

THE BIG IDEA: We can risk it ALL because ALL we can risk is temporary.

The Take-Off

It's not really up for debate that the greatest Star Trek Captain of all time was...

Captain Jean-Luc Picard. He's the GOAT. Do you remember his two signature catch phrases?

"*Make it so*" and simply, "*Engage*." I'm going to channel my inner Captain Picard today and call you to ENGAGE! Today we transition from **acknowledging** the battle to **engaging** in it.

In **Week 1** Paul showed us there is a spiritual battle taking place around us. We're called to fight in it not FOR victory but FROM victory. The battle is already decided.

Week 2 focused on seeing our Leader in this battle; our King; our Victor: Jesus. Seeing Him changes the way we see the battle.

Finally in **Week 3** we studied our enemy: Satan, and his simple yet powerful mission statement: steal, kill, destroy. More than anything he wants to take us down, and though he may have no authority he has plenty of power to do damage.

The *next* 4 weeks after today we'll focus on the weapons by which we **engage the battle**.

Today we'll begin to dive into the most practical elements of engaging in the fight by answering 3 questions: **Who do we fight? Why do we fight? How do we fight?**

1. Who Do We Fight?

- Short and sweet: NOT flesh and blood. I repeat, we do NOT FIGHT FLESH AND BLOOD.
- The battle isn't against people. It's a spiritual battle against a spiritual enemy.
- Read [Ephesians 6:10-12](#)
- This is a SPIRITUAL battle and we are NOT fighting it against flesh and blood.
- That's exactly why Jesus said in [Luke 23:34](#), "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." His fight was against death, but he conquered the grave!
- ENGAGE the correct enemy, DISENGAGE from battling the people around you, no matter how difficult they are. *** Examples**
- **See people. See people more deeply than the circumstances by which you view them. See. People.**
- Those people you can't stop viewing as the enemy? You need to annihilate that via prayer and service, remembering [Romans 5:6-11](#) (Christ gave His life for us while we were still His enemies)
- Pray God would bear good fruit in you for the sake of your non-enemies ([Galatians 5:22-23](#))

2. Why Do We Fight?

- Because our enemy is doing this: [2 Corinthians 4:4-6](#)
- **We don't fight *against* people, we fight *for* people!**
- Satan is blinding people from seeing the light of the Gospel ("good news," "well-message")
- Jesus called us the light of the world. We stand in direct opposition to the enemy! ([Matt 5:14-16](#))
- We are eternal beings and we are battling for people's souls.
- Read [2 Corinthians 5:11-21](#)
- Through the finished work of Jesus, we have been **reconciled** to God.
- There was a hostile divide between God and us: we caused it-He fixed it.
- Our sin separated us from God, but Jesus gave His life as payment for sin ([1 John 4:10](#)) so that we could be forgiven and made NEW; so that we could be RECONCILED back to our God and Creator!
- Now that He has reconciled us, He is making His plea to unbelievers *through* us: **Ambassador**
- **We have to engage the fight like Ambassadors in a foreign land on a mission.**

3. How Do We Fight?

- Like we've got nothing to lose.
- **Matthew 6:19-20** tells us to store up treasures in heaven, not on earth
- **James 5:3** speaks about the temporary nature of all earthly things
- **John 14:1-3** speaks about our heavenly home he'll take us to one day
- **1 Peter 2:11-12** calls us *aliens* and *strangers*
- **We can risk it all because all we can risk is temporary.**
- Paul said he considers ALL things a loss compared to knowing Christ (**Phil. 3:7-8**)
- We've got to see the battle with an ETERNAL perspective, not a TEMPORAL one.
- That's a "Kingdom Mindset," to be focused more on things that are of eternal value rather than temporary value.
- The Bible never promised us things would go well for us on earth. Ever.
- In fact we see quite the opposite over and over and over again.
- In **John 16:33** Jesus says you WILL have trouble
- In **2 Corinthians 11:24-33** Paul talks about all it cost him to follow Jesus
- In **2 Corinthians 12:9-10** Paul says through our weakness God proves strong.
- He even goes on to say he *delights* in weakness and suffering for Christ's sake!
- I need you to acknowledge that following Jesus WILL cost you something.
- BUT you still engage in the battle, because anything it costs you is temporary anyway!
- **Following Jesus will cost us something temporal for the sake of something eternal.**

So what will it cost?

- You've heard this a number of times: We don't fight **for** victory, we fight **from** victory.
- That means He's already won the WAR, yes. It DOESN'T mean it won't cost us anything to fight.
- What's the worst thing it could cost us to follow Jesus?
- Death? To live is Christ, to die is gain! (**Phil 1:20-24**)
- To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. (**2 Cor. 5:6**) What else you got?
- No Christians in America are being beaten or imprisoned or killed for their faith.
- In OUR context it's likely going to cost us our time, our resources, our treasures our rank and our reputation.
- Those "things" you want? The McMansion, the luxuries, the creature comforts, the toys?
- You might pass on those because you spend that money doing ministry and helping people in need. Maybe you found a better investment for it. Something not made out of wood and bricks.
- You may not climb the success ladder because you'd have to lie and cheat to get there.
- You leave your cushy job because God calls you to go start a new ministry.
- You don't get that free time because someone needs help, someone needs to talk, and you put them before yourself.
- You get walked all over because you're willing to give grace and be patient and forgive.
- Your reputation takes a hit because you stand for what God stands for.
- You pass on worldly pleasures because they don't honor God.
- You're rejected by people who think you're crazy for really believing all this Jesus stuff.
- You lose your child because you've raised her to love Jesus and love people, and serve them fiercely and she becomes a missionary and leaves home.
- You sacrifice the known and the safe because you know He's leading you into the unknown.
- But He's good, and whatever you face, you face it with a good God. (**Psalms 136, 1 John 4:4**)
- Whatever you face for the sake of Christ, it's worth it, because people are worth it.
- Whatever you face for the sake of Christ is temporary and it's accomplishing something eternal.
- **Tomorrow cannot begin to compare to TOMORROW!**
- We have nothing to **fear** because we have nothing to **lose**.
- There is NO condemnation for those who are in Christ (**Romans 8:1**) What else is there?
- **We can risk it all because all we can risk is temporary.**

The Landing

-Story Time: The Day My Daughter Painted Herself With Poo, aka "Yesterday"

You really need to read 2 Corinthians 4 and 5 in full this week. A couple times. **FeedYourself.net**

-In the meantime, let's sum up by reflecting on a few verses:

- **2 Cor. 4:8-9** - afflicted NOT crushed, perplexed NOT in despair, persecuted NOT abandoned, struck down NOT destroyed

- **2 Cor. 4:16-18** - We don't lose heart, because our affliction is *light* and *momentary* and we look past it to eternal things.

I'm going to pray over you, we're going to turn some music on, and you're going to leave and re-enter the battle. As you do, and all week long, PLEASE reflect and pray that God would help you do the following:

1. Disengage from the the *wrong* enemy and engage the correct one.
2. See people deeply and with compassion.
3. Serve people without regard to yourself.
4. Risk it all for the sake of the well-message of Jesus
5. See life from an eternal perspective.
6. Not lose heart, and live without fear.

Additional passages to study:

In the following passages we find men and women who risked it all. They didn't know the outcome of the individual battles they were walking into. What they DID know was this:

1. Whatever happens, God is in control!
2. Whatever happens, God is good!
3. Whatever happens, it's worth it!

* 2 Samuel 10 - "Be of good courage and let God do what seems best to Him."

* Esther 4 - "If I perish I perish."

* Daniel 3 - "God can save us from the fire, but if He doesn't, oh well."

* Mark 14 - "Take this cup from me. Not my will but Your will be done."

* Acts 21 - "God's will be done."