

Content

In Ephesians 6 Paul is calling the church to action in its spiritual battles against the spiritual forces of evil. He is calling us to armor ourselves with the armor of God, which, as we saw last week, is to put on Christ. This morning we want to explore being dressed for battle, and even before being dressed in the armor being prepared to dress for battle. In v.12 it says 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. We are a wrestling people. In Genesis 32 we learn in the narrative of Jacob that Jacob wrestles with a man at night. And his name is changed by God from Jacob to Israel, which literally means to wrestle with God and prevail. The church is the new Israel. So our very identity is a people who have wrestled with God and have prevailed. And we are going to explore in this sermon how we need to be prepared for battle with evil by embracing our identity as the people who have already wrestled with God and come out victorious. How do we do that? By remembering two things. (1) Remembering Our Weakness. Jacob was transformed into Israel through weakness. And we are transformed through weakness.

Gospel Connections

The second point is (2) Remember the Power of Grace. How did we prevail in our wrestling with God? Through Jesus wrestling with God and losing on our behalf. Jesus took the full weight of the wrath and judgment of God on Himself so that we could be blessed. As we go into spiritual battle we need to be dressed with our identity in Christ through the gospel. That means remembering the power of grace and the reality of the blessing that God has given to us. We do not earn blessing or favor with God. It is gifted to us.

Application and Discussion Questions

1. What did you learn from this sermon? Specifically
 - a. What insights did you learn?
 - b. What questions do you have? Are there any areas you don't understand?
 - c. What areas of your life (be specific) do you sense God wants to change as a result of this passage of Scripture?

2. Read Genesis 32:22-32. We said that Israel (what Jacob's name was changed to) means to wrestle with God. The church is the new Israel. What does it teach you about the church that our name is "struggle (or wrestle) with God?"

3. How can knowing that your identity is that you have wrestled with God and have prevailed through Christ help you in your battle with the spiritual forces of evil? What do you need to do to remember your identity on a daily basis?