picture

1. What are some examples of the plainly visible evil we tend to focus on?
2. Why do we focus on these things?

The Biblical picture

Read 2 Corinthians Ch 11 vs 1-15

3. In this passage how does Paul compare himself with the false apostles in Corinth?
4. How are the dangers the Corinthians faced similar to those Eve faced [Genesis Ch 3 vs 1-7] when she first met the serpent [vs 1-3]?
5. Why is it more effective for deceivers to distort the gospel than to deny it altogether? [vs 4]
6. False apostles had infiltrated the Corinthian church. In what ways did these super apostles seem superior to Paul? Also look at Ch 10 vs 1,10.
7. How does Bible knowledge v6 protect a person from eloquent speakers who are trying to deceive?
8. In contrast to the false apostles Paul did not charge people for his ministry. Why do you think the Corinthians viewed this as a weakness in Paul rather than strength?
9. How can we discern the difference between those who preach merely for money and prestige and those who have godly motives?

10. Why do you think that Satan masquerades as an angel of light rather than appearing as a demon of darkness [vs 14]?

11. Why might Satan's servants also find it effective to masquerade as 'ministers of righteousness'?

Being in the picture

12. What are some of the pious disguises Satan's servants use to deceive people today?

13. Paul concludes his section by saying 'Their end will be what their actions deserve'. What types of actions might reveal that a 'minister of righteousness' is really working for the enemy?

Study 3

Challenges we face- Temptations

Introduction

Back in the 1930's a play was written called 'The Devil and Daniel Webster.' The play was set in North America and involved a farmer called Stone. Stone was hit by a string of natural disasters. The day his wife and children went down with measles, he broke his plough on some rough ground. He cried out, 'This is enough to make a man sell his soul to the devil, and I would for a few dollars. The devil takes Stone up on this, and ten years later when the devil has granted Stone prosperity and success the devil returns for what he calls his property Stone himself. Stone makes an appeal to the legendary American politician Daniel Webster, where Webster argues against the devil on Stone's behalf, and wins. The devil flees empty handed.

The big picture

1. In a moment of anger or frustration when have you done something you later regretted?
2. People often claim that everyone can be bought for a price. Explain why you think this is true or false?

The Biblical picture

Read Matthew Ch 4 vs 1-11

3. Looking through these verses, what clues do you see as to what Jesus would have been thinking and feeling?
4. Verse 1 opens with the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry, why do you think the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by the devil?
5. If there's nothing wrong in being hungry, and there's nothing wrong with bread, then what was the temptation?
6. When we fail to trust God, how can we be tempted to meet legitimate needs in illegitimate ways?
7. In the second temptation, was the devil misquoting Scripture, as people often claim? Explain.
8. Jesus responds in v7 by quoting Deuteronomy 6 vs 16. How does testing God differ from trusting God?
9. What is wrong with demanding 'right now' that God proves his presence, power or care?
10. In the third temptation the devil promises to give all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. If Jesus would eventually receive all of these kingdoms anyway, then what was tempting about the devil's offer?

Being in the picture

11. The devil offers us shortcuts instead of us taking 'a long obedience in the same direction'. Why are these shortcuts really spiritual short-circuits?
12. How do these shortcuts tempt us to bow the knee to Satan, even when that's not our intention?
13. Throughout this passage, Jesus demonstrates trust, obedience and true worship. How can we make these our ultimate weapons against the devil's temptations?

Study 4

Challenges we face -enemy tactics

Introduction

C.S. Lewis in his book *Screwtape letters* offers letters from a senior devil *Screwtape*, to his younger apprentice *Wormwood*, in the diabolical craft of leading a person into temptation and ruin. The ultimate goal is to ensnare their victim. The book offers up a sobering fact for us all to consider, Satan is a master in the art of temptation.

The big picture

1. Often in a restaurant you will be shown the temptations of the dessert trolley, which are described in detail one by one. Why is this a more effective form of temptation, then simply being given a dessert menu?
2. What temptations have you faced that appeared harmless or even attractive on the surface?

The Biblical picture

Read Genesis Ch 3 vs 1-6

3. Reflecting on this passage. What different thoughts and emotions do you think Eve had throughout?
4. The serpent said to Eve, 'Did God really say that you must not eat from any tree in the garden?' How does Satan compare with what God really said [Gen 2 vs 16-17]
5. From the way the question is worded, what do you think Satan had hoped to accomplish?
6. Why do you think Satan appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent, instead of showing himself openly?
7. How does Eve's response reveal that Satan's venom is beginning to affect her thinking about God?
8. How can doubting God's generosity make us targets for temptation and sin?
9. Satan's next tactic is to boldly declare, 'You will not surely die'. Why do you think he lies to Eve about the consequences of sin?

10. Why is it tempting to believe that sin has no consequences?

11. In verse 5 Satan goes a step further. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil'. What does this statement imply about both God and sin?

Being in the picture

12. What evidence do you see today that some people believe God is a 'cosmic killjoy' and sin is really good for them?

13. In verse 6 the conversation between the serpent and the woman breaks off. How is Satan's tactic at this point similar to the one the waiter uses with the dessert trolley in the big picture?

14. Martin Luther once said ' You can't stop the birds flying over your head, but you can keep them from making their nests in your hair.' Why do you think it is dangerous to toy with temptation, or to fantasies about it?

15. Instead of toying or fantasising with temptation, what should you do when you're tempted?

16. Consider this passage from the writing of Helmut Thielicke
'Under the pressure of this twofold curiosity, the fascination of the senses and the mind, Eve reached out for the fruit. And only as she did this, as she performed this practical act of disobedience did she actually answer the serpent's question whether she was really going to take God so dreadfully seriously and whether she was going to trust his goodness so utterly- answering it almost without being conscious of answering it. Now she is going to do neither of these things anymore, and therefore she is quitting, not officially, not formally, and not by flinging an emotional defiant no, but through one small gesture, through one very harmless snatch at an apple.

What does Thielicke's summary of Genesis Ch 3 reveal to you about the nature of temptation and sin?

Study 5

Challenges we face- the war within ourselves

Introduction

C. S. Lewis describes hell as a vast city that stretches for on for millions of miles. In his book 'The Great Divorce', he describes how when a visitor arrives the tour guide explains why most of the houses are empty. He asks whether there was once a much larger population. The tour guide replies.' No, the trouble is that the people are so quarrelsome. As soon as anyone arrives and settles in a street, before they have been there less than 24 hours they have quarrelled with their neighbour. Before the week is over the quarrel is so bad that thy decide to move out. Very likely they find the next street is empty because all the people have quarrelled with one another, and moved out. Even if they do stay in their new home, they are sure to quarrel again soon, and so they will move out again. Finally they move out right to the edge of the town.'

It would be nice to think that quarrels were confined to hell, but nothing is further from the truth.

The Big picture

1. Why do you think that people, even Christians, spend so much time arguing among themselves?
2. What are some of the things, which cause fights and quarrels in your family, work or leisure situation?

The Biblical picture

Read James 4 vs 1- 10

James does not just expose the existence of quarrels but explains why they occur. James hops that if we understand the cause of our quarrels, then we will be open to the cure for them.

3. What words in the James passage reflect the tension and conflict?
4. If James asked most people' What causes the quarrels and fights amongst you, they would respond. 'It's the other person's fault!' How does James challenge this idea?
5. Why do you think that frustrated desires would lead a person to be verbally or even physically violent? Read verse 2.

6. James says ' You do not have because you do not ask God' vs 2. When our desires are frustrated why do you think prayer is better than fighting?

7. Sometimes even God will not give us what we want [v. 3]. Why is it important to examine our motives when we pray?

8. In many places the Bible tells us to love and befriend sinners. Jesus certainly did this. However what kind of friendship with the world is it that James condemns [v 4]?

9. If you fight and argue a lot, or if you desire the wrong things for the wrong reasons, then James says you need God's grace [v.6]. What steps do we need to take to receive that grace [vs. 6-10]? Why do you think God requires such a radical response?

Being in the picture

10. Even though James has stressed that our own evil desires and motives are the true source of quarrels, he says in v 7 resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Why do you think the devil lives to see us fight and quarrel?

11. When we resist the devil in the ways that James suggests [vs 6-10], why will he flee from us?

12. Think of someone with whom you regularly fight and quarrel. How can James' insights and commands help you live in greater peace with that person?

13. To think on through the week ahead.

What impure motives might be hindering your prayers?

How might those motives reveal an infatuation with the world?

Why not ask God to help you desire and pray for the things that are pleasing to Him.

Study 6

Challenges we face- demonic attack

Introduction

Many years ago the film 'The Exorcist' introduced many people to the concept of demon possession, which has previously been relegated by science and psychology to the realm of myth and medieval superstition. Maybe you went to see it. When conventional medical treatments fail, the mother of Regan the possessed girl calls upon two Priests to perform an exorcism.

The big picture

1. With the advent of modern science and psychology, why do you think the idea of demon possession fell into disfavour?
2. Why do you think demon possession, which was common in Jesus' day, seems so rare in Western culture?

The Biblical picture

Read Mark Ch 5 vs 1-20

Here we are introduced to a scene that is both terrible and tragic. Jesus confronts a demon-possessed man whose life has become a living nightmare. In this passage we discover that God's ultimate authority over Satan has been invested in Jesus, which is something very important to remember when circumstances appear to contradict this.

3. What do you learn about the dark and destructive life of the man Jesus meets [vs 1-5]?
4. What do the man's experience teach us about the devil's desires for each one of us?
5. Why do you think the man speaks and acts as he does when he sees Jesus from a distance [vs 6-8]?
6. A Roman legion consisted of about six thousand soldiers. How does this help us understand the pervasive nature of Satan's control over this man [vs 9-10]?
7. Although we know nothing about the man's life prior to his demon possession, what steps might lead an ordinary person to become increasingly controlled by evil?

8. The story of the pigs [vs 11-13,] is one of the strangest in all Scripture. We are not told why the demons asked for this particular fate, or the reason why Jesus granted their request. Although the impact provides some clues to the latter. Supernatural power was clearly at work here, as with one word they are expelled from the man and enter the pigs, which in turn stampede headlong into the lake.

Why do you think both Jesus and the demons acted as they did?

9. Describe the response of the people from the town when they see both the man and Jesus [vs 14-17]?

10. Why do they respond in fear rather than faith?

11. Frequently in Mark's gospel Jesus tells people to follow him [see Mark Ch 1 vs 17 2: 14 10:21]. This man is eager to follow Jesus, why does Jesus send him home [vs 18-20]?

Being in the picture

A full treatment of demonic possession and oppression would take more than this study. However we do need to say a little.

12. There are times when our lives can be oppressed by the presence of an evil presence. This can be an area of bondage in our thinking, our bodies, our soul, and can provide encouragement to the devil Luke Ch 11 vs 21 helps us a little here. We need to not only define something but also detect it and then demolish it.

To detect an impact from a demonic presence can be seen in the following: Compulsions, fixations, obsessions, involuntary thought processes. Increasing fear, helpless hate, insurmountable jealousy, uncontrollable temper a ruthless aggressive attitude.

Tell tale signs could be; constantly demanding lust, unchecked appetites undeniable urges, lack of self-restraint, impatience. All of these can be a point of spiritual conflict with the presence of Satan's influence upon our life.

So in practice how do we engage in spiritual warfare?

We begin by being in total dependence on God. Here are a few suggested guidelines.

- a. Begin with yourself
- b. Identify the pressure point

- c. Confess the sins that has helped the spiritual activity to present itself in your life
- d. Dismiss the enemy, even as formerly as you encouraged him.
- e. Declare that you are God's property, and that the devil is a trespasser
- f. Confess that our body is the house of the Holy Spirit who lives in you.
- g. Take your stand against any encroachment of the enemy in your mind, emotion, will as well as your body.
- h. Declare yourself to be free in Jesus Christ. Remember that God's ultimate authority over Satan and his influence is invested in Jesus. Receive the freedom which bring consciously
- i. Thank God with all your being for what he has done for you
- j. Be ready to help others become whole people in Jesus

13. So what opportunities do you have to tell how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you [Mark 5: 19]?

Study 7

Defeating the challenges- Living in God's protection

Introduction

The challenge is to ask the question. 'How can we protect ourselves from our enemies?' A Roman soldier would answer by using my armour. The whole armour was needed. The soldier would not pick and choose he would wear it all. One part would protect his heart but not his head, another the head but not the heart. He would need every single piece. He would also carry an offensive weapon a short, two-edged sword used for both cutting and thrusting.

The big picture

1. what sort of protective armour have you worn while playing various sports or activities, and why?

2. Describe is you can a time when you felt surrounded by God's protection.

The Biblical picture

Read Ephesians Ch 6 vs 10-20

Here Paul introduces us to each piece of the Roman armour and its spiritual counter part. This offers is protection when the evil one attacks.

3. As you read this passage, what battlefield images come to mind?
4. Why must we rely on God's power if we are to be victorious against our spiritual enemies [vs 10-11]?
5. Throughout Paul's life he was opposed, flogged, stoned and imprisoned by various human enemies. Why then does he claim that our struggle is 'not against flesh and blood'?
6. Paul identifies our true enemies as the devil, and the demonic rulers, authorities, powers and spiritual forces of this dark age. What evidence do you see of these hostile forces in your life or the lives of Christians you know?
7. Why do you think Paul states three times that we must stand our ground, to do everything to stand and stand firm?
8. Why are both truth and righteousness essential components of our armour [see also Isaiah 11: 5 and 59: 17]?
9. How can the gospel message that we have peace with God [v 15] give you strength to stand against spiritual opponents?
10. Faith [v 16] refers to both what we believe and who we believe in. How can our faith act like a shield against all of the evil one's flaming arrows?

Being in the picture

11. In what ways do you need to exercise faith in God's protection and promises?
12. The sword of the Spirit is our only defensive weapon. Why do we need both the Spirit of God and the Word of God to defeat the devil?
13. Although prayer isn't listed as one of the pieces of armour, how is prayer a vital component of your spiritual warfare?

Study 8

Defeating the challenges

Being a Survivor

Introduction

On the morning of April 18, 1906, the San Andreas Fault settled violently. The city of San Francisco was shaken by a terrible earthquake. Buildings shuddered and collapsed, and fire swept through the city leaving it virtually destroyed. Thousands of people who went to bed on the 17th awoke on the 18th to a world that has fallen apart around them.

The big picture

1. In what ways are personal sufferings and tragedies like earthquakes?
2. Think of a time in your life when your world seemed to fall apart. What were some of the thoughts and feelings you experienced?

The Biblical picture

If the Richter scale had been around and could have measured Job's personal troubles then his earthquake would have measured close to maximum. Because of what Job endured and the way he endured it, his name has become synonymous with suffering and patience. In one form or another his story is re-enacted every day in a broken world.

Read Job Ch 1.

3. In Greek tragedy the greatness of the main character emphasises the heights from which they fall. In a similar way how do verses 1-5 set the stage for the tragedy that follows?
4. At the outset of the story, why do you think we are allowed to overhear the conversation between God and Satan [vs 6-12]. A conversation not revealed to Job or his friends?
5. The name Satan means 'accuser'. What is the essence of Satan's accusations against Job [vs 8-12]?
6. How do his accusations lead to Job's disaster?
7. Try to put yourself into Job's place. How might you have felt as a wave after a wave of disaster struck?

8. Have you ever be in a place where you were demanding an explanation for the pain you were experiencing? Why is this desire so strong within us?
9. What is astounding about Job's response [vs 20-22]? Why do you think he is still able to worship and praise God?
10. Read Job Ch 2. The scene in heaven repeats itself with a new twist. Why is Satan still unsatisfied with Job's character [2: 1-5]?
11. How would Job's new affliction intensify the pain he already felt [2: 7-8 see also 7:5, 13-14, 30:17, 30]?
12. Those who cursed God [2:] were to be stoned to death[Lev 24: 10-16]. How does Job respond to his wife's 'solution' to his suffering?

Being in the picture

13. Based on this passage, how does Satan sue suffering and tragedy to tempt us to sin?
14. How can we follow Job's example when suffering strikes?

Study 9

Defeating the challenges- Being an overcomer

Introduction

In Victor Hugo's book 'Les Miserables' a young man named Jean Valjean is sentenced to twenty ears hard labour for stealing some bread. After his release from prison Jean Valjean is shown mercy and forgiveness by a priest. Yet throughout the book a heartless police inspector called Jarvert, who believes that criminals can never be reformed, pursues Valjean. With obsessive determination Javert vows to expose Valjean's past and send him back to prison. In a similar way the devil detests the mercy and forgiveness God has shown in Christ. Throughout a Christian's life, Satan will pursue you with demonic determination. He is obsessed with destroying your walk with God, and bring you back into a spiritual prison.

The big picture

1. Think of a time when someone chased you, perhaps when you were a child. How did you feel, and what did you do to get away?
2. Why do you think accusation is such a powerful weapon in Satan's arsenal?

The Biblical picture

Read Revelation Ch 12: 7-12.

3. Describe everything you can about the war that is fought in verses 7-9?
4. Notice the different titles used of Satan in v 9. What can you learn about him and his tactics against you from each of these descriptions?
5. Verse 10 begins with a triumphant declaration of Satan's defeat. What words or phrases in v 10 emphasise God's strength and contrast to Satan's?
6. On the one hand, the devil is described as the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night [v 10]. On the other hand he is described as the one who is 'hurled down' from heaven. How does the 'blood of the Lamb' overcome all of the devil's accusations against us?
7. When have you felt assaulted by guilt and shame, how has it helped to realise that Christ's blood was shed for you?
8. A second key to overcome Satan is our 'testimony'. How can sharing our faith with others, even in the face of opposition, enable us to overcome the devil?
9. Verse 11 implies that if we love our lives too much then we will be hesitating to testify about Christ in the face of opposition or threats. Why would this be true?
10. When Christians are martyred for their faith, it appears to the world that they have been defeated rather than victorious. Yet how can their apparent defeat be seen as an ultimate victory?

Being in the picture

11. Verse 12 concludes by saying that the devil is filled with fury because he knows that his time is short. Why should this statement keep us from being complacent about our struggle with Satan?

12. How can John's vision of the war in heaven encourage you in the midst of the spiritual battles you face?

Study 10

Standing firm today

Introduction

The idea of fantasy football teams are very popular at present. So if someone was to ask you who you would pick from the whole of history for an all time football team of evil who would you pick? For centuries people have speculated about this person the Bible describes as the antichrist. It is a long list running from Emperors in the Roman Empire to present day dictators. The choice is endless, and full of speculation. Certainly the Roman Caesar would be a good candidate. If you combine the ferocity of a leopard with the power of a bear, and mix in the terror of a lion, you would have strong candidate for the role.

The big question

1. Do you think it is wise to speculate about the possible identity of the antichrist? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think that Christians through the ages have been inclined to imagine that someone in their own generation is the antichrist?

The Biblical picture

Read 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-17

Although Paul does not reveal the identity of this antichrist, he does reveal how we can stand firm against Satan's schemes.

3. According to this passage what false information caused the Thessalonians to be unsettled or alarmed?
4. Even today some groups claim that Jesus Christ has already come. How does Paul know for sure that Jesus has not yet come? See verse 3-5.

5. Paul says that before the Lord returns the man of lawlessness will be revealed. In what ways will this man counterfeit Christ?
6. The kind of power of lawlessness, which reaches its climax in the antichrist, is already at work. In what ways do you see the power of lawlessness at work in the world around you?
7. What outward and inward reasons cause people to be deceived by the lawless one?
8. According to verses 10-12, how do our values and lifestyle influence our ability to perceive spiritual truth?
9. According to this passage, what is the ultimate fate of the man of lawlessness and those who follow the power of lawlessness?
10. What has Paul already done, and what does Paul ask him to do, to make our lives different both now and in the future? See verse 13-17.
11. How can we co-operate with God in this process?

Being in the picture

12. Think of a spiritual conflict you are facing. How can you stand firm and hold to biblical truth in this situation?

Study 11

A call to a new lifestyle

Introduction

When the light of the reality of all that Jesus has done for us, and all that he is doing for us at present begins to dawn on us, then the challenge of living a holy life is less of a challenge for us. Many years ago I read something, which I found helpful in spiritual warfare. It spoke about the devil's continual activity. 'He never slumbers, never is weary, never abandons hope. He deals his blows alike at childhood weaknesses; youth's inexperience, manhood's strength and the tottering of old age. He watches to ensnare the morning though; he departs not with the shadows of night. He is busy with the busy; he hurries about with the active. He sits by each bed of sickness, and whispers into each dying ear'. We just need to recognise that spiritual warfare is lifelong, it is a fight we are in from the moment we commit our life to Christ to the very end. The aim of Satan is to gain dominance over the whole person of the human body. If we are serious about Christ being your Lord and God, then you can expect opposition. Yet life with Jesus can be a constant, exhilarating, reassuring experience of constant triumph over evil forces.

The big picture

1. Which of the following statements best describes the connection for you between your thoughts and your actions?

I normally act first and think later

Before I do something, I've usually weighted up the pros and cons

I imagine myself doing each possible course of action then I choose

I usually think before I act

I wish I would take more time to think before I do things

Too often I think so much that I don't get round to acting

Explain your response

2. When do you find your thoughts spilling over into actions- without even trying?

The Biblical picture

Read Colossians Ch 3 vs 1-17

1. What two ways of life are strongly contrasted, and what is the source of each?

2. Through this passage Paul tells many things we ought to do. However he also mentions several things, which God has already done, is doing, or will do. What are those these acts of God on our behalf?

3. Describe some of the radical differences between living according to Christ and living according to our earthly nature> How can a person relationships be different following one way or the other?

4. How is our behaviour affected by the focus of our minds and hearts?

5. Quite a few ugly things are listed in verses 5-9. How are they evidence of minds and hearts set on earthly things?

6. How is God continuing to change is internally?

7. How does holy living impact the community life of believers? See verses 11-17

8. What is appealing to you about a life clothed with Christ? See verses 12-14

Being in the picture

9. Are there practices in your life, which you cannot do in the name of Jesus [vs 17]? Can you explain?

10. which of the qualities in verses 5-9 do you find the most difficult to take off?

11. Which of the qualities in verse 12-14 do you find the most difficult to put on?