

Guard your heart

1. We're all involved in a spiritual battle. A name for Satan is Beelzebub, which means *lord of the flies*. Flies are attracted to rubbish...they lay eggs which turn into maggots. Unresolved hurts & wounds make us vulnerable to spiritual attack. Discuss some of the areas that can make us vulnerable.
2. Paul prayed in Ephesians 1:18 that *"the eyes of our understanding would be opened."* Or *"let's see what's going on behind all these things that are happening"*. There may be things like abuse, betrayal & generational sins. These can open us up to strife, depression, wrong reactions and associations. Discuss
3. We can become obsessed with the negative, and overlook the fact that we have many positive forces on our side.
Psalm 34:7. *The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them.*
Psalm 91:11. *For he will give His angels charge over us to guard us in all our ways.*
Describe a situation from which you felt that you were supernaturally rescued or protected.
4. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 *Therefore we do not **lose heart**. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.* Satan buries us in disappointment, anger, bitterness, hopelessness, rejection, despair, financial setbacks, marital conflicts, & family problems. It's important that we don't get locked into the past but determine to move forward and learn from our setbacks. Discuss.
5. Proverbs 23:7 *"as a person thinks in his heart, so he is."* If we lose heart, we're likely to give up. A wounded heart yields to fear and overlooks our strength. What we say, declare, or murmur reflects what's going on in our heart. What sort of statements from people would indicate that they're trapped in a bad place?
6. We can't choose what happens to us, but we can choose what we remember. A major negative event can sometimes colour our thinking & define our personality & life. Discuss people who have been trapped through tragic circumstances. Name some others that have not allowed their calamities to define them.
7. The man at the pool of Bethesda had been crippled for 38yrs. In John 5:6-8 Jesus asked... *"Do you want to get well?"*...he replied, *"I have no one to help me"*. Jesus said *'Get up! Pick up your mat and walk'*. How can we help people who have given up and spent years wasting away on their mat?
8. Later on in David's life he encountered other giants. Most of these giants were related to the first Goliath! (2 were Goliath's children & one was Goliath's brother see 1 Chronicles 20) We also can have major victories in life, (over sickness, oppression, difficult people, or some other need) and believe that it was the Lord that delivered us from our Goliath. A few months or even years later, the old symptoms return and manifest worse than ever. These negative experiences can drain our faith. We wonder: 'did I lose my breakthrough' or 'was I only deceiving myself in the first case?' How can we trust God when these 'giants' return and it seems like God has let us down?

Spend time praying for people who have suffered wounds. Ask the Lord to help them to rise up from their mat....