

NEFARIOUS

Nefarious - Week 3

Message Discussion Questions

Introduction:

This week Matt concluded our series called Nefarious. How do you feel about spiritual warfare? Are there really demons and the devil and dark forces at work around you or is this all just something you conjured up in your head? We're learning from God's Word the truth of the matter is, spiritual warfare is around you whether you like it or not, and whether you choose to believe it or not. The great news is while we need to be cognizant of it, if we're in Christ, we have to be dependent on Him, but we don't have to be afraid because of the Truth we have in who Jesus is, and what Jesus has done.

This week in Part 3 we'll continue looking at what the Bible has to say about spiritual warfare and when the enemy tempts us, how you can achieve victory in this spiritual war, specifically addressing the question of "What's our strategy?"

Questions:

Prior to our focus for this weekend's message, let's do a quick review of the previous weeks and what we've learned so far:

- We ALL have an enemy. What's his name? (Hint: Satan). How does Jesus describe Satan? (Hint: Murderer, Liar, Accuser)
- Satan's a predator, a roaring lion, seeking to devour us
- Satan's very smart, NOT all powerful like God, NOT all knowing like God, NOT all present like God, but very smart and more powerful than any human being on his or her own without the power and protection of God

- Satan knows our weaknesses and vulnerabilities, and knows the best times and situations to attack
- Satan is real and has a specific scheme against each one of us individually to steal, kill, and destroy everything God has planned for us.
- Satan knows Scripture better than we do, and twists God's Truth wanting us to question God
- Satan ultimately strives to hurt the heart of God

So, before going any further, what have you learned so far during this series (some "high nails" so to speak), and specifically regarding your own life? New information or insights? Timely reminder in your life? Opportunity to talk about questions others might have in their own lives? How so?

1. From this week's message, Matt shared that based on all of the above...therefore we each need to have our own strategy to go into battle with, why? READ Ephesians 6:12-17. Based on this and as you look at your own life as Matt shared about his own, what areas does Satan tend to attack you and at what times or seasons? Do you find these areas are not necessarily "big" things, but even in the simple areas of our lives? How so?
2. Matt gave us homework for this coming week: "As you look at your life, ask this question, 'If I were Satan, I would...'", meaning if you were Satan, how would you attack you? What would your strategy be?
3. Once we identify this strategy for our own lives, it's also important to remember, Satan is NOT God's equal opposite. He has limited resources. But knowing he has to then be simple and efficient, what are the two things he's always going to lie to you about? (Hint: Who God is; Who God says you are). Why so? (Hint: He wants to get you to believe things about God and about you that aren't true). How have you seen this play out in your own life?
4. This leads us then to two more questions we need to answer and this hits at the heart of why each of us believe what we really believe..so what is that and where's it come from? Matt said two questions we need to ask ourselves are: How do we know anything about God? How do we know anything about what God says about us?
5. In other words, with all of the lies that could enter our minds each day, how do we recognize Truth?
6. If it's of any encouragement and Hope, it's critical we Jesus Himself was tempted by Satan, and how He responds. READ Luke 4:1-2. What correlation do you see between Jesus' physical state and how Satan wanted to attempt Jesus' spiritual state? READ Luke 4:3. How did Jesus see what was happening and respond? (Hint: Jesus quoted God's Truth, specifically from Deuteronomy 8:3). READ Luke 4:5-8. What was Satan saying? (Hint: Jesus, you're not Lord of everything, I am...). And how did Jesus respond? (Hint: Jesus quoted God's Truth, specifically Deuteronomy 6:13). Satan continued with the lies, even trying to get Jesus to question God the Father's love for Jesus. READ Luke 4:9-11. And what was Jesus' response? (Hint: READ Luke 4:12; Jesus quoted God's Truth, specifically Deuteronomy 6:16)
7. READ Luke 4:13. What happened here? (Hint: Satan left Jesus until an "opportune time"). With this in mind and to personalize this which is critically important to apply this to our own lives, asking once again, as you consider your own life, what are those "opportune times" for Satan to attack you? Spend time on

this and be specific, giving real life examples.

8. It's not only important to recognize when we're most vulnerable to attack, but what's your strategy to fight back in the midst of temptation? What's "your scheme"? After sharing this, now think overlay your strategy with Jesus' strategy (Always responding with the Bible, quoting and believing, God's Truth). Is this similar to your strategy, very different, or anywhere in between? How so?
9. Matt asked some really important questions for us to truly think about. As you think about your life: Are you tired of falling for the same lies, in the same way, all the time? Is it possible that the reason we fall for the same lies all the time is directly connected to an unfamiliarity with God's Truth?
10. The truth is...while Jesus, nor certainly us, don't need to know all the lies Satan will use against us, just as Jesus did, we simply need to know God's Truth. READ Hebrews 4:12, then 4:14-15. Do you sometimes think you're more powerful than Jesus? But with our obvious answer of "of course not", then why at times in our lives do we live like we think we are and try to handle things on our own and separate from learning, knowing, and applying God's Truth and in His strength and power?
11. As you take some time to reflect on this message, and this entire series and previous message questions for each message, READ Psalm 119:11. If we are wanting victory over that sin or those sins that keep getting the best of us, how will we strategically in our own lives, creating our plan, our strategy, flesh out, live out this verse, and cover ourselves with the armor of God, that Jesus Himself used, even in this next week in order to begin to build a discipline and have developed into a lifestyle?