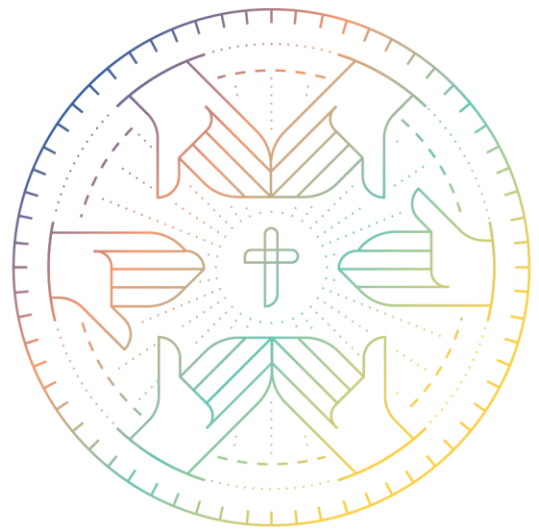


Group Life.

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MEETING AGENDA

WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

In this week's study, we will be covering Ephesians 6:10-13. In it, Paul will remind us how we are in a very real battle and that we need to stand our ground against the devil. We are including an article that gives an overview of who the devil is according to scripture.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/who-Satan.html>

Don't forget to take attendance via the attendance reminder email.

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

What was your favorite costume as a child or adult? Or share a fun costume story.

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

In this week's passage, Paul shifts us to the battle we face as we walk out who we are in Christ. He instructs us to stand strong and to put on the armor of God to counter the "schemes" of the devil. Paul wants us to understand that there's more at play behind the curtain in our day-to-day lives. Paul uses battle imagery to call us to stand firm in the midst of the spiritual war in our world.

INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

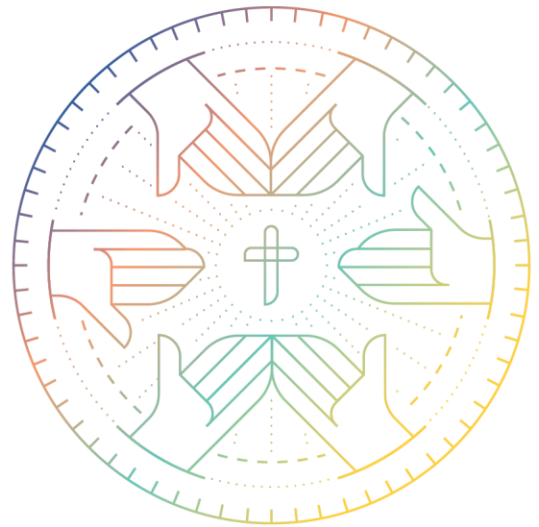
1. **Read Genesis 3:1-7, Matthew 4:3, John 8:44, John 10:10, 1 Peter 5:8, and Revelation 12:10. What characteristics about the devil stick out to you from these passages?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. In Genesis 3 we see him as crafty and deceiving. Matthew 4:3 the devil is described as the tempter. John 8:44 describes him as a murderer that doesn't stand for truth but also has no truth in him. The devil is not only a liar but is known as the father of lies. In John 10:10, we see that the devil is here to kill, steal and destroy. In 1 Peter 5:8, he is described as a roaring lion seeking to devour someone. Finally, in Revelation 12:10, he is described as the accuser. To understand the battle, we are in we must understand who we are up against and how he operates. It is very difficult to stand strong when you don't know what and where to look.]

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2. Read Ephesians 6:10-11 and 1 John 4:4. What stands out to you from Paul and John's guidance to believers?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Paul instructs us to be strong in the Lord, not in our own might. All throughout Ephesians, Paul reminds us where we find our identity and from whom we are to imitate as we walk out our faith. He opens this letter with a prayer for the Ephesian Christians to receive wisdom and knowledge (Ephesians 1:15-23). After discussing the real-world application of that wisdom, Paul notes that the believer does not rely on his or her own strength, but on the power of God to win victory in life's battles. When Paul speaks about finding strength in the Lord, he is referring to the nearness of Christ. We find "strength in His might" which give us the ability to actively fight against the schemes of the devil. John reminds us that as we are in this spiritual battle we have Jesus in us through the Holy Spirit; and that is greater than the schemes of the devil. So, we can have confidence as we draw near to God to be strengthened.]

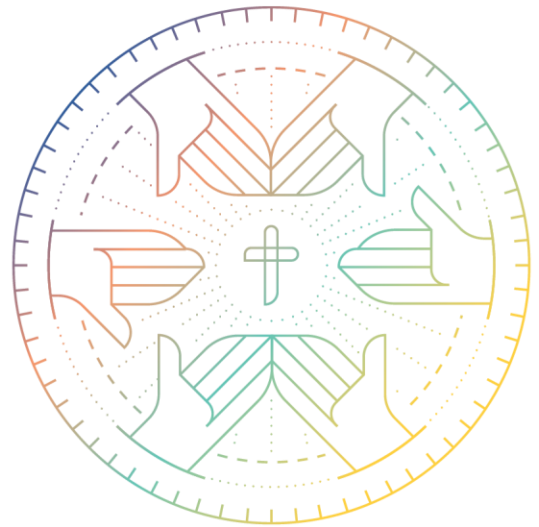
3. Read Ephesians 6:12-13. How does understanding that our fight isn't against people (flesh and blood) help us to understand how we are to stand firm and withstand the evil day?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. The enemies we face, ultimately, are not people or objects. The devil may use those as part of his attack, but our true opponent is not other people. We are reminded that all of these tools or armor are critically important which is why we are called to put on the full armor. God's armor is a package, not a cafeteria of items from which we can select. We must have salvation and God's Word. We need prayer and righteousness, not one or the other. All of these areas must work together to operate effectively. The "evil day" can refer to any moment of spiritual attack. Believers who wear God's armor can "stand firm," a phrase used in connection with success with God in the Old Testament (Exodus 14:13; 2 Chronicles 20:17; Psalm 89:28; Isaiah 46:8; Daniel 11:32).]

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APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

1. **Share an example when you have experienced the devil's opposition in living out your calling? How did you overcome that?**

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. This is a great opportunity for reflection. Give your group a few moments of silence. Be sure to ask follow-up questions to your group responses. An example of an area of difficulty could be a relational issue between you and another person that is causing anxiety and stress for both of you. It is important to understand that there may be spiritual forces that are aggravating the situation. Knowing that you are just not fighting against the other person causes us to go to God and submit the situation to him and pray that He will help both of you find a resolution to move forward in.]

2. **Read James 4:7-8. James lists five things we can do practically to stand firm this week.**

Submit to God

Resist the devil

Draw near to God

Cleanse your hands

Purify your hearts

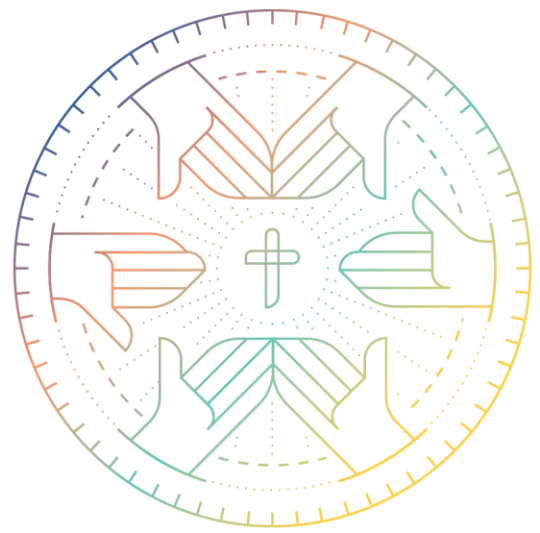
Which one of these do you want to prioritize this week and why?

H.O.S.T. GUIDANCE

[Answers will vary. Give up getting what you want, and willingly receive all the good He gives. We must surrender our battles to achieve our own desires, and turn to serving others instead. The promise in James is clear: if we quit the path of the world and resist the devil, he will run away from us. Resistance requires us to actively pull away. It demands we continually counter his lies by telling ourselves the truth about God's goodness, love, and power. James calls us to draw near (move closer) to God. This comes with an additional promise: God will respond by moving closer to us. That's an incredible act of mercy on God's part. The God of the universe owes us nothing, including His closeness. Next, James calls us sinners to clean our hands. He calls us double-minded people: trying to serve both self and God. James pleads with us to purify our hearts. For Jewish readers who had grown up under the law, these commands would have called to mind ceremonial washings. The idea here is to completely turn from our sin, to resolve that we will serve God and to begin again.]

Group Life.

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PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Dear heavenly Father,

Help us to be strong in the Lord being strengthened by your might. May we put on the armor that you provide so that we will stand against the schemes of the devil. Help us to be reminded that our battle isn't against other people but against spiritual forces. May we view our neighbors and see them as you see them. Thank you, Lord, that we can stand against the devil as we submit to you. We pray all these things in your wonderful name. Amen.