

SCRIPTURE: Philippians 4:8, Psalm 139: 2-4, Ephesians 6:10-18

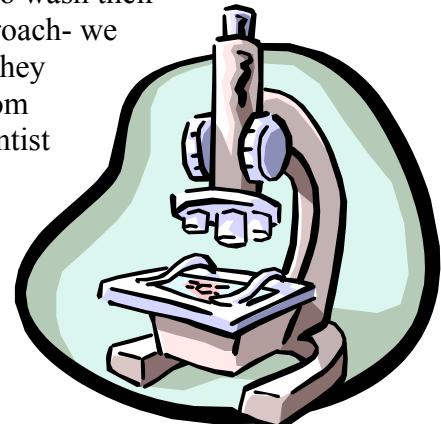
HYMN: A Mighty Fortress

*“...For still our ancient foe,  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great,  
And, armed with cruel hate.  
On earth is not His equal.”*

## INVISIBLE ENEMIES

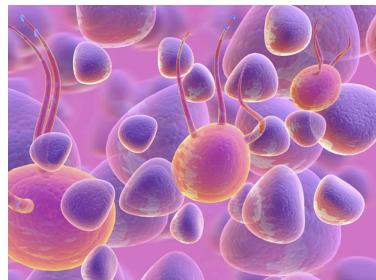
I have recently been teaching my children about remembering to wash their hands often and brush their teeth regularly. We took a fun approach- we called germs “invisible enemies”, explaining that even though they could not see them, germs were the reasons we caught colds from other people; and bacteria were the cause of bad news at the dentist (cavities!). Truthfully, we both needed reminding to keep consistent in these healthy habits- my children needed to do these things and I needed to pay attention!

Why is it so easy to forget to do even these simple tasks? I think it’s because we cannot see germs and bacteria. They are not there to remind us, like stains on our clothing or dirt on our hands; they do not stand out and get our attention.



But do they cause harm? Indeed, they do! These “invisible enemies” are responsible for everything from the common cold to severe pneumonia. They knock us down, make us bedridden, and even cause death. Teeth bacteria out of control lead us to experience the dreaded dentist drill. Can there be any more awful sound than that on this earth?! How many here have endured a root canal? Not something you want to re-live, huh? Can you believe that tiny, invisible things cause us so much pain and harm?

It is the same with sin. We might think that bad thoughts are okay, because no one sees them. But Jesus taught us otherwise. He taught us that the words we say are an overflow of what is stored in our hearts. Have you ever said something you’ve regretted later? It was because it was in your thoughts first. We learn in the book of Philippians to choose our thoughts- to keep them on what is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy. When bad thoughts enter our minds, we can choose to get rid of them quickly and think about something else.



Another good reason to guard our thoughts is because the Lord knows our thoughts- He tells us that in Psalm 139. We want to think things that we would not be ashamed for Him to see.

Another “invisible enemy” the Bible teaches us about is the enemy of our souls. The book of Ephesians teaches us,

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places”(Ephesians 6:12). What all that means is that for those of us who are in Christ, we have a real enemy who works against us. He wants to steal our joy and makes us miserable. He lies to us and aims to harm us. Just like invisible germs cause us to get really sick, the enemy’s lies- if we agree with them- can cause us to become downcast in our soul. Thankfully, our good God, who is greater than the enemy, has given us His wonderful, effective help against the enemy’s harmful schemes: His Word, faith and prayer. Do you read God’s Word every day? Do you believe what you read, and put your trust in the One who said these wonderful words of life? Do you pray continually? If you do, you are well armed; “you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil” (Ephesians 5:11).

Our spiritual enemies are real, but we may be tempted to think less of them, because we cannot see them, just like with germs and bacteria. So as your friend, I am reminding you to remember your healthy spiritual habits- just like I remind my children to wash their hands and brush their teeth. Read your Bible and pray every day! Pray for those around you, too! And don’t forget to guard your invisible thoughts, too! Even better than simply having clean hands and teeth, you will have a clean soul and a very blessed heart!



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