

## Small Group Study: Week 12

Welcome to week twelve of the “Off the Shelf” Small Group study. Throughout this 13 week series, we pray this study will help you and your group further grasp the overall story of the Bible and what it means for your lives today. This study will build on each weekend’s sermon, so please make it a priority to listen to the sermon before meeting with your group each week. If you were unable to catch the sermon this weekend, check it out at [firstdecatour.org/sermons](http://firstdecatour.org/sermons). Also, if you need an online Bible, please download the YouVersion Bible App from the App Store or Google Play.



### Getting Started

Last week we studied chapter 15 in the book of Acts. The book of Acts gives us an understanding of the beginnings of the church, the difficulties they faced, and the spread of the Gospel message. It shows the extraordinary power of God working through what could not be more of an ordinary and exceedingly unqualified group of people; to carry out the most crucial mission in the history of the world.

The rest of the New Testament includes the writings of the Apostle Paul and five other men. These writings teach us even more about the early church, but they also show us what it means for us to follow Jesus.

- ▶ This week we will be taking a look at the book of Ephesians, which was written by the Apostle Paul. This book, like many New Testament books, is a letter. To get the conversation going today, have each person in the group share about one of their favorite letters they have ever received and why that letter was so important to them.
- ▶ For those who participated in one of the Bible reading plans last week, what was your biggest takeaway?



### Read Ephesians 6:10-20

In the previous chapter, the Apostle Paul wrote about the way a Christian household should function. Then in chapter six, Paul made an abrupt change in his focus and started writing about spiritual battles. However, this is not random. Paul is reminding his readers that following Jesus has some sweet moments. Our eternal destiny is secured. Our sins are forgiven — shame, guilt, all gone. But Paul is saying, “Amid your euphoric joy in Christ, remember there’s an epic saga in play. There’s spiritual war.”



### Talk About It

- ▶ When you think about spiritual warfare, what images come to mind?
- ▶ Why are we so surprised by the spiritual battle going on around us? Why aren’t we in tune with it on a day to day basis?
- ▶ If you could re-word verses 11-17, how would you summarize these verses in your own words?
- ▶ Paul’s understanding of prayer in verses 18-20 is powerful. When have you experienced prayer like this? If this kind of prayer is not a part of your life, what keeps you from praying like this?

# Off the Shelf



## Watch

- ▶ Watch the "Off the Shelf Small Group Video Week 12". The video is available on the leader blog at <https://fccgrowtogether.org>.



## Talk About It

Pastor Wayne said that sometimes sinful choices are decisions we make. Sometimes we just want to sin. However, while Satan does not have control over our actions, he certainly has some authority on earth for a period of time. As Pastor Wayne said, we should not look for a demon in everything. However, as Paul wrote in Ephesians chapter 6, we are involved in a spiritual battle. As Pastor Wayne said, we need to take things to God in prayer and get the forces of God working on our behalf against that forces of hell that are lined up against us.

- ▶ In your own words, explain why we sometimes choose to sin. Where does the desire to sin come from?
- ▶ How would you describe the authority that Satan has in our world today?
- ▶ If God has called us to be in prayer against the spiritual forces in our world and our lives, how are you doing with that? What might need to change?
- ▶ What is your biggest take away from this week's discussion?



## Pray

Pray for one another this week that you will each understand the spiritual battle you are in. Encourage one another to pray and allow God to work on your behalf against the forces of evil.



## Bible Reading Plan

Please continue reading the Bible reading plan together as a group in the week ahead. Encourage one another throughout the week to stay engaged.