



WELCOME!

We are glad you are joining us.

December 15, 2024

Worship Team led by David Dillon

Message by Karl Helvig

Advent

Text: Revelation 12:1-6

Who Are You Fighting?

Make sure you are _____ the right things, in the right way.
Give more attention to God's will and ways that to our _____ and _____.

Ephesians 6:12

WHO ARE YOU FIGHTING?

You are fighting a _____!

Life is a battle, and we fight something powerful.

We underestimate the _____ of our enemy to our own detriment.

The Dragon's purpose is the destruction of all that is good.

Arrogance vs. Humility

Destruction vs. Creation

Victory vs. Self-Sacrifice.

If it has _____ and _____, it is not your enemy.

God's desire for every human being in every _____ is reconciliation and restoration,
just as that is his desire for all humanity with himself.

YOUR MOVE

Remind yourself who the real enemy is.

Tell yourself the true story.

God created all humans good.

Sin has broken and polluted human hearts and lives.

God gave his own life to redeem and restore this brokenness.

And he invites you to join him.

There are countless authors who have reflected on the importance of remembering the spiritual battle going on around us day by day. Below are some excerpts from authors that have been helpful to me. They are not all obviously related to the topic of the day, but I believe they all provide for thoughtful reflection:

Barton-Rolheiser-*Embracing Rhythms of Work and Rest* talks about the experience of relentlessness and how it can burn us out. The implication can be to find more rest, but that is not always the case:

The books that are most easily enjoyable to read are sometimes also the least profitable from a human growth and development perspective.

There is most certainly a place for casual enjoyment or entertainment. There is also a need for good rest. The problem is our tendency to default to mere enjoyment and never instead pursue the more challenging - and therefore beneficial - work of engagement, thinking, wrestling, maturing in thought, emotion, relationship, character.

Matthew 6.33, Seek First the Kingdom, Colossians 3.17

1 Clement Talks about the need for a *singleness of mind*. This is amidst a long exploration of the need for humility found through confession and repentance. "Confession, practiced properly and regularly, keeps the mind focused on the greatness of God." Clement quotes extensively from the Psalms and believes, "that a truly repentant person will become humble, and become fixated on God's greatness. God's greatness and man's humility are inextricable."

The practice of [[single tasking]] would be good to develop single mindedness. Do only one thing at a time. It is the antithesis of multi-tasking.

homothymadon a word that the gospel writer Luke is fond of, is used to refer to the 'single-minded purpose' of the early church. The church didn't lack for quarrels, yet it remained unified in its quest to remain faithful to Jesus as Lord, in its devotion to God's purposes, and with a developed habit of mutual concern. Wright-Bird, *The New Testament in its World*, 646.

Lewis – *Mere Christianity* has a number of reflections on the subject of engaging in the war against evil in our world, communities, and lives:

"When considering any good or bad inner impulse, remember: Every virtue is the perversion and excess of some other Vice. There is no neutrality."

"Every day we must wake and decide what sort of immortal we want to be."

"These, then, are the two points I am trying to make. First, that human beings, all over the earth, have this curious idea that they ought to behave in a certain way, and they cannot really get rid of it. Secondly, that they do not in fact behave in that way. They know the Law of Nature; they break it. These two facts are the foundation of all clear thinking about ourselves and the universe we live in."