

STUDY NOTES

WE ARE FAMILY

A SERIES AT NEW CITY CHURCH

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The following content is based on the message “The Nature of Evil” spoken on 08/28/16 by Brian Kruckenberg at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis of the message but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at www.newcityphx.com/sermons.

Leaders using these Study Notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective communities.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

THE SCRIPTURE: EPHESIANS 6:10-18

INTRODUCTION

Culture often sensationalizes evil with different forms of media. We lose sight of the truth of evil. We lose sight that it is nuanced and it is real.

- *Talk about how we lose sight of the truth of evil through culture’s portrayal of it.*

TRANSCENDENCE OF EVIL

Our battle is not only against flesh and blood (what we see), but it also against and evil that we don’t see. Satan leads an evil force of demons that fell from heaven and now fights against the goodness of God. People used to accept evil as legitimate, but now evil is explained away or “fixed”.

- *Why do you think some people don’t like to talk about evil?*
- *How do you think that evil can work through things that we use to explain evil away?*

COMPLEXITY OF EVIL

Evil is complex so there are two errors that we fall into when we look at it. The first error is to say that all bad things are a result of the devil’s work. The second error is to say that there is nothing at all behind evil.

- *Which error do you fall into more often?*
- *How do both of those errors simplify evil?*
- *Why do you think some people would rather just blame the devil for every bad thing?*

Evil never comes pure and simple. In fact, the best lies have a ton of truth wrapped up in them. The religious leaders were the ones that killed Jesus, not a visible army of demons. It isn’t just about evil at work in others because some of the biggest evil is within us. Our flesh turns good things into idols that rule us.

- *Talk about a time in your life that something good in your life began to rule you.*
- *Why do you think Satan loves to use good things to advance his rule?*

DEFEATING OF EVIL

We are at war fighting against evil and God gives us armor to fight with because we are not strong enough to do it alone. Read Ephesians 6:14-18 again. Jesus already fought evil and has defeated it, but it didn’t look like we would expect. Jesus looked like he was becoming a slave, but he became a king. Satan tried to be king, but is actually a slave.

- *In what ways do we naturally want to fight the battle against evil by attacking like Satan does?*
- *How is the power of Christ different than the power of Satan?*
- *Look at the armor that God gives us. How do you see Jesus in each one of those pieces?*
- *By looking at the pieces of armor, in what specific ways is the Holy Spirit leading you to be more like Jesus by putting on these on?*
- *Pray together and ask that Jesus would make us more like him and that he would protect us from evil and the evil one.*