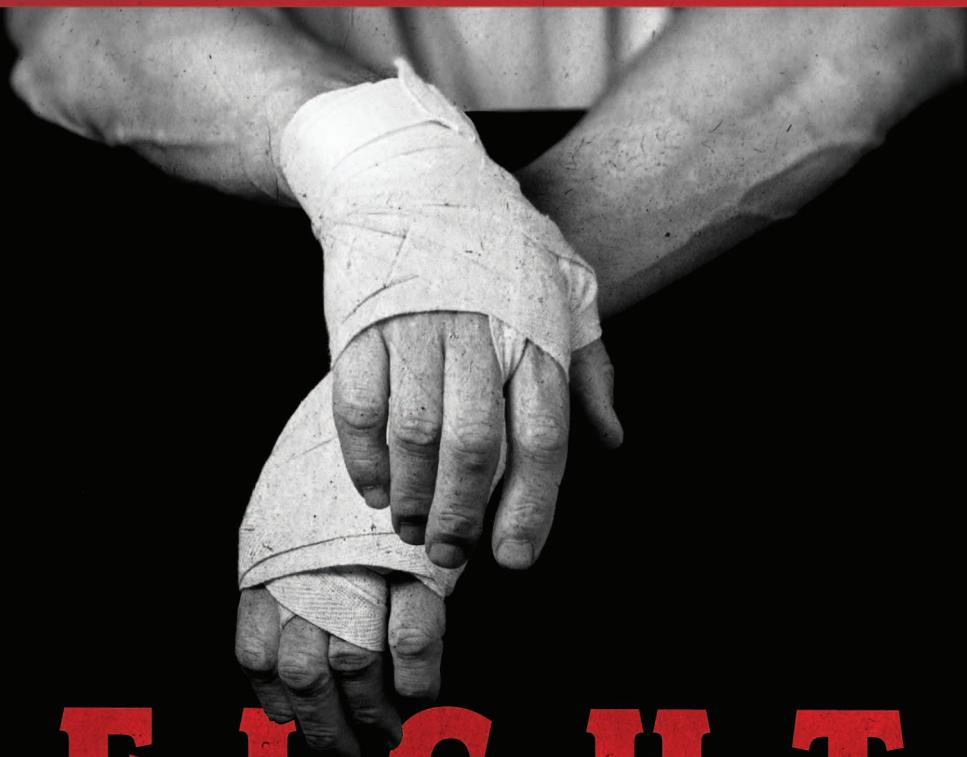


FIVE SESSIONS

STUDY GUIDE



FIGHT



WINNING THE BATTLES
THAT MATTER MOST



CRAIG GROESCHEL
WITH JUDSON POLING

SESSION 1

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FIGHT LIKE A MAN

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I see in Fight Club the strongest and smartest men who've ever lived. I see all this potential, and I see squandering. An entire generation pumping gas, waiting tables, slaves with white collars. Advertising has us chasing cars and clothes, working jobs we hate so we can buy stuff we don't need. We're the middle children of history, man. No purpose or place. We have no Great War. No Great Depression. Our Great War's a spiritual war ... our Great Depression is our lives.

—Tyler Durden in *Fight Club*

GROUP MEETING

Welcome

Welcome to the first session of *Fight*. If your group members do not yet know one another, introduce yourselves before watching the video.

Video

Play the video segment for Session 1. Use the outline below to help you follow along with the main points, filling in the blanks as you go. (See the appendix for any words you miss.) Jot down any insights or questions for discussion.

NOTES

Men, God created you with a heart of a _____. There are times we must put up a fight, a spiritual fight, where we stand our ground.

Jesus was full of love, grace, mercy ... and he was the greatest warrior who ever lived. In Exodus 15:3, God himself is called a _____.

In Matthew 10:34, Jesus acknowledged he “did not come to bring peace, but a _____.”

“I looked for a man among them who would _____ up the wall and _____ before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none.” (Ezekiel 22:30)

Two Principles for Being a Warrior:

1. Every warrior has a _____ to fight for.

“Don’t be _____ of them. Remember the Lord, who is great and awesome, and fight for your families, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your homes.” (Nehemiah 4:14)

2. A warrior without a cause to fight _____ will find the wrong thing to fight _____.

He might fight against authority ... wife ... boss ... boredom. Saul of Tarsus, before he became a Christian, fought against Christianity (see Acts 8:3).

A warrior without a cause becomes a _____ man.

When you see a man with godly _____, you will see a man reflecting the _____ of God the Warrior, who stands up for truth.

Two Ways You May Have to Fight:

1. Sometimes, you throw a _____ (metaphorically and spiritually—be active).

There are times when you have to draw your _____, and your sword is the _____ of God.

Stand against injustice, stand up for the weak, fight in prayer, leave a job that’s hurting you spiritually, or walk away from a woman who is not your wife.

2. Sometimes you turn a _____ (which often takes more strength).

Fight with humility, repentance, _____ your sin, apologizing, asking for _____.

Conclusion: Deuteronomy 20:3–4 says that “the LORD your God is the one who goes _____ you to fight for you against your enemies.” The Lord gives you _____. Your job is to _____ ... and fight like a man of God.

Discussion

Take time to discuss what you just watched.

1. In your family of origin, how was “manhood” described and modeled?
2. When you were growing up, what influenced you toward or away from the idea that men are naturally supposed to have a “heart of a warrior”?

How does the challenge of Nehemiah 4:14 line up with or contradict those who influenced you as a boy and shaped your early character?

Describe an early time in your life when you saw your own warrior heart coming out.

3. How do you react to the passage in Exodus 15:3 that describes God as a warrior?

In John 2:13–17, Jesus clears the temple of the moneychangers and animal merchants. He makes a whip, overturns tables, and his language is notably forceful. In what ways do you imagine his anger was like your anger? How might it have been different?

4. Jesus said in Matthew 10:34 that he “didn’t come to bring peace but a sword.” Yet Jesus is called “the Prince of Peace” in Isaiah

9:6. What kind of “peace” does Jesus not bring, and what kind of peace is he the prince of?

Jesus also said in Matthew 26:52 that “all who draw the sword will die by the sword.” What “sword” are we being warned against using, and what exactly is the “sword” Jesus brings in Matthew 10:34?

5. In Ezekiel 22:30, God said, “I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so that I would not have to destroy it.” What is a “gap”—a place of need and a worthy cause for you to fight for—that brings out your warrior?

Knowing we are susceptible to picking the wrong battles, describe a time when you fought *against* the wrong thing. What price did you pay for that mistake?

6. What is an example from your life of a fight that involved “turning the other cheek”?

What is difficult for you personally when you have to engage in that kind of fight?

Individual Activity: My Takeaway

1. Briefly look over the video outline and any notes you took.
2. In the space below, write down the big idea you want to take away from this meeting. It may be a teaching point you want to sear in your mind or something you sense God wanting you to do.

What I need to focus on as a result of this session is ...

Closing Prayer

Close your meeting with prayer.

PERSONAL STUDY

Reading

Read section 1 of the *Fight* book. Use the space below to note any ideas or questions you want to bring to the next group meeting.

Study

God created men to have the heart of a warrior, placing a desire within us to stand up and fight for what's pure, for what's true. A man has a warrior's heart. You have a warrior's heart. You itch for a fight. That's God's design, not ours.



Fight, page 13

1. People often describe their desired spiritual condition as being filled with “peace” or being completely “at rest” or living in “serenity.” While there are certainly biblical precedents for having these worthy aspirations, they don’t tell the whole story of our life with God—and they don’t capture the essence of what it means to be a man. Many times in Scripture, God wants to stir us up inside, not calm us down. Look up the following passages, and note how you see God actually leading men away

from being at rest and toward a challenge—or fight—of some kind. Put in your own words what you observe:

Genesis 1:28; 2:15

Genesis 12:1–3

Exodus 3:7–12

Luke 22:39–46

John 21:15–19

Acts 9:10–19

Acts 10:9–23

Looking back over these scriptural examples of God-commanded initiative and risk-taking, what might be the role of “peace that passes understanding” (Philippians 4:7) in each situation?

2. What are some aspects of your life or personality that keep you more in status quo mode rather than warrior mode?

What aspect of your own warrior heart do you find hard to accept?

3. What do you think is the difference between having a God-given desire to stand up and fight, and just being a combative person?

Virtually everyone who takes on a fight thinks he is right. Yet we're all human, and too often, we are blind to our own arrogance or self-serving agenda. As Dallas Willard observed, "It is extremely difficult to be right and not hurt anybody with it" (quoted in *God Is Closer Than You Think*, by John Ortberg, page 148). Seeing as that is true, how can we take on a challenging fight without allowing ourselves to be blinded to the possibility we may be in the wrong fight, or fighting in the wrong way?

Who is a good example of a godly fighter that you know or read about, and what makes that person worthy to be emulated?

You're already in a fight, whether you know it or not. Your spiritual enemy wants to take you out. He's a master at making strong men weak. Sometimes he does that by making us comfortable, secure, and safe, resigned to a mediocre life because it's familiar and doesn't require much from us. Is that really how you want to live?

Fight, page 27



4. Read Matthew 13:18–23. As Jesus explains the Parable of the Sower, he mentions three ways in which the seed is rendered unfruitful. Which of those three conditions is most likely to block your spiritual progress? What “fight” would counteract that?

With what “cares of this world” or “deceitfulness of riches” (Matthew 13:22) do you struggle? What steps can you take to overcome their stifling influence?

5. Any of us can fall prey to living according to the values of the world around us. The tragedy is not just the loss of what God could have done through us; it’s also that our lives end up being bland and purposeless.

If you watched a movie about a guy who wanted a Volvo and worked for years to get it, you wouldn’t cry at the end when he drove off the lot, testing the windshield wipers. You wouldn’t tell your friends you saw a beautiful movie or go home and put a record on to think about the story you’d seen. The truth is, you wouldn’t remember that movie a week later, except you’d feel robbed and want your money back. Nobody cries at the

end of a movie about a guy who wants a Volvo. But we spend years actually living those stories, and expect our lives to be meaningful. The truth is, if what we choose to do with our lives won't make a story meaningful, it won't make a life meaningful either.

—Donald Miller, *A Million Miles in a Thousand Years*

What about your life makes “the story of you” meaningful?

What fight are you avoiding that—if you really and truly engaged in it—would turn your life into a story worth telling for generations to come?

Guided Prayer

God, thank you for giving me the heart of a warrior. Show me how I can remove the barriers that keep it from being strong, courageous, and fully yours. Help me get past my fears and insecurities, especially ...

I confess there are times I fight the wrong battles. I can be stubborn, and smug, and sure I'm right. But people I love have told me they see this in me, and when I'm honest, I know they are right and I need to change. Especially help me ...

I also know I sometimes get tired of keeping up with the battles I'm supposed to win. Honestly, I wish some of my problems would just go away—I'm sick of working so hard and not seeing results. But with your help and power, I know I can fight and win, even if it takes the rest of my life. Keep me in the battle, Lord; don't let me give up in these areas ...

I am your warrior, Jesus. I will fight the good fight like a man of God, using the tools of a man of God. When you need a ready man, a good man, or a brave man ... I am here to answer the call. Amen.