

Understand your Enemy Sept 25

Intro: Stefan Duerksen – Lead Pastor of Southland Church

Hi to those online! We want to hear from you and know how we can serve you better. If you are looking for other ways to connect, or have ideas for us – we want to hear from you! Even if it's just a message to tell us who you are and where you are from. 😊 – P. Stefan stefand@mysouthland.com

Announcements or Celebrations:

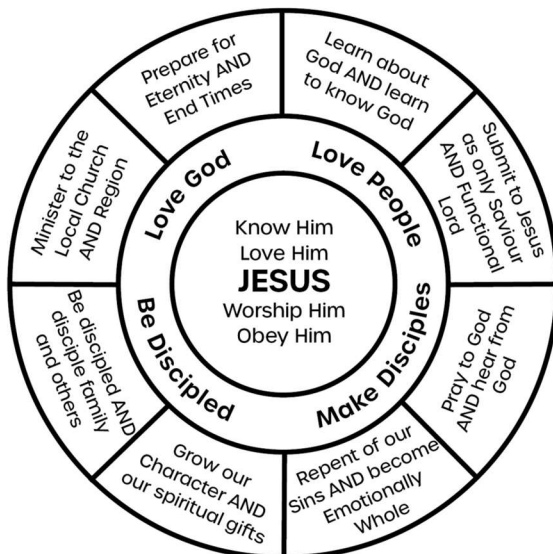
- **Community Impact Mission: Food and Clothing Drive –**
 - Are you looking for a way to “live on mission”? sign up to help at the Food and Clothing Drive – we get the chance to help MANY families and people!
 - **CHALLENGE:** would you consider picking one of your FAVORITE articles of clothing to give to those less fortunate this year?

Church-wide Requests: PRAY TOGETHER. 1. & 2. Great Command & Commission: Love & Disciple family, friends, neighbors & beyond

- That every person would have a clear STEP 1 to joining in the Great Commission!
- That we would be so in LOVE with Jesus that sharing him would become our greatest joy!
- For Steinbach, region, workplaces, schools... pray for our MISSION FIELDS
- Pray that Jesus' love would be FELT AND KNOWN through the Food and Clothing Drive

RECAP: As we continue with our Cruise to Battleship...

PICTURE OF DISIPLESHIP TARGET



But Battleships are called to go into ENEMY TERRITORY! There are real threats that could come our way!

Now, the majority of our time should be spent **BEHOLDING THE BEAUTY OF JESUS** – But...

It is important that we understand our enemies' tactics and how we can "STAND FIRM" and resist him.

WHY ARE WE STUCK? WHY IS EVERYTHING SO BROKEN?

- we struggle with addictions... life controlling behaviors... escapism... FB – IG – online shopping – alcohol – food! Spending money! We try an escape the tension we feel inside...
- our past seems to hold us captive in the present...
- the future paralyzes in anxiety...
- We struggle in the PRESENT with:
- Broken relationships... Shame... rejection... fears... anger... offense...
- Or... they just feel empty, condemned, unloved, unmotivated... and distant from God...
- You look at the world and wonder how people can be so evil... we look at war... and injustice... how callous and cold people can be...
- We look at MAID... and read articles in our own country that highlight the COST SAVINGS MAID COULD GIVE US – we here that and can hardly believe it! How can anyone put a cost on human life?

You see, we all recognize that something is wrong. We all feel it. It's like we just can't peg where it is coming from... so we guess! And we blame government, leaders, healthcare, schools, family members, bullies, taxes, police, churches, each other... IF THEY WOULD JUST DO _____ THEN THINGS WOULD BE OK!

Scripture says our problem isn't what we think it is. And encourages us to open our eyes and STAND FIRM.

Sun Tzu wrote in his famous book, The Art of War, "If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."

1. **The Enemy is NOT People.** We are to LOVE ALL people – even those who persecute us!

Ephesians 6:11-13 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

- **IMPORTANT:** Paul makes a really clear point here! Your enemy on the OUTSIDE is not the government, not your BOSS, not your SPOUSE, not your KIDS, not your PARENTS, NOT EVEN THOSE WHO MISTREAT YOU – YOUR ENEMY IS THE DEVIL.

Matthew 5:44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

- Though others might cause you pain – and may act like enemies... and disagree with us and treat us harshly... they are not our TRUE ENEMY! We are to LOVE, SERVE, PRAY for, and to SHOW them the GRACE that is freely offered to them by JESUS – if they will receive it.

2. The Enemy Outside – the Devil

“There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about devils,” C. S. Lewis noted in The Screwtape Letters. “One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them.”

We don’t want to land in either ditch. “The Devil made me do it” or the “He’s not real”. In both camps we are left vulnerable and end up falling for his traps.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: the Devil cannot “MAKE” anyone do ANYTHING. We have choice!

Scripture tells us Satan is our archenemy, a deceiver and accuser!

The short origin story: God created him, he was good! He was an angel! That led a rebellion against God and was cast out of heaven.

But what is Satan doing now?

1 Peter 5:8-9 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

- He is prowling around looking to devour those created in God’s image! ALL OF HUMANITY!

John says, “the thief comes to steal, kill & destroy”

Now... if we actually saw a LION coming towards us! We wouldn’t stick around! I doubt anyone would try and play with or entertain an actual LION – THEY WOULD NEVER RISK SUCH CERTAIN DEATH.

2 Corinthians 11:14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. – **meaning – we may mistake him as harmless!**

PICTURE: House and the flies – “holes in the screen let in flies!”

Scripture uses a different word to describe the “hole in the screen” and calls it a FOOTHOLD! **Ephesians 4:27** do not give the devil a foothold... or an OPPORTUNITY

Ephesians 4:26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger,

Unrepented sin in our lives leaves openings in our lives for the enemy to come in by building strongholds in our lives...

2 Corinthians 10:3-4 For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.

So we are instructed to... Ephesians 6:11-13 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil...Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

1 Corinthians 7:5 Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

3. The Enemy Inside – the Flesh – our sinful nature

And here we see the first clue that our enemy is NOT **just** the devil – “because of our lack of self-control” AKA the introduction of our FLESH!

The flesh in Greek is called SARX – often translated as the flesh or sinful nature

- This includes our physical bodies – yes! But it is MORE than that!
- the flesh, denotes human nature, apart from divine influence, and therefore prone to sin and opposed to God
- this would include our animalistic cravings and impulses

Romans 8:6-8 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Romans 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Sometimes we believe that ALL temptation comes from the devil – not true!

James 1:14-15 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

- 1. Distorted desires lead to us being tempted – (NOT sinful until acted upon)**
- 2. Acting on temptation (internal/external) = SIN**
- 3. Unrepented sin = DEATH (physical, mental, emotional, spiritual – STRONGHOLDS)**

Sin has infected us and infected our world and the problem is NOT just EXTERNAL it is also INTERNAL

When we look at our world... the problem isn't getting better with any type of reform that we can humanly come up with! We need DIVINE INTERVENTION.

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There is only ONE Saviour and Lord of all who can rescue us! JESUS CHRIST. He is the Son of God, he came to earth, and paid the debt that was owed by us.

PRAY & RECOMMIT LIVES TO JESUS AND LEAD PEOPLE IN THE SINNERS PRAYER & WORSHIP

We'd love to have you join us at Prayer Summit! We are going to work on "closing the holes in our screens" and worship & pray together!

MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!

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SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2022

Cruise Ship → → → → → Battleship

1. **Great Command** (Mt 22:37-40): Love God – Love people: hospitality, generosity, serving & empathy
2. **Great Commission** (Mt 28:18-20): Disciple family, friends, neighbors & beyond
3. **Word & Truth** (1Pet 3:15): Know the Gospel, grow in discernment, speak the truth in love
4. **Persecuted Church** (2 Cor 4:7-10): Religious freedom, freedom of speech, spiritual fortitude, wisdom
5. **Church Renewal:** Directors for India & the Chinese worldwide, make many global disciple makers (The Way)
6. **DONE - Leadership:** Wisdom and direction in the search for Lead Pastor and Executive Pastor