

# The Battle for Your Brain

1 Peter 5:8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Romans 7:21-23 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

John 1:12 Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

*Zombies are pretend but there is someone who really wants your brain!*

According to 1 Peter 5:8, Who is our enemy? \_\_\_\_\_

What does he want to do to you? \_\_\_\_\_

From previous lessons we've learned that *the enemy* wants to mess you up using deception, accusation, and temptation.

In what ways does he accomplish his goal?

As Christians, God's has given us the desire to want to please Him. But, we still have our original desires many of which are pretty selfish.

In Roman 7:21-23, Paul describes this inner conflict as \_\_\_\_\_. The two sides in the war are his fleshly desires and "Gods Law." What are other words for "fleshly desires" and "God's Law?" (God's Law is referring to The Bible. The Bible wasn't in existence yet.)

According to 2 Corinthians 10:3-5, we wage the war for our brains by using \_\_\_\_\_. Who are we arguing with? \_\_\_\_\_ What are we arguing about? \_\_\_\_\_

Many of our ideas about how we should think and act come from the Internet, television, magazines, and others around us. Our minds are clogged with misinformation and bad ideas. Paul, in Romans 12:2 encourages Christians to \_\_\_\_\_ and not to \_\_\_\_\_ to the pattern of the world.

## Example of taking a thought captive:

Sophie was receiving mean posts on her web page:

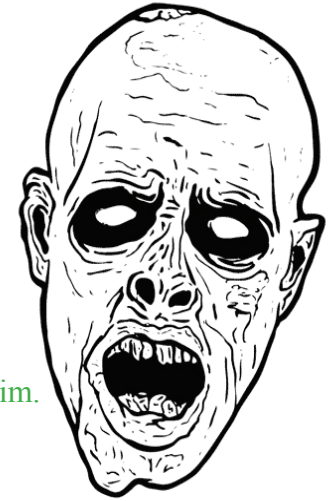
"you think you are so wonderful because of your money but you are just a ...

"You are such a ..... why don't you just grow a pair and end it all today."

She lay in bed rethinking these posts over and over. In addition she did not get the lead part in the play and was not picked for the team. "Maybe everyone was right," she thought. I am worthless and unlovable.

If Sophie had read The Bible she may have been able to contradict what others were saying with verses like John 1:12, and Ephesians 2:10

Taking a thought captive (2 Corinthians 10:3-5) would mean that she forces herself to stop reviewing mean web posts and began thinking about the Bible verses instead..



## The Battle For Your Brain, cont.

Philippians 4:8-9 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

James 4:8 Come near to God and he will come near to you.

Romans 5:5-8 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

1 John 5:5-6 Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth

John 16:13-14 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you..

Ephesians 4:22-24 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Instead of concentrating on hurt, and anger, or remembering traumatic events, Philippians 4:8-9 recommends that we think about these kinds of thing:

\_\_\_\_\_

This can be very hard to actually do. Another avenue of help this verse recommends is to copy someone you admire like a friend or youth pastor and do some positive activities. What are some positive things your youth group could do?

Trusting God's Word can be very difficult if you haven't first trusted God with your life. But the Bible promises that if you draw near to God He will \_\_\_\_\_.

We draw near to God thru prayer. Prayer is like exercise. It takes time and discipline to work into a fulfilling prayer life but God will comfort, guide, and speak to you.

Romans 5:5-8 really speaks about God's love for us. Memorize these verses.  
"While we were still sinners \_\_\_\_\_"

Now you're starting to fight. Keep going. Put more awesome verses in your mind.  
Who overcomes the world and it's bad news? \_\_\_\_\_  
(1 John 5:5)

Jesus sent The Holy Spirit to \_\_\_\_\_  
(John 16:13-14)

The Holy Spirit lives with you to give you the strength and ability to fight back and win.

Each day, like clothing, put on your \_\_\_\_\_ created to be like God.  
(Ephesians 4:22-24)

Remember: You are important to us because:

1 Corinthians 12:27 "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."

God has pre-planned \_\_\_\_\_ for you to do.  
(Ephesians 2:10)

Read The Bible from cover to cover. Don't worry about pronouncing every strange name properly or understanding every little thing. Just read it. We will spend a lifetime studying The Bible, but for now -JUST READ IT.

Then a supernatural event will occur regularly in your mind: Jesus said:

John 14:26 "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

You, with the Holy Spirit, can win the battle for your brain.

# Lesson Plan:

**The Goal:** The goal of this lesson is to help young people understand that *the enemy* (Satan) wants to take them out but they can fight back if they have the tools. Use this lesson as a follow-up to “Know Your Enemy” (parts one and two) as we will refer to some information from those lessons.

**Preparation:** Please read my blog post entitled, “Self-Injury (cutting) goes mainstream. How you can help.,” and review the lesson plans listed above. For more in depth study read some of the books I suggest on the web page where this lesson was found. In the lesson, “Know Your Enemy,” we learned about our enemies identity, origin, his abilities and limitations. We also touched on a method of defense available to believers. In the lesson, “Know Your Enemy (Part 2)” we learned that the Satan uses deception, accusation, and temptation to try and cause believers to no longer love and follow God. In this lesson we will use the current preoccupation with Zombies to pique their interest in the real battle for their brains.

**Pre-Lesson Activity:** Invest a few dollars in face paint and brushes at your local costume or crafts store. Have the kids paint scary scars and wounds on their faces. If you have someone in your church with face painting talent ask them to join your class to help out. If you’re really ambitious bring some Zombie themed snacks. The Internet has a never ending supply of awesome suggestions.

## **Leading the lesson:**

The first question identifies *the enemy* as The Devil and capitalizes on the verses description of his desire to devour someone. I usually scream, “CHOMP,” and throw red gummy worms.

Now we get serious. Don’t expect them to answer the question, “In what way does he accomplish his goal.” You will have to suggest some ways. Then the direction of our lesson will become clear to them and they can suggest more ways. Suggest these ways:

The enemy, via TV, magazines, and other media, will suggest that they (mostly the girls) are not be pretty,

The enemy, via bullies, test scores, lack of physical skills, will suggest that they are stupid, worthless, and unlovable. These things make them feel bad.

The enemy, via friends, chat rooms, bad acquaintances (like the local drug dealer) will suggest that they can lessen their pain by taking drugs, drinking, or even self injury (cutting).

On some level and for a short time these methods do work. But in the long run, we know there is a high cost to pay, and it usually just makes things worse. With no one to tell them differently (Unchallenged Assumptions) they fall into the devils trap of addiction and destructive behaviors.

According to 2 Corinthians, we wage the war for our brains by using arguments Who are we arguing with? ourselves What are we arguing about. This open question allows more discussion about the topics mentioned above. We argue about anything that goes against what God’s word says.

Romans 12:2 encourages Christians to be transformed and no to conform to the pattern of the world

This is where the Bible, good parents, and trusted adults (like you) come in. We offer the TRUTH of God’s word to stand against false beliefs.

Many of our human desires are very legitimate. It’s OK to want to be loved, accepted, and feel significant. Our fleshly desires may drive us to seek solutions that are not good. A girl might dress provocatively to gain the attention of boys. God’s Law, The Bible suggests different behavior.

The example of web posts used next is an example of teenagers coming to wrong conclusions about their identity from listening to bad sources. We show that the Bible, good friends, parents, and you can offer contradictory information to correct her distorted conclusions.

In addition, Christians have the advantage of the indwelling Holy Spirit who testifies to the truth and reminds them of scripture verses to fight back against the enemies distortions. Never assume the teens in your class are true believers. This would be a good time to give them the opportunity to surrender their lives to Christ.

**Close with Prayer:** Use this prayer time to ask for the Holy Spirits guidance and strength in the battle for their minds. Guide them through “The sinners prayer,” so they have the opportunity to accept Jesus as their personal saviour if they need to.

**Follow-up Lessons:** Use my lessons, “In His Image”, “The Beauty Inside”, and the “Who I Am In Christ” Christmas tree, found on the Sunday School Lesson Connection website to battle against the enemies lies with the Bibles truth.

Make yourself available to any kids who want to talk about their situations. Listen with humility, gentleness, and acceptance. Seek professional help for them if needed.