

## Summary

Pastor discusses the importance of spiritual warfare and standing strong against the powers and principalities of this world. He emphasizes that Christians are called to 'walk like Jesus' with humility, gentleness, patience, and love, while also putting on the full armor of God to stand against spiritual forces of evil. The sermon addresses how the enemy works through deception, convincing us to act opposite to Jesus' character, and how spiritual powers manifest in societal issues like racism, poverty, and division. Rather than fighting against flesh and blood, believers must recognize that the real battle is spiritual and requires defensive armor - truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and God's word.

The pastor uses an extended Monopoly analogy to illustrate how systemic injustices develop over time through human actions, creating 'beasts' that serve to divide rather than unite. He calls the church to lead in unity rather than division, standing together across racial, gender, and political lines as one body in Christ. The solution is not aggressive retaliation but standing firm in God's armor while proclaiming that Jesus is Lord over all powers and principalities.

## Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together today, we ask that You would open our hearts and minds to receive what You want to teach us. Remove any fear or defensiveness that might prevent us from seeing truth clearly. Help us to approach this time with humility, knowing that we all have blind spots and need Your wisdom. Holy Spirit, fill us afresh and guide our discussion so that we might grow closer to You and to one another. We surrender our preconceived notions and ask that You would speak to us through Your word and through each other. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

## Ice Breaker

What's the longest board game you've ever played, and did you finish it or give up partway through?

## Key Verses

1. Ephesians 6:10-17
2. Ephesians 4:1-3
3. Ephesians 5:1-2

## Questions

1. The pastor mentioned an 8-word sermon: 'See Jesus, walk like Jesus.' How would you explain what it means to 'walk like Jesus' in practical, everyday terms?
2. Paul shifts from talking about 'walking' like Jesus to 'standing strong' against spiritual forces. Why

do you think this change in posture is significant for our spiritual lives?

3. The sermon describes how the enemy works through deception rather than obvious evil. Can you think of examples where something that seems good on the surface might actually lead us away from Christ-like behavior?
4. How do you respond to the idea that 'spiritual powers are real' and that we as humans have a role in creating and feeding these forces through our actions?
5. The pastor used systemic racism as an example of spiritual powers at work. How can the church address complex social issues while maintaining unity and avoiding division?
6. What does it mean that our battle is 'not against flesh and blood' but against spiritual forces? How should this change the way we approach conflicts and disagreements?
7. Looking at the armor of God (truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, God's word), which piece do you feel you need to strengthen most in your own life right now?
8. The sermon emphasized that the church should lead in unity rather than division. What practical steps can we take as a church community to model this unity in our divided world?

## **Life Application**

This week, identify one area where you tend to see 'enemies' in flesh and blood (people or groups you disagree with) and practice putting on the armor of God instead. Before reacting to conflicts or disagreements, pause and ask: 'How can I respond with the truth, righteousness, peace, faith, and love of Jesus?' Choose to stand strong in God's armor rather than fighting against people, and look for opportunities to build unity rather than division.

## **Key Takeaways**

1. Christians are called to 'walk like Jesus' with humility, gentleness, patience, and sacrificial love
2. Our real battle is not against people but against spiritual forces of evil that work through deception
3. Spiritual powers are real and are often created and sustained through human sinful actions over time
4. The armor of God provides defensive protection: truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and God's word
5. The church should lead in unity rather than division, standing together across all human boundaries as one body in Christ

## **Ending Prayer**

Lord Jesus, thank You for this time of discussion and learning together. We acknowledge that the spiritual battle is real and that we need Your strength and armor to stand firm. Help us to walk like You in our daily lives - with humility, gentleness, patience, and love. Give us wisdom to discern between the real spiritual forces at work and the human enemies we're tempted to fight against. Unite us as Your church across all our differences, and help us to be agents of Your peace and reconciliation in this divided world. May we stand strong in Your armor and proclaim that You are Lord over all powers and principalities. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit and use us to advance Your kingdom. In Your mighty name we pray, Amen.