

MBC C3 LEADERS QUESTIONS
WEEK 1 - 10/10/21

Listen to, Learn about, and Love on one another

- Share one blessing you've experienced or received since our group was together last semester.
- In 5 minutes or less, briefly tell your group about your week and if you sensed God's peace?

"Now may the Lord of peace himself give you his peace at all times and in every situation. The Lord be with you all" (2 Thessalonians 3:16, NLT).

- "Paul prays for perpetual peace from God for the church." (The Bible Panorama commentary, accessed 10/8/21, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=2+Thessalonians+3&version=NLT>)

Getting Started with a Warm-Up:

- Reflecting on Pastor Randy's sermon about demons this past Sunday 10/10/21:
1) How do you determine between fiction and facts about Satan and demons?;
and 2) How has your view of Satan and demons changed?

Getting Down to Business:

The following questions are following this format: Scripture/Observation, Application, and Prayer (SOAP).

1) Scripture/Observation:

- Read Ephesians 6:10-12. Recall that the term demon is a general name that covers a variety of supernatural beings who oppose God's people. How does this biblical evidence help confirm or change your perspective of current events worldwide?

"10 A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 11 Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. 12 For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the

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unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 6:10-12, NLT)

- 6:10 *be strong . . . the strength of his might*. Paul uses similar terms in 1:19 to describe the power that raised Jesus from the dead. We are not encouraged to face the evil hosts of darkness in our own strength, but in the strength that raised Jesus and believers with Him (2:4–6; 3:16–19).*
- 6:11 *Put on the whole armor of God*. The new set of clothes (4:22–24 note) now becomes a warrior’s battle gear (Col. 3:10, 12 notes). *stand*. Repeated three times in vv. 11, 13, 14 (the related term “withstand” in v. 13 has the same meaning). The “walking” image of chs. 4 and 5 (4:1 note) gives way to the picture of a soldier standing firm in battle.*
- 6:12 See 1:21; 2:2; 3:10. *rulers . . . spiritual forces*. These terms all refer to powerful spiritual beings that make up the “power of the air” (2:2) ruled by Satan. *darkness*. See 5:8–14.*

(*ESV Reformation Study Bible, accessed 10/8/21,
<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+6&version=NLT>)

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- Read Matthew 13:3-4; 18-19. 1) How does the information in this passage help us in our approach to evangelism?; and 2) Give an example of what it might look like for the evil one to “snatch away the seed.”

“3 He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: “Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. 4 As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them...18 The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don’t understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts. 19 The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don’t understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts.” (Matthew 13:3-4, 18-19, NLT)

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The parable of the soils (vv.3b-9; cf. vv.18-23) explains the several reactions to the proclamation of the kingdom. The seed represents the message about the kingdom (v.19), i.e., the preaching of the gospel (cf. 4:17). Although all persons hear the same Word, they respond to the Word in various ways. Some, like the Jewish crowds, have hearts that are so hard the seed is unable even to germinate. Others begin the life of discipleship but fall away either because of suffering or concern over material things. Only a minority remain faithful to the Word, obedient to the will of the Father until the end (v.8; cf. 12:33-37).

To those on the outside this parable declares that the rejection of the Word by the greatest part of Israel (and, indeed, the greatest part of all hearers) does not mean there is anything wrong with the Word. On the contrary, the problem lies with the poor quality of the human heart-soil on which the Word falls. To the disciples this parable teaches vigilance: They must guard against the possibility of falling away because of persecution or possessions. (Asbury Bible Commentary, accessed 10/8/21, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=matthew+13&version=NLT>)

2) Application: Read 1 Peter 5:8-9. How can we prepare ourselves to be ready for the attacks of Satan?

“8 Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. 9 Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are.” (1 Peter 5:8-9, NLT)

V 8–9: RESOLUTE RESISTANCE By trusting God, we should soberly, vigilantly and steadfastly resist the lion-like devil. Christians who suffer should remember that, worldwide, other believers also suffer. (The Bible Panorama commentary, accessed 10/8/21, <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+peter+5&version=NLT>)

3) Prayer: “Lord, help us to learn much through this series so that we will be better prepared and equipped to stand firm when Satan and his evil forces attack.”