



# Small Group Study Guide for October 4, 2020

*Our Savior Lutheran Church and School*

**Theme:** As we talk about heart matters, the Devil seeks an opportunity to divide and demoralize people – especially the people of God. St. Paul reminds us that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood...” and that we should not get pulled into worldly conflicts, but keep a heavenly perspective. To stand firm, we should put on the full armor of God, to take our stand against the devil’s schemes.

## Getting Started: (sharing with each other)

1. Share your highs and lows from the past week. What happened that was really great, and what is something that was not great?
  
2. We will be talking about the real enemy of God’s people. There are many movies that portray enemies or villains. Have each person name an infamous villain from a movie that they have seen.

## In the Word: Ephesians 6:12-18a (a closer look at the text)

3. Verse 12 reminds us that our struggle is not actually against flesh and blood, that is, the enemies that we see. Instead, our real struggle is against four supernatural foes. List the four supernatural enemies, as St. Paul records them.
  
4. Since we are in a spiritual battle, we need spiritual armor. For the Christian, this is the armor of God. List the six pieces of the armor of God in verse 13-17.
  
5. Of the items listed above, they are mostly defensive armor. What is the offensive item in the list?
  
6. There is one more important piece of armor for the Christian, and that is in verse 18 – prayer. How is prayer a supernatural weapon to assist us in the struggle against the spiritual forces of the heavenly realms?

**Read Matthew Luke 8:26-39**

7. How is the man described in this text before his encounter with Jesus?
8. How do the demons act when Jesus arrives? How do they respond to Jesus?
9. How does this show the power of Jesus over the demonic forces?

**Putting it all Together (what do we believe or do as disciples?)**

10. Sometimes we get so mad at people and focus our anger on them. Then something makes us step back and see a bigger picture. Can you think of a time when that happened? What was it that made you step back and realize there was more going on than just the person you were mad at?
11. “Modern” thinking is often humanistic naturalism, which focuses only on what is in the physical world (i.e. what we can see and observe as part of the natural world) and disregards or even denies the spiritual world (i.e. what we cannot see as part of the heavenly realms – God, angels, demons, etc.). Why might it be difficult for some to embrace the spiritual world, and why is that actually a narrow-minded view?
12. How does understanding the spiritual battle in the heavenly realms help us as Christians to step back from the conflict, anger, and vitriol that so often characterizes our current society?
13. How does the understanding of the armor of God help us in a Christian approach to racism and prejudice?

**Prayer:** Ask God to equip us for the spiritual battle with the armor of God. Pray for protection for our congregation and all our families as we seek to grow in faith, hope, and love. Pray for unity and healing in our nation.

**Next Week:** We continue our preaching series, focusing on how we are united in the Lord and how God brings us together through faith in Christ. Pastor Khumalo will be preaching on the power of forgiveness and reconciliation. It will be a powerful message!