

Catechetical Sermon, July 13th, 2025

Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 52 "Spiritual Battle"

Scripture Lesson: Ephesians 6:10-20

Lesson Aim	To understand two things: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That we Christians are engaged in a spiritual battle every day2. How to fight, spiritually speaking
Steps to Learning	Read the Heidelberg Catechism Lord's Day 52 and Ephesians 6:10-20 . Also discuss the sermon and the particulars of the lesson below. It may be best to work through the material over several days or sessions.
Discuss	<p>What does it mean to be engaged in a spiritual battle every day?</p> <p>Since the world fell into sin after Adam and Eve sinned, the devil has made it his goal to attack believers. Genesis 3:15 predicts this struggle and Revelation 12 speaks to the same struggle as it reviews the history of redemption. Spiritual battle was seen in Israel's wars against their enemies; it was the people of God warring against the people of Satan. We are to understand from Israel's wars that God is the one who ultimately fights on behalf of his people and will win the battle. After the time of Israel, when Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father, our battle against Satan and evil is spiritual in nature (Israel's battle was both physical and spiritual). Paul argues in Ephesians 6 that our battle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of evil. This is a reference to Satan's power to tempt us but includes, more generally, the world (socially and psychologically what makes sin look normal and righteousness strange) and the flesh (our own sinful desires).</p> <p>How do we fight spiritually speaking?</p> <p>We need to begin by believing that there is a personal devil and that we necessary struggle against his attacks together with the world and our flesh. There is spiritual struggle every day of our lives. Given that we are often tempted to sin, we need to pray that God would "not lead us into temptation." God does not lead us into temptation (James says that God tempts no one) but is in control of the circumstances surrounding temptation. We need to rely on God's strength in Christ to endure temptation to sin. When we are tempted to sin, we need to be sober-minded, resist the devil and be watchful, aware of what is happening in our mind and environment. Paul, in Ephesians 6:10-20, instructs us to put on the armor of God, which is spiritual armor. The focus of the strength of this armor is Christ and his power and his Gospel, which promises us eternal salvation through faith in Christ.</p>
Bible Reading	Galatians 6 – Ephesians 6 (Reading through the New Testament)