

TO THE GROUP LEADER: This resource is designed to help you lead others to better understand one of the “Basics of the Faith” booklets published by P&R. The numbers in brackets indicate the page number in the booklet. Below each question is an answer based on what the author presents, or advice on how to discuss the question. You have the freedom to adapt the questions to best fit your group.

A good teaching technique is to distribute the questions to the group and have them write down how they would answer BEFORE reading the booklet. After reading, members can refine their answers based on their reading. As a group, members can discuss their views to affirm or modify what they wrote.

1. Assuming you believe in angels and demons, where are they right now? What influence do you think they are having in your life?

Use these questions as a way of getting them to think about the topic. Remind them to answer as they did before they read the booklet.

If our chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, then what is the chief end of angels? (6-8)

Like us, they exist to glorify God, which is why God created anything. They, like us, are to reflect the glory of God to all the world. Angels do this from their realm.

In what way do demons rebel against God? In what way do they serve God’s plan and purpose? (e.g., Job 1:12; 2 Cor.12:7)

Demons long ago ceased to have any desire to glorify God. Their purpose in existence today is to do everything they can to hinder us from glorifying God. Ask the group their understanding of 2 Cor.12:7.

2. Read Genesis 3:1-13 and 4:1-16 carefully. When man sinned, there were five areas of his being that changed. The first one is given here; can you figure out the other four? (9-12)

Man fell Spiritually: Our relationship with God was broken. This is the most obvious one, but there was more.

Man fell Psychologically: Our relationship with ourselves was broken. Look at the emotions that appear for the first time in these passages – fear, guilt, anger, rage enough to kill...

Man fell Sociologically: Our relationship with each other was broken. The first thing Adam did was to blame Eve. No longer was there a perfect bond between humans.

Man fell Ecologically: Our relationship with the creation was broken. All of creation became affected by man’s sin. We would never again have perfect dominion over it.

Man fell Physiologically: Our relationship with our bodies was broken. With that sin, man’s body was no longer perfect. It was now subject to pain, disease, and finally death.

How does Satan oppose God in each of these areas in the Genesis 4 passage?

These won’t be hard to find. Be careful not to “spiritualize” what happens. This is real life – then and now.

How do these passages show us that spiritual warfare is part of everyday life for us?

Satan cannot force us to do anything. However, he does have many powerful ways to influence us, especially through our weaknesses. He knows our weaknesses, because he, and/or his minions, are always watching.

3. Read John 8:42-44. Whose family does the non-Christian belong to, and what is their chief end? (12-14)

The chief end of the non-Christian is to do the will of their father – the devil. They are enslaved to sin, and Satan’s influence over them is so strong it blinds them from being able to see the glorious gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4.4)

4. Read Matthew 4:1-11. When Jesus was confronted with temptation, how did He handle it? What example does Jesus give us to handle our temptations? (14-19)
 When Satan tempted Jesus to deny who He was, Jesus did only one thing – He stood firm on what was taught in Scripture. He not only quoted the Bible, He believed what it said. We should also know Scripture well enough to defend ourselves against the devil and his minions who tempt us all the time. However, we do not need to talk with these demons; we resist their temptations and stand on the Word so that they flee from us. (James 4:7)
5. Read Isaiah 53:4-6 and 1 Peter 2:24. Jesus, our Divine Warrior, suffered wounds that led to His death. We are “healed” by those wounds. Which of the areas mentioned in question 3 did He heal? (14-19)
 Too often we think these verses mean He only healed us physically. But the truth is, He began the healing process in *all five* areas. They will only be healed totally when we go to be with Him.
6. Read 2 Corinthians 4:1-12, especially the end of verse 6. What should be our battle plan against Satan? (19-27)
 We are to stand our ground! If we are to do things like not losing heart, renouncing disgraceful underhanded ways, etc., we can only do it if we are clothed in His armor. (Eph. 6:10ff) We can only stand when we recognize *the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us*. We **can** do all things through Christ, for the battle is the Lord’s. We stand and fight in His victory.
7. Read Romans 12:1-2, Ephesians 5:18, and 1 Corinthians 10:5. According to these verses, what does it mean to *be filled with the Spirit*? (27-34)
 Every time a thought comes to your mind, it is another opportunity to be filled with the power of God’s Spirit, enabling us to resist temptation. This way we take every thought captive, and we obey the Spirit Who tells us to do what is right. Both God and Satan are at work here. One wants to lure us from Christ and fail, and the Other wants us to win and will empower us in Christ to succeed.
8. Pastor John Piper has made the great statement: “God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him.” Satan wants to hinder us from glorifying God. What does he do to keep us from being satisfied in Him? (34-37)
 One thing keeps us from being satisfied in Him – idols! Any time we put anything ahead of God we break the first commandment. Idols will always pull us away from God, Who alone can satisfy. **All** sin is rooted in idolatry!

After going through these questions, read the text and fill in the answers in preparation for class. Write down other questions you might have here...

APPLICATION

Read through the section “Spiritual Weaponry.” (27-34) In this section, Dr. Gale gives many suggestions on how to combat Satan’s onslaught. Satan has already lost, but he won’t stop fighting until he is finally put away at the end. Once you have read and re-read this section, make a plan to begin implementing these warfare tactics until they become a normal part of your life. What are Satan’s primary tactics and how is each one met through “standing” in Christ?

For Further Study

Why Do We Pray, Stanley D. Gale. P&R, 2012.

Warfare Witness: Contending against Spiritual Opposition in Everyday Evangelism, Stanley D. Gale. Christian Focus, 2005.

Overcoming the World: Grace to Win the Daily Battle, Joel R. Beeke. P&R 2005.

Spiritual Warfare: A Biblical and Balanced Perspective, Brian Borgman and Rob Ventura. Reformation Heritage, 2014.

See Dr. Gale’s list of other suggested works on pages 37-38.

Find these and more at www.pcabookstore.com.