

How Do You Answer Your Child's Questions About the Enemy?

I stood over a saucepan, spatula in hand, slowing moving scrambled eggs over the heat. The scurry of little feet hustled behind me as the early morning rush ensued. There were clothes to put on, teeth to brush, backpacks to put in the backseat of the car. In the meanwhile, I was in charge of filling tummies – breakfast for now and a packed lunch for later.

Soon, two little boys sat in stools behind me at the kitchen nook waiting for their breakfasts. Gratefully, the baby was still asleep in his crib. I spooned eggs, bacon and a slice of cinnamon toast onto one plate, set it down in front of one then returned to the stove to prepare the next.

It was only a few moments, seconds really, that my back was turned from the hungry duo. Wouldn't have even been enough time for my son to take more than one or two bites off of his plate really. So, maybe he'd been dreaming of it the night before and his foggy imagination was just beginning to clear. Maybe he'd already been stewing over the issue for quite some time. Or maybe, just maybe, his sentiments echoed a deep God-whisper that the Spirit settled into his soul in that instant over a plate of scrambled eggs.

Mom, will I ever be in a war?

I whipped my head over my shoulder just long enough to flash him a sideways grin and furrowed brow – chuckled a bit when I saw the blank, curious stare of his brother barreling down at him too.

Babe, what are you talking about? What do you mean?

He was serious. Concerned even. His melancholy expression gave away his intentionality about all of this. His fork was motionless in his hand and a pile of half-chewed food was piled underneath one cheek. He was undistracted. Carefully calculating his response.

“Mom, will I ever be in a war, a battle. . . .like. . ummm. . .with Satan?”

Silence.

While I gain my composure.

You know how it is – your kid uncovers some deep truth that stuns you; stops you in your tracks like a deer caught in headlights. You know how it feels when they pose some gargantuan question that makes you start asking God for help. . . .like right now please God.
know how it is.

What to do with a child’s question that isn’t so childish after all.

I turned to face him now. Walked over with the other plate of breakfast in my hand and a prayer in my heart. One went to my son, the other to my Father. I wasn’t quite sure how to respond to my boy who wielded a toy Star Wars light-saber sword during playtime and wore a cape regularly during trips to the grocery store. Didn’t want my response to water down the Truth to the level of child’s play nor did I want to elevate it beyond his young level of understanding. My heart beat a bit faster and louder echoing in my ears. And then, surely, each beat began to drum out an answer.

Whisper: Thank you Lord.

Son, you are in a battle. Both of you are.

Their attention was captured. The silent one asked questions without uttering a word. Their eyes were searing into mine.

They wanted more information.

So, I told them. . . .exactly what I want to tell you.

Every single hour of every single day there is a war that is waging between you and a very certain enemy. He represents an invisible and yet extraordinarily powerful kingdom that is the root of all of our experiences on earth. In fact, this enemy's reality, and our dealings in it, are even more important, more critical, more impacting than our actions on earth. . . .at our jobs. . . .in our homes. . . .at breakfast time . . .over a plate of scrambled eggs.

Will I eat more than I should?

Will I take what I shouldn't?

Will I cheat on this test?

Will I cave to peer pressure instead of standing for truth?

Will I treat another kindly who has not offered me that same courtesy?

Will I fold to laziness or be dedicated to the task?

Will I follow God's leading or yield to my own desire?

Will I respond harshly or with deference?

Will I choose humility or pride?

Will I sleep with him or wait until I walk down the aisle?

Will I watch that or turn it off when the scenes have taken a turn for the worst?

Will I give in to her instead of holding out for God's best for me?

The struggles. The frustrations. The arguments. The fissures. The pressures. They all reveal the battle – signposts pointing

to the tug-of-war waging in the invisible realm beneath the surface of our reality.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. – 2 Corinthians 6:12

Two worlds.

Here. . . and there.

Contending in the there heavenly places is the prefix for claiming victories in these here earthly places. Understandably, we forget that. Face to face with an issue that is bearing down on us day in and day out we turn our weapons on the wrong people and things. But the fighting that we do here against her, or him, or this, or that, is a fruitless wasting of efforts – a vain exhausting of resources that need to be reserved for there – the realm in which all things are resolved in Jesus Name.

It's a tale of two worlds – an ongoing saga in heavenly places for which each of us has been fully suited and equipped to walk in victory.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God that you might be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. (10-11)

The quiet one's questions finally slid from his mind into his smiling mouth:

Armor? You mean we actually have weapons? Really?

Yes sweetie. And this armor ensures victory every single time.

Mommy, I want to learn to use it.

Ok baby. Let's get to work.

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