

WEEKLY GAME PLAN

Battle Of The Bell

Read Samuel 11:1-6 NIV, Matthew 5:28 NIV, Genesis 3:6 NLT

Context: While the Holy Spirit will help us to do what's right, He will not force us to be obedient to God. When we put ourselves in situations that we know can lead to falling to temptation, we are playing with fire. Play often enough and we will get burned. We've all been there. We've worked hard, we deserve the- fill in the blank rest/reward. But is this the time that God actually wants us to rest, or are we taking something He hasn't given yet? David was in the wrong place, at the wrong time and he took what didn't belong to him. It was a heart issue.

Reflection Question: What temptations are you falling into because you are in the wrong place at the wrong time right now? How is it affecting your relationship with God, with other people? Why is delayed gratification important?

Read John 10:10 NLT, 1 Peter 5:8 NLT, 2 Corinthians 11:12-14

Context: Whatever situation you face in life, it's wise to know what you are up against. Scripture has a lot to say about the enemy we face. We need to familiarize ourselves with the tricks that the enemy uses to discourage us and to pull us away from the mission the Lord has given us. Satan does not get tired in attacking us. He pretends to be more than he is. He prowls around *like* a roaring lion and, if we're not careful, he will scare us away from doing what God created us to do.

Reflection Question: How does Satan like to attack you the most? Is it when you're tired, hungry, busy, comfortable? What precautions can you take to keep from being discouraged during your weakest moments? How does knowing yourself better help you to defend against the tricks of the enemy?

Read Matthew 11:28 NLT, Proverbs 24:16 ERV, James 4:7 CEV, John 16:33 NIV

Context: God does not promise easy sailing. In fact, the exact opposite. He tells us that we *will* get attacked, we *will* see troubles, we *will* fall, we *will* become weary. But He *does promise* that He *will* be with us and He has already won. The enemy is not going to waste time attacking people who are no threat to him. When we are warriors for the kingdom of God, we will be in the thick of the fighting.

Reflection Question: What's your go-to move for rest? When you are at the end of yourself, what/who do you turn to to get recharged? How often does that work? In James 4:7, God says we first have to submit to Him, but then we still need to resist the devil, and *then* he will flee. What happens when we try to get the results of this verse, but do it out of order? Why is this so ineffective?

Read Galatians 6:9 NLT, Exodus 14:13 NLT, Ecclesiastes 4:12 NIV

Context: We can't give up. We have to stand. We can do this together. The enemy is not trying to fight us one on one. He loves to find us alone and isolated and attack us in droves. We need to do this life as a community, as the body of Christ. Together, we can encourage, we can defend, we can build each other up.

Reflection Question: Who is your tribe? Why is it so important to do this life with other believers? What can you do together that you can't do alone? How can you encourage someone to stand firm this week? Who can you reach out to and tell them that you need encouragement to keep going this week?

Read Hebrews 10:36-39 NIV, James 1:12 NIV

Context: To those who will choose to remain faithful and not give up, Christ promises a reward! We are not those who will shrink back. We will not ring the bell. We are those who will continue in faith and we will receive the crown we have been promised. When we think we cannot go one more step, we're right. But when we partner with our brothers and sisters we can go infinitely farther.

Reflection Question: How excited are you to receive the prize that God has promised you, if you remain faithful? Why is it so hard to wait for what we have been promised? Who needs to hear that God is faithful in what He promises from you today?

End in prayer. Be intentional about building your community of people that you can rely on to encourage you in the faith. Be bold to encourage others!