

Taking It Home:

Read Ephesians 6:14-18. This passage speaks of the armor of God. Max E. Anders in *30 Days to Understanding the Christian Life* calls us to make this commitment:

I promise to take up the whole armor of God. I promise to put on the:

Belt: I accept the truth of Scripture and commit myself to following it with integrity.

Breastplate: I dedicate myself to living as much like Christ as I know how, counting on Christ's righteousness to make me acceptable to God and rejecting Satan's accusations against me when I fail.

Boots: I believe the promises of God and count on them to be true for me, and then, I can have His peace in life.

Shield: Whenever I feel like doubting, or sinning, or quitting, I will reject those thoughts and feelings, because I deeply believe that God's truth and His will are the best.

Helmet: I fix my hopes and affections, not in this world, but in Christ and the next world.

Sword: I will master the Word so well that I will be able to use it to strengthen and guide me in life's specific circumstances.

Are you willing to commit to these things?

Signed: _____ Date: _____

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew's sermon points, visit pastormatthew.net and click on the "Write This Down" tab.

Church on the Edge | The Book of Mark
A Call to Fight
Mark 1:23

Dr. Matthew R. St. John
Bethel Church
October 28, 2012

A Call to Fight

Notes:

For more information about Growth Groups, Growth Group homework, and a podcast of sermons with homework, visit www.bethelfc.com.

Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 28, 2012

Mark 1:23

Quick Review:

The Christians living in Rome were being heavily persecuted for their faith. Emperor Nero was having them arrested almost nightly, turning many into the streetlamps that illuminated Rome. Thus the Christians begged Mark for an answer to their burning question: *since they are killing us off, is this Jesus thing worth while?* To answer the question, Mark wrote the gospel bearing his name, reminding the believers that our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the forces of a dark kingdom. The church, living on the edge of time, must never forget that we are swept up in a cosmic war between darkness and light.

My Story:

What do you think angels are like? What about demons? How much influence do you think they have on the visible world? What kind of influence?

If you could describe an area of your life in which there seems to be an invisible battle going on, what would it be?

If you were a demon, how would you try to wreck your life?

The book of Mark records 22 episodes where Jesus encounters demons. Why do you think Jesus had so much contact with demons during his ministry? Do you think they're still active today? Explain.

Growing Deeper:

Read Mark 1:21-28

Synagogues were formed after Israel and Judah were sent into exile. They were no longer able to worship at the temple so they formed synagogues where they would read God's word and pray. In the synagogues visiting teachers would discuss the law and the prophets. They would often try to validate their thoughts by saying things like, "Rabbi ben Mitchell has said..." Mark 1:22 says, "[Jesus] was teaching them as one having authority." Why didn't Jesus have to quote the recognized authorities of the synagogue?

In Mark 1:27 we learn that the people were amazed by Jesus' authority that even evil spirits obeyed. What do the following verses have to say about authority?

- Matthew 12:28
- 1 John 4:4
- Matthew 28:18-20
- Mark 9:14-29

Read Ephesians 6:10-13.

This passage points to the reality of spiritual warfare. What guidance does Paul give to those who are in the midst of spiritual warfare?

Read James 4:7.

What advice to James to give to those in the midst of spiritual warfare?