

## **Battle Lines**

### **May 25 | Group Guide**

#### **Introduction and questions (10 minutes)**

On Sunday, we began a new, three-week sermon series called Battle Lines, focusing on the concept of spiritual warfare as described in Ephesians 6:10-18.

- When you hear the words “spiritual warfare,” what comes to mind? What have you heard or read or been taught about it?
- Do you have any concerns, fears, or resistance to discussing spiritual warfare?
- Can you share about a time when you recognized that you were experiencing spiritual warfare?
- What stood out to you from Gary’s sermon?

#### **Read Scripture and discuss (30 minutes).**

Tonight, we’ll read Ephesians 6:10-18 using a centuries-old Christian practice called lectio divina (“divine reading”). This passage will be the foundation for the entire sermon series.

Lectio divina consists of four movements: reading, meditation, prayer, and contemplation. In each movement, we will read the passage and respond to it in a different way.

**Read:** Have someone read the passage out loud slowly. Encourage everyone to follow along in their own Bibles, taking in each word and phrase.

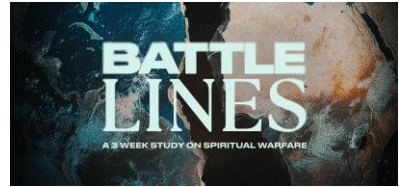
**Meditate:** Have someone read the passage again. This time, each person can notice the words and phrases that stand out to them. They may wish to underline those words and focus on them.

**Pray:** Have someone read the passage again. This time, each person can respond to God in prayer about the things they are noticing. Provide a time of silence when the reading is done and consider providing something for people to write their prayers down on.

**Contemplate:** Have someone read the passage a final time. Encourage everyone to listen to the words without expectation to notice or respond.

Provide a short time of silence when the reading is done, then close this time of lectio divina with a short prayer.

- What did God show you as we read this passage together?



- How can the reminder that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood” impact how you interact with others in times of difficulty or conflict?
- Can you confess a time (in the past or ongoing) when you treated a flesh and blood person as your enemy instead of recognizing that there was a spiritual battle happening?
- Ephesians 6:11 references the devil’s schemes. Gary listed three schemes of the devil in his sermon on Sunday: deception, distractions, and division. See how many examples of each of these you can come up with as a group!
- Share an area of your life where the enemy has deceived, distracted, or divided you. How can our life group help you?
- Share an area of your life where you have taken a stand against the devil’s schemes – where you have refused to be deceived or distracted or divided. Thank God for arming you against the enemy!

### **Memorize Scripture (5 minutes).**

As we spend these three weeks studying Ephesians 6:10-18, one way we can arm ourselves is by hiding God’s Word in our hearts. Let’s take a few minutes to memorize the first verse or two of this passage.

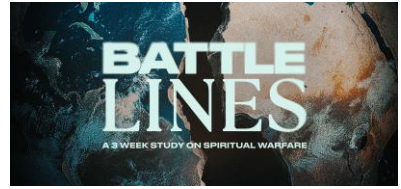
Work individually or divide into pairs to memorize.

Note: A more extensive memorization and deep dive experience can be found in the daily devotionals available at [thecreek.org/sermons](http://thecreek.org/sermons).

### **Finish with prayer (10 minutes).**

Consider using the “pray your requests” approach for your prayer time. Rather than spending most of your “prayer” time explaining what you need to pray about (rather than actually praying), simply begin praying together, inviting each person to pray about the challenge, struggle, or need they are facing. After each person “prays the request,” others can pray on their behalf.

When we pray our requests, we are invited to think not just about the problem but about what we actually want to ask God for. And when we listen to others pray their requests, we can pray on their behalf even if we don’t know all the details.



And the group can always take a moment after prayer to ask follow-up questions or offer explanations about specific situations.

Be sure to pray that each of you fight in God's strength and power, and to remember who the enemy is – and who it is not.