

## “Jesus is Better”

**Use this guide as a tool to help you prepare to experience spiritual transformation in a practical way. It is a flexible guide that will help you discover, own, and apply the truths of God’s Word.**

### Message Summary

Paul’s ministry in Ephesus was going well. Over the course of two years all of Asia heard the word of God. Lives were being transformed and the city was being turned upside down. Yet, in his spirit, Paul believed the Lord wanted him to leave Ephesus and head west. So he made plans to pull up the tent stakes!

In the final months of Paul’s time in Ephesus, however, those who made silver shrines used for worship of Artemis began to lose profits. As a result the city was in an uproar and began to riot in the local theater. Paul’s life was in danger. Yet God protected Paul and the word of God continued to spread.

Paul ultimately left Ephesus and worked his way through Macedonia in order to take a collection for the saints in Jerusalem. Sensing danger would come if he continued following his plan, he decided to go a different direction in order to make his way back to Jerusalem. Through it all we see God’s guiding hand protecting and leading Paul.

These three stories highlight Paul’s understanding of the Gospel and the fact that Jesus is better than anything we can ever worship. We were created for worship. We were created to honor Jesus with our lives. Yet sometimes things or people get in the way. Other things can take precedence over our worship of Jesus. We learned through this message that anything we put above Jesus is an idol in our lives. Whether it is a physical place, a person or even our plans, these can become idols if our lives are dominated by them over our obedience to Jesus.

Last week we learned in our Missional Community gatherings that every one of us is involved in a spiritual battle. We are attacked by the world, the flesh, and the devil. All three of these can raise idols in our lives without us even realizing it. This week in our gatherings we will examine part 2 of Spiritual Warfare. As you prepare to meet with your group, realize that Jesus is better than anything or anyone else!

### Message Outline

Jesus is better than your **idols!**

Sometimes an Idol can be...

1. A Place. (21)
2. Other People. (22)
3. Your Business/Lifestyle/Income. (23-29)
4. Your Safety. (30-31)
5. Your Reputation. (32-41)
6. Your Plans. (20:1-6)

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### Group Discussion (video application)

Watch the video titled “Spiritual Warfare – Part #2.” Use the Listening Guide below as you watch the video and then spend some time making application by answering the following questions as a group.

What do we actively do to stand against the schemes of the devil?

1. Give no \_\_\_\_\_ to the devil. (Ephesians 4:25-32)
  - Speak \_\_\_\_\_ to one another.
  - If you can't be someone's \_\_\_\_\_ then go to them.
  - Work hard at \_\_\_\_\_ each other up.
2. Put on the \_\_\_\_\_ of God. (Ephesians 6:10-17)
  - Truth \_\_\_\_\_ lies.
  - At the \_\_\_\_\_ of who you are you are clothed in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.
  - Run quickly with the \_\_\_\_\_ to be \_\_\_\_\_.
  - When we are \_\_\_\_\_ each other up do it with the \_\_\_\_\_ of God.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ always. (Ephesians 6:18-20)
  - Prayer is constant awareness of God's \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and your \_\_\_\_\_ for Him.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ the devil. (James 4:6-8)
  - In order to \_\_\_\_\_ the devil you've got to \_\_\_\_\_ to God.
  - In order to \_\_\_\_\_ the devil you've got to \_\_\_\_\_ the Gospel.
  - Take a firm stand against \_\_\_\_\_ that are present.
  - Remain \_\_\_\_\_.

Questions for reflection:

1. Talk about what's going on in your heart as you hear this. Share concerns that you have or share any bad experiences you may have had.
2. Encourage each other and affirm the truths of the Gospel and how they give us power over the evil one. Affirm Jesus' power over everything that's been talked about – talk about your confidence in the cross and in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.
3. Is anyone in your group experiencing ongoing demonic oppression? With them, practice everything that's been discussed in this session and help them stand against the evil one.

### Weekly Prayer Focus

- **Church:**  
Pray that God would give us new believers and covenant members.
- **Local:**  
Pray that God would burden us with the lostness in our cities, neighborhoods, and at work.
- **Global:**  
Pray that God would give us hearts for the nations.