

Celebration Services (May 24th - 25th) **"Learning to Fight... Insights on Possessing Promises" (Pt. 1)**
"Learning to Fight"

INTRO ... Why Does the Christian Life Contain So Much that's NOT EASY?

- **ATTITUDES**
- **RELATIONSHIPS**
- **FINANCES**
- **PERSONAL ISSUES**
- **EVANGELISM**

“ The needs in your own life, and in your family, and in this church and other churches, and in the cause of world missions, and in our culture at large are huge and desperate. In many cases heaven and hell hang in the balance, faith or unbelief, life and death. Remember Paul's grief and anguish for his perishing kinsmen in Romans 9:2, and remember that in Romans 10:1 he prays for them earnestly, "Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved." Salvation hangs in the balance when we pray. You will not know what prayer is for until you know that life is war.” **John Piper**, “Be Devoted to Prayer”

The Difference between Living in London and Living in NARNIA

2 Cor 4:18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

1 Tim 6:11-14 But as for you, O man of God, flee these things. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, steadfastness, gentleness. 12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 I charge you in the presence of God, ... 14 to keep the commandment unstained and free from reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ,

“ The first thing I have to say is this: True Christianity is a fight! ... The warfare I speak of is the spiritual warfare. It is the fight which everyone who would be saved must fight about his soul. This warfare, I am aware, is a thing of which many know nothing... And yet it is as real and true as any war the world has ever seen. ... The true Christian is called to be a soldier, and must behave as such from the day of his conversion to the day of his death. He is not meant to live a life of religious ease, indolence, and security. He must never imagine for a moment that he can sleep and doze along the way to heaven... If the Bible is the rule of his faith and practice, he will find his course laid down very plainly in this matter. He must fight!” **J.C. Ryle**, “Holiness”, p. 62-63

LEARNING TO FIGHT

Judges 3:1-4

- **A Generation that Didn't Know War**

Judg 2:10 ... Not so much "Knowledge" as Experience
– Some things must be learned 1st Hand

- **God's Solution** ... to Challenge them with Enemies that would teach them to Look to God for Victory

“ Teach them war - That by the neighbourhood of such warlike enemies, they might be purged from sloth and security, and obliged them to innure themselves to martial exercises, and to stand continually upon their guard, and consequently to keep close to that God whose assistance they had so great and constant need of.” **John Wesley**, “John Wesley's Notes on the Bible”

“ Israel was a figure of the church militant, that must fight its way to a triumphant state. The soldiers of Christ must endure hardness, 2 Tim 2:3. Corruption is therefore left remaining in the hearts even of good Christians, that they may learn war, may keep on the whole armour of God, and stand continually upon their guard.” (from Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible)

NOTE: Understanding the “Promised Land”

Egyptian Deliverance = Freedom from the Bondage/Enslavement to Sin
Promised Land = with this freedom, we are now to “Occupy” the Land of God's Promises

“ WE frequently use Canaan as a type of heaven, and the Jordan, through which Israel passed, as a symbol of death.This is thoroughly poetical, and may be made exceedingly instructive; but it is not quite accurate,.... If the New Testament is to expound the Old, then there is another lesson to be learned from the land which flowed with milk and honey. “We that have believed do enter into rest;” that is to say, all believers in Christ have crossed the Jordan, and have come into the promised rest. The covenant is fulfilled to them already in a great measure; they are living under Messiah's sway within the bounds of his kingdom, and every precious thing which God promised them is theirs. They dwell in the “land which the Lord thinketh upon”: “Thy land, O Immanuel!” ...this condition of exalted privilege is not a state of undisturbed repose: on the contrary, he wars a constant warfare, wrestling with spiritual wickednesses. The Canaanite is in possession, and the Canaanite is to be driven out. Our natural tendencies and corruptions, our sinful habits and lustings, and the warping and bending of our spirit towards evil all this has to be overcome; and we shall not possess the land so as to enjoy undivided tranquillity until sin is utterly exterminated.” **Charles Spurgeon**,

WHY DO ENEMIES REMAIN IN THE LAND OF OUR LIVES?

... Because of God's Sovereign Purpose — AND— Because of Our Failure to Drive them Out!

Judg 1:1-2 ... “The Lord has given them into your hands”

Judg 1:19 ... The Lord was with Judah, BUT he still could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had chariots of iron.

Judg 1:21 ... Benjamin (along with Ephraim and Asher) did not drive out the Jebusites

Judg 1:27 ... Manasseh did not drive out several inhabitants — because the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in that land

Judg 1:30 ... Manasseh, Zebulun, Naphtali, and Joseph turned the Canaanites into Forced labor rather than driving them out —

REASONS GIVEN FOR REMAINING OPPOSITION: (Why We Do Not Expel the Enemies in Our Lives)

1. *Chariots of Iron* – these represented INTIMIDATING & EXTRAORDINARY Opposition.

“ they could not conquer the chariots of iron, because, first, they did not try. The Hebrew does not say that they could not drive them out. What the Hebrew says is that they did not drive them out. Some things we cannot do because we never make the attempt. I wish we had among Christian workers the spirit of the Suffolk lad who was brought up in court to be examined by an overbearing lawyer. The lawyer roughly said to him, “Hodge, can you read Greek?” “I don’t know, sir,” said he. “Well, fetch a Greek book,” said the lawyer, and showing the lad a passage he said to him, Can you read that?” “No.” “Then why did you not say that you could not?” “Because I never say I cannot do a thing till I have tried it.” If that spirit were in Christian people we should achieve great things; but we set down such and such a thing as manifestly beyond our power, and, silently, we whisper to ourselves, “therefore beyond God’s power,” and so we let it alone, No chariots of iron will be driven out if we dare not make the attempt.” **Charles Spurgeon**, “Chariots of Iron”, Metropolitan Tabernacle, vol 28, p. 812

2. *Simply Didn't Do It*

“ I suspect that they did not drive them out because they were idle. If cavalry were to be dealt with, Judah must bestir himself. If chariots of iron were to be defeated they must enter upon an arduous campaign; and so, taking counsel of their fears and their idleness, they said, “Let us not venture on the conflict.” There are many things that Christ’s church is unable to do because it is too lazy. ... Idleness refuses to sound the trumpet for the battle, and the fight never comes on, and therefore the enemy is not driven out.” **Charles Spurgeon**, “Chariots of Iron”, Metropolitan Tabernacle, vol 28, p. 812

3. *Persistence on the part of the opposition*

4. *Entertaining Alternatives or Compromising God's Instructions* ... Israel chose a different way (forced labor) rather than God’s way (drive them out). Interesting that once one tribe did this, how many followed the practice.

.... You Cannot Make an Arrangement to Put Temptation & Sin on a Leash and Keep it Close for your own purposes.

Judg 2:11-14 *The outcome of IDOLATRY ON A LEASH*

- Why Does God Call Us to Destroy Idols and not just Move them around in our lives? Because Idols Corrupt the Vulnerable Hearts of men!

Judg 2:15 *When God is For You by being Against You*

Judge 2:16 *God's Mercy on the Undeserving*

Why Does the Christian Life Contain So Much that's Not Easy? ... Because God Knows that WE Need to Learn to Fight and Depend on HIM

THE GENERATION OF THE CHURCH THAT DIDN'T KNOW WAR ...

What do we know of War?

“...life is war. But most people do not believe this in their heart. Most people show by their priorities and their casual approach to spiritual things that they believe we are in peacetime, not wartime. ...In wartime, the newspapers carry headlines about how the troops are doing. In wartime, families talk about the sons and daughters on the front lines, and write to them, and pray for them with heart-wrenching concern for their safety. In wartime, we are on the alert. We are armed. We are vigilant. In wartime, we spend money differently - there is austerity, not for its own sake, but because there are more strategic ways to spend money than on new tires at home. The war effort touches everybody. We all cut back. The luxury liner becomes the troop carrier.Very few people think that we are now in a war greater than World War II, and greater than any imaginable nuclear World War III. Or that Satan is a much worse enemy than Communism or militant Islam. Or that the conflict is not restricted to any one global theater, but is in every town and city in the world. Or that the casualties do not merely lose an arm or an eye or an earthly life, but lose everything, even their own soul and enter a hell of everlasting torment (Revelation 14:9-11).Until people believe this, they will not pray as they ought. They will not even know what prayer is.” **John Piper**, “Prayer, the Work of Missions”

PREPARATION FOR A NEW DAY AT LCC

“No duty can be performed without wrestling. The Christian needs his sword as well as his trowel.” **William Gurnall**

“There is no winning without warfare; there is no opportunity without opposition; there is no victory without vigilance.” **Alan Redpath**

PRAYER Sign-Up

Eph 6:10-13, 18-19 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God,.... 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,