

## The ENEMY Inside Our Home

What would be your course of action if you knew there was a predator inside your home waiting to harm your family?

Well there is a predator in your home and he is entering in through technology. Don't get me wrong, technology is great. It can be a great tool and resource to help make our lives easier and more efficient, but we also have to recognize that this same technology can also give unfettered access to our hearts and the hearts of our children and rest assured that Satan is using it to lure our hearts away from God.

Welcome to **Week 4** of our series called **FIGHTING FOR YOUR FAMILY**. Through this series we are hoping to encourage you and help strengthen your family by taking a look at 6 areas where the FAMILY is under attack. In WEEK 1 we looked at **A Mother's High Calling**. In WEEK 2 we looked at **A VISION for Parenting**. And LAST WEEK looked at **What Marriage Is and What It Isn't**. And today we are going to look at **The ENEMY Inside Our Home**.

**Before we jump into today's message I want to remind you of God's promise of protection. And if we have ever needed these promises it is today! In fact, I want to use these promises as a prompt for our prayer today as we plead with God for protection over our very vulnerable hearts. Our enemy is crafty and one of the ways he is attacking our homes is through technology. The sad part is many of us are not even aware of what is happening. So as we prepare to pray for God to protect us, here are a few of God's powerful promises:**

**Proverbs 18:10 (NIV)** The name of the LORD is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

**Psalms 138:7 (NIV)** Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes; with your right hand you save me.

**Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)** **5** Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; **6** in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

**Psalms 91:9-10 (NIV)** **9** If you say, "The LORD is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, **10** no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.

**Let's PRAY!**

Experts believe that the average age in which a child is being exposed to illicit content is now 11 years old or younger. It is believed that this is due to the easy access we now have to technology and the online world. It is amazing how addictive entertainment has become and how technology has only enhanced that possibility. When we consider the amount of money being made behind so much of our entertainment it is no wonder we find such easy access

through social media, apps on our phone and other online connections. It is as if the producers of this content want us to be addicted so that they have a consumer for life. What's even more interesting is that it appears that our modern conveniences and American lifestyle is actually feeding our addictions with entertainment and technology by giving us more leisure time which has led to boredom. Because we are bored, we are seeking more ways to be entertained in order to overcome our boredom. It is a perfect storm that is leading to massive entertainment addictions. If this is the case we need to be aware of this danger and seek to protect our families from this enemy.

What are some reasons why we are allowing this to happen? It could be one of four reasons:

- 1) As parents we are caught in the same cycle ourselves therefore, it becomes hard to tell our kids not to do something that we ourselves are engaged in.
- 2) Another reason could be we are in denial. We know it is a huge problem but we tell ourselves if we just ignore it maybe it will go away or that maybe it will get better with time.
- 3) A third reason could be due to the powerful current of the culture. The cultural current can be very strong and hard to swim against. Sometimes it is just easier to give into it. After all, everyone else is doing it and we don't want to seem odd.
- 4) Lastly, it could be because we don't understand the spiritual implications this will have on our lives and families. We tend to think of the world in just physical terms and forget that there is a spiritual component to our lives.

So how do we navigate this issue being that technology is such a vital part of our lives and it isn't going away. Let me share with you THREE TESTS we need to consider when thinking about how much entertainment media we should allow into our lives and our homes. This is something we need to teach our children if we want to help them navigate life in this new world.

## #1 - The CONTENT TEST

**1 John 2:12-17 (NIV)** I am writing to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name. **13** I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. **14** I write to you, dear children, because you know the Father. I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one. **15** Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. **16** For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. **17** The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.

Does the content we consume cause us to Love the world more and God less? Does the entertainment we engage with steal our heart away from God? Does it appeal to the LUST of my flesh? The overpowering desire for that which God has forbidden leading me to try and

satisfy yearnings through self gratification. **“What we shouldn’t want!”** Does it appeal to The LUST of my eyes? Simply put, the lust of the eyes is the sinful desire to possess what we see or to have those things which have visual appeal. **“What we wished we had!”** For example, coveting money, possessions, or other physical things that others have or are enjoying. The PRIDE of life? The pride of life is the desire in every human being to be his or her own god. For example, arrogance, self-promotion, and greed all stem from the pride of life. **“Who we wished we were!”**

There can be things that are neutral. They are just enjoyable or a way to unwind or relax. But then there are things that lure us away from God. These are the things we want to limit or cut off altogether. But the key filter we need to pay attention to has to deal with the three areas listed in vs. 16. These three we must be careful with for we do not want to allow ourselves to be entertained by or to admire things that are considered sin of which we have been delivered from.

## **#2 - The CONTROL TEST**

**1 Corinthians 6:12 (NIV)** “I have the right to do anything,” you say—but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything”—but I will not be mastered by anything.

Can you quit it for a period of time and do without it? Do you need to have it? Do you set the terms or does that entity have you in its grasp? This is what idols of our heart do. They seek to control us! We think we are free when in reality we are actually slaves and it is our master. Social media can be this way. Video games can be this way. It is like you have to have it and it distracts you from more important things in your life. Such as conversations with your family, prayer, or meditating on scripture. The content can be morally neutral. It could just be informative. It can just be interesting. For example, updates on the latest scandal. Youtube shorts of people doing stupid stuff. A game on your phone just to pass time. But, if it is something that has control of you and is keeping you from other stuff that really matters, that’s a problem. So we have #1 The CONTENT TEST. #2 The CONTROL TEST.

## **#3 - The CLOCK TEST**

**Ephesians 5:15 (NIV)** Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

The NKJV says it this way. Which, btw, I feel is a better translation of the original Greek. **Ephesians 5:16 (NKJV)** Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

The idea is that we have many activities that are in competition for our time and we must buy that time from a whole host of other opportunities that are competing for our attention in order to do the best thing. We need to ask ourselves this question, **“Considering the eternal implications, is this which is consuming so much of my time the best investment of my time?”**

**Erwin Lutzer** says this, *“What is it about the entertainment industry that is so important to us in meeting certain needs in our lives that apparently we feel God is unable to meet?”* Is God truly our one thing most needful or have we settled for something far less satisfying and didn't even realize it? Btw it's not the stuff that is the problem, the problem is our heart and how we treat the stuff.

Consider what the Psalmist says!

**Psalm 16:11 (NIV)** You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

**Psalm 107:8 (NIV) 8** Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for mankind,**9** for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.

Let's not settle for temporary little twinkies that never satisfy when God has something more. Let's not allow the world to spoil our appetite for God by trying to fill the boredom in our lives with meaningless activity that really has no eternal value.

What are some steps we can take to protect our home from this thief that comes to steal, kill and destroy. What actions do we need to take to protect our children from this enemy in our home? Let me give you **4 Action Steps we need to take to disarm the thief in our home:**

**1) Recognize the spiritual nature of the conflict. Acknowledge WE are at WAR!**

This is serious. It requires immediate action. This is not play time. This is not an exercise in preparation for war where we are practicing. We are at war and the enemy has already penetrated our camp. We need to think like a warrior. We need to be diligent like warriors. We need to dress like warriors.

**Ephesians 6:10-12 (NIV)** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

We cannot fight this battle in the flesh. We can't fake our way through it. We need to understand that it is a spiritual battle we face and we must fight with spiritual weapons. One of the mistakes we make as human beings is we tend to compartmentalize life into two categories. The physical and the spiritual. Satan loves that! We need to see everything in life from a spiritual lens. The two are very much intertwined together. There is not one without the other. Our enemy fights in the spiritual realm and he must be engaged with spiritual weapons. But if you don't think you are in a battle, you never see the need to pick up those weapons let alone know how to use them. The conflict we face is not with those who produce the entertainment or with technology itself. It

is with Satan who knows how to manipulate such things to destroy your heart and the heart of your children spiritually. **Recognize we are at WAR and know who the enemy is**

2) Address your own heart and put yourself in a posture to pursue holiness. We need to **PREPARE for BATTLE!**

**Ephesians 6:13 (NIV) 13** Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

We must put on JESUS! His righteousness! His truth! His peace! His word! His faith! We must be honest about our fleshly weaknesses and then set proper boundaries to help us with those areas. It should disturb us enough to take whatever action is necessary against the things that rob us of our appetite for God. If it doesn't, that should trouble us!

**Hebrews 12:14 (NIV)** Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

If there are some things that we are unwilling to give up, unplug or limit access to and they damage our heart or our families, then are we any different than the rich man whom Jesus asked to go and sell everything he had and give it to the poor?

**Matthew 19: 16-22 (NIV)16** Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" **17** "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments." **18** "Which ones?" he inquired. Jesus replied, "'You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, **19** honor your father and mother,'[c] and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'" **20** "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?" **21** Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, Here, Jesus is calling the man to holiness! go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." **22** When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

His money was an idol in his heart keeping him from God and it had to be removed for him to receive Jesus! Prepare for BATTLE - put on JESUS! Stand in HIS righteousness and in HIS holiness!

3) Set FAMILY standards based on your personal convictions as guided by God's word and don't let the culture pressure you to compromise. **BE VIGILANT!**

**Ephesians 6:14-17 (NIV) 14** Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, **15** and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. **16** In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. **17** Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

For young families begin setting those standards early on. Don't wait until you get there. When will your kids be allowed to have smart phones? What will be the allowed use of those devices? When will your children be allowed to date? What will be your policy for allowing them to sleep over at another friend's house? What will be the established curfew? As a parent we do not want to navigate these important issues on the fly and we certainly don't want to base it on what their friends are allowed to do or on what is convenient and comfortable. Don't be intimidated by the "**You don't trust me**" card! If your kids say that to you, this is how you respond. *"That's right, I don't trust you because I don't trust myself. The Bible says that my heart is desperately wicked." Therefore I have to set boundaries for it according to God's word.*

And then stand firm! Not on your wisdom, but God's! Stand firm in His truth! Stand firm in His peace!! Stand firm in faith! Stand firm in the word of God and shape your child's heart to do the same!!

We have to **Acknowledge WE are at WAR. We need to PREPARE for BATTLE. We need to BE VIGILANT!**

4) We need to lean on God for HELP. Don't Go it ALONE!

Remember you need to walk in Christ! This is a spiritual battle requiring spiritual power and the spiritual weapon of PRAYER!!

**Ephesians 6:18 (NIV)** And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

Rules without relationships lead to rebellion. Prayer is necessary for maintaining our relationship with God. Pray for one another in the church! Lean upon God in prayer! Pray together as a family as we navigate the challenges and as we work through the boundaries and the attempt to protect and shape our children's hearts! Pray through confrontations and ask God for wisdom. Pray for our family to resist temptations and pray for repentant hearts and restoration when we break boundaries and when we sin against each other. We need God's help!!

Here is the reality! We are at war but the battle has already been won. We have victory in Jesus! May we walk in that victory and may we teach our children to do the same.

**John 16:33** "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

**Our goal as parents isn't to keep our children from the world. Our job is to help them understand how vulnerable their little hearts are to temptation and to teach them how to protect their hearts as they encounter the world.** We must teach and prepare them for the

spiritual battles that we all face and how God is the true satisfier of all that the heart longs for in life.

**Invitation:**

**First of ALL Parents, where are you when it comes to entertainment and technology? Do you pass the test?**

CONTENT? Is the content you are consuming feeding the Lust of the FLESH, Lust of the EYES and The PRIDE of Life?

CONTROL? Does it have control of you or do you have control of it?

CLOCK? Does it consume too much of your time robbing and stealing from other important matters?

**Do you recognize you are at war? Do you have a warrior mindset? Are you preparing like a warrior?**

**Are you VIGILANT? Are you TRUSTING GOD through strategic prayer?**

**What promise do you need to claim today for your family?**

**Proverbs 18:10 (NIV)** The name of the LORD is a fortified tower; the righteous run to it and are safe.

**Psalms 138:7 (NIV)** Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life. You stretch out your hand against the anger of my foes; with your right hand you save me.

**Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)** 5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.

**Psalms 91:9-10 (NIV)** 9 If you say, "The LORD is my refuge," and you make the Most High your dwelling, 10 no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent.

