

## SERMON STUDY GUIDE

# TUG-OF-WAR

WEEK 2: FEB. 12-17, 2023

Living God,  
thank you  
for your nearness  
when we confront  
life's challenges.  
Guide our beliefs about  
winning and losing.  
Help us to make  
wise decisions  
that honor you.  
Amen

## YOU CAN'T WIN EVERY BATTLE

Genesis 26:15-22

15 So all the wells that his father's servants had dug in the time of his father Abraham, the Philistines stopped up, filling them with earth.

16 Then Abimelek said to Isaac, "Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us."

17 So Isaac moved away from there and encamped in the Valley of Gerar, where he settled. 18 Isaac reopened the wells that had been dug in the time of his father Abraham, which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham died, and he gave them the same names his father had given them.

19 Isaac's servants dug in the valley and discovered a well of fresh water there. 20 But the herders of Gerar quarreled with those of Isaac and said, "The water is ours!" So he named the well Esek,[a] because they disputed with him. 21 Then they dug another well, but they quarreled over that one also; so he named it Sitnah.[b] 22 He moved on from there and dug another well, and no one quarreled over it. He named it Rehoboth,[c] saying, "Now the Lord has given us room and we will flourish in the land."

## GETTING STARTED

- Welcome each other.
- Inquire as to anyone who is missing. Is follow-up needed?
- How did you first react to the title of this sermon--"You Can't Win Every Battle"?



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## SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- We live in a culture obsessed with winning. What do you suspect drives this obsession? Give a few examples of how these drivers may lead us to put a disproportionate emphasis on winning.
- If we are always winning, someone else is consistently losing. Who in your life is often on the losing end of our victories?
- By most definitions, Isaac was on the losing side of important conflicts. He tried to build wells for his people, and another nation continually forced him away. If you were in Isaac's position, how would you have responded? Why?
- In each instance, Isaac was able to move to another location in his attempts to build a well. What role do you think faith played in his ability to "move on"? Why is it sometimes difficult for us to move on when we experience loss? Give some examples of unhealthy responses to loss.
- How might faith challenge us to redefine our beliefs about wins and losses in our relationships? Take a moment to write down your new definitions. Share them with members of your small group.
- What did Isaac gain by losing? How can we learn to lose well? What might we gain even when it seems we are/were on the losing side?

## PRAYER REQUESTS

