

## Sermon 6:

### The Power of Spiritual Warfare: "Triumphing in Christ"

#### Introduction:

Good morning, St John. Today, we assemble to consider a topic of profound gravity: Spiritual Warfare. As disciples of Christ, we are continually in strife with the forces of evil. Our reading from **Luke 11:17-23** reveals the continuous spiritual conflict we encounter and the ultimate victory we uphold in Christ.

Significant phrases within this passage include **strong man, stronger man, attack:** confrontation as opposed to passive observation, and **stripping of the armor.**

#### The Spiritual Battle is Real: Battleship vs. Cruise ship.

Will you join our fight? Divine blessings seem to be withheld when we do not engage in battle. Refrain from acknowledging your circumstance when it doesn't align with God's message and purpose for you. To do so would be akin to conceding defeat without fighting.

What does "you win by default" mean?

Winning by default refers to a situation where a competitor or team is declared the winner of a match or competition without actually competing, **usually because the opponent has withdrawn, is absent, or has been disqualified.** The circumstance often arises due to the failure of the opposition to meet the necessary requirements or rules of the competition; hence the **victory is awarded to the remaining participant.**

(You) won without technically doing anything to qualify as a true winner.

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Are we going to let Satan win the battle over our children, marriage, finances, purpose, and church?

Let's learn together who tap in the victory that Christ won for us on the cross. **Are you ready?**

"For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. **Ephesians 6:12**

### **Recognizing the Reality of Spiritual Warfare (Biblical Texts on Spiritual Warfare)**

"For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, wanted to again and again—but **Satan blocked our way.**" 1 Thessalonians 2:18 NRSV

"And we do this so that we **may not be outwitted by Satan**; for we are not **ignorant of his designs.**" 2 Corinthians 2:11 NRSV

"And no wonder! **Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.**" 2 Corinthians 11:14 Analogy: Impersonation of law officers. Impersonating an officer is a crime that involves falsely **pretending to be an officer or an employee acting under the authority of the United States** or any department, agency, or officer thereof. **The crime is punishable by fines and imprisonment for up to three years 12.** The crime also applies to military personnel who impersonate an official of a government.

"Ananias," Peter asked, "**why has Satan filled your heart to lie to** the Holy Spirit and to keep back part of the proceeds of the land?" Acts 5:3 NRSV

"And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham **whom Satan bound for eighteen long years**, be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?" Luke 13:16 NRSV.

**"Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil** prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." 1 Peter 5:8 NIV

We don't **wrestle** against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. There are spiritual powers of **darkness** who wage war against God and seek to destroy His people.

Let us not be passive spectators but active warriors, ready to unleash the power of Christ against the forces of evil.

### **What are the 7 pieces of The Armor of God**

The Belt of truth

The Breastplate of righteousness

The Gospel of the Peace

The Shield of Peace

The Helmet of Salvation

The Sword of the Spirit/The Word of God

### **Breaking Down Satan's Rules of Engagement**

1- The enemy comes after those who don't know, understand, or act on the purpose of God in Christ Jesus. Those who walk in the Spirit will live their lives in tension with the darkness.

2- Persistence brake resistance: The enemy wants you doing what he wants and what you want but NOT what God wants. "Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart." **Luke 18:1** Prayer without ceasing. You are close it to your miracle than when you first believe.

3- The misplacement of the gift of faith. **Ephesians 2** We all are born with this gift. The misplace faith occurs when you place your faith anything or being other than Jesus. Faith has the power to active the supernatural and create points of convergence between both worlds. What I call open doors in the Spirit.

4- Resist the devil by wearing the Armor of God. **James 4:7** Therefore **submit to God. Resist the devil** and he will flee from you. Satan opposition before Jesus' deliverance. Daniel 10 Angel interruption needs our persistence. Angelic reinforcement, assistant, undertakings.

5- Mixed seeds. Mixed garments. Integrity of Garment/Jesus garment One Piece.

6- Good vs. Evil: The most extreme manifestations of malevolence are found in structured, organized evil. Even though goodness originates from God, it is only through concerted and organized efforts that good can triumph over systematic malevolence or criminality.

7- **KRONOS vs. KAIROS**:

- **2. The Authority and Power of Jesus**

"But if it is by **the finger of God** that I cast out demons, then **the Kingdom of God** has come to you." **Luke 11:20**

**Last Sunday I gave an introduction on the phrase "The finger of God"** as vivid expression that points to God in action. The finger of God that wrote the Ten Commandments is described as giving the law without any mediation (**Ex. 31:18; Deut. 9:10**). In other biblical passages, the finger of God indicates His power to send plagues upon Egypt (**Ex. 8:19**) and to create the heavens (**Ps. 8:3**).

The statement by Jesus, "**But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you**" (**Luke 11:20**), means that because He was casting out demons through divine power, He was demonstrating that the rule of God was already a reality among His listeners. **What is the kingdom of God? The kingdom of God is...**

When Moses and Aaron unleashed the plagues by the power of God upon Pharaoh and the Egyptian kingdom, Pharaoh's sorcerers concluded, "**This is the finger of God**" (**Exodus 8:19**).

**The plagues are Water turning to blood** Ex 7:14-24, **frogs**: Ex 8:1-15; **lice** Ex 8:16-19; **flies** Ex 8:20-32; **livestock** Ex 9:1-7, **boils** Ex 9: 8-12, **hail** Ex 9:13-35, **locusts** Ex 10:1-20, **darkness** Ex 10:21-29; and the **killing of firstborn children** Ex 11-12: 1-30.

**Exodus 8:16-19 (NIV) The Unlimited Power of the Kingdom of God vs. The limited power of the Kingdom or darkness.**

"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Tell Aaron, "Stretch out your staff and strike the dust of the ground," and throughout the land of Egypt the dust will become gnats.' They did this, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with the staff and struck the dust of the ground, gnats came on people and animals. All the dust throughout the land of Egypt became gnats. **the magicians of Pharaoh's court were able to perform similar tricks**

through their secret arts, imitating some of the plagues. However, when it came to the gnats, they were unable to replicate this miracle. This caused them to acknowledge the finger of God at work. Since the gnats were on people and animals everywhere, the magicians said to Pharaoh, 'This is the finger of God.' But Pharaoh's heart was hard, and he would not listen, just as the LORD had said."

In the **Luke 11** Jesus declared, "**But if I cast out demons by the finger of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you**" (**Luke 11:20**). He simply meant that His actions came from God with no intermediaries.

When we explore parallel passages where, instead of "**the finger of God**," the text mentions "**the Spirit of God**": "But if I cast out demons **by the Spirit of God**, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you" (**Matthew 12:28**). "**Finger of God**" simply refers to God Himself (whether the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit) manifesting His presence and power in the **KRONOS** a continuous space-time medium.

**Main Argument/Thesis: The main message of this text is that a hardened heart leads to folly and blindness.** Despite witnessing the power of God through a series of plagues, Pharaoh stubbornly refuses to listen and acknowledge God's sovereignty.

### **The meaning of the plagues of Egypt & Spiritual Warfare:**

- **First, the revelation of Yahweh as the only God, Lord, and Judge.** Divine intervention in favor of the liberation of the people of God discredits polytheistic religion, undermines the bases of the political and economic power of the authorities, and expresses the sense of divine justice and freedom.
- **Second, the presentation of the worshipers of Yahweh as a chosen people.** The story states that Yahweh mercifully listened to the cries of his people, favored him, protected him from the plagues, and guided him on his way.
- **Third, is the presentation of misfortune as an instrument of moral correction in the face of the persistence of sin.** It is a condemnation of sin committed consciously, deliberately, and obstinately. Pharaoh's downfall lies in his pride and arrogance, which prevent him from listening to the prophet's warnings and correcting his actions.

### **Jesus' Authority over the Demonic Forces**

- Jesus' power to cast out demons and His victory over them

- Through Jesus' authority, we can experience the victorious reign of God in our lives

## **The Operation of the Kingdom Darkness:**

Purpose: Kill, Steel, Destroy.

Function: The power to make another person to err by the flesh or by demonic influence.

**1. Kingdom of God:** The kingdom of God refers to the spiritual dominion or rule of God over all creation. It encompasses God's reign, authority, and sovereignty in the lives of individuals and throughout the universe. In this kingdom, God's will be central, and His righteous principles and values guide the thoughts, actions, and relationships of people who acknowledge and submit to His rule. It is associated with concepts like love, salvation, grace, peace, and eternal life.

**2. Kingdom of Darkness:** The kingdom of Darkness, referred to as **the kingdom of Satan or the kingdom of Evil**, symbolizes the opposing spiritual realm to God's kingdom. **It represents the dominion of darkness, sin, evil, and spiritual forces that oppose God's authority and seek to undermine His purposes.** Those aligned with the kingdom of Darkness may be characterized by behaviors such as deceit, hatred, immorality, and rebellion against God's will.

### **How Satan deceives and tempts us.**

"Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. **For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other,** to prevent you from doing what you want." Galatians 5:16-17

**What is the source of our Temptations?** It is certainly **NOT** God.

"No one, when tempted, should say, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. But one is tempted by one's own desire, being lured and enticed by it; then, when that desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and that sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death. Do not be deceived, my beloved." **James 1:13-16**

**In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century** we have **Genesis problem 1-11. Example**

**Genesis 3: Open Warfare** (The problem of boundaries & calling evil good)

**Process of the Fall:** How do we start falling from Grace in Spiritual Warfare?

Questioning of God's Commandments. **Did God really say?**

**The woman: saw** that the fruit of the tree was good for food and **pleasing** to the eye even when God said it was evil, and **desirable, take, give-share, die** eyes opened to the darkness. **When our eyes are opened to the darkness, we lose a degree of**

**innocence.** In **Matthew 7** Jesus teaches us about the difference of having Healthy eyes, or Unhealthy Eyes. Are your eyes healthy? The eyes are the lamp of the body. **1 Jn 2:16** The lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life does not come from the Father, but from the world.

**Heavenly Father:** Our Father who are in heaven. Luke 1

**Father of Lies:** <sup>44</sup>You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Our **confidence** in spiritual warfare rests not upon our own abilities but upon the perfect **victory** of Jesus Christ.

### **3. Joining the Battle in Christ**

Active Participation: - Actively engage in spiritual warfare rather than being passive spectators.

The difference between **human evilness and evil spiritual influence lies in their origins and nature.**

**Human evilness** refers to the capacity of human beings to engage in morally wrong or harmful actions. It is an inherent aspect of human nature that stems from factors such as **individual choices, beliefs, desires, and societal influences.** Human evilness can manifest in various forms, such as lying, stealing, violence, or oppression, and it is often driven by selfishness, greed, hatred, or ignorance.

On the other hand, **evil spiritual influence** refers to evil supernatural entities or forces who can exert influence on individuals or societies, leading them towards evil actions or thoughts. This concept the presence of evil entities, such as demons, devils, or negative spiritual energies according to the Scriptures.

Evil spiritual influence suggests that these **entities can manipulate or possess** individuals, tempting them to commit immoral acts or influencing their thoughts and behavior in negative ways. It is believed that such influences can be overcome through spiritual practices, **such as prayer, meditation, or seeking God's protection in Jesus.**

It is important to note that while evil spiritual influences are often attributed to external forces, human evilness remains rooted in the choices and actions of individuals. Both concepts can coexist and interact, shaping human behavior and moral choices in different ways.

**Luke 10:17-20** <sup>17</sup> The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

<sup>18</sup> He replied, "**I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Every time you see lightning remember that Satan is FALLEN).**" <sup>19</sup> I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. <sup>20</sup> However, **do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.**"

The Impact of Spiritual Warfare on Our Daily Lives affects our thoughts, emotions, relationships, and decisions.

## **Equipped for Battle United in Christ**

The book of Ephesians tells us that we are engaged in a **cosmic war**. We must fight daily to mortify our flesh, tear down strongholds, and proclaim the **powerful** gospel of Jesus Christ.

### **Key Principle:**

**Those who are Children of God and spiritual disciples cannot be possessed by demons.** "Why? Because the Holy Spirit cannot coexist with demonic activity. The children of God can only be externally afflicted by the kingdom of Darkness when sin becomes a practice in their lives." **How?**

1. **Regression. Regressing to the Old Life habits**
2. **Oppression:** Oppression refers to prolonged mistreatment or domination of an individual. It involves the exercise of power and control by the enemy over another, limiting their freedoms, rights, and opportunities.
3. **Repression:** Repression involves blocking or forgetting personal experiences as a means of coping with emotional turmoil.
4. **Suppression:** Suppression is a conscious effort to deliberately push away or ignore unwanted thoughts, emotions, or desires.
5. **Depression:** Depression is a mental health disorder characterized by persistent feelings of sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, low energy, and changes in sleep, appetite, and concentration. It is different from everyday sadness and can significantly affect a person's daily functioning and overall well-being.
6. **Possession:** Total control of the person by the Kingdom Of Darkness.

In summary, **Do not confused oppression, repression, suppression and depression with possession.** If the enemy influences, you to believe that you are possess even though you know in your inner heart you are a child of God. Then, **these 4 external demonic activities** will reach unbearable levels of affliction in your life where you cannot tell the difference even though one is not possessed. There is clinical depression, and demonic influence. How do you know when you are facing one or the other? Natural depression goes away with medication, resting, dieting and exercise. A depression from demonic activity will not go away, and I will paralyze you to the point you stop living your life and most importantly living God's purpose. The enemy know he cannot stop you or win the battle, but if can at least distract you, slow you down in the kroon's he will win by default. **Matthew 12:43-45 When an impure spirit comes out of a person.... When the enemy comes would he find your house unoccupied? Not today, devil My House is Occupied. Come Holy Spirit!**

#### **APPLICATION:**

Acknowledge the reality of spiritual warfare and seek to discern the enemy's tactics.

Turn to Jesus, acknowledging His authority and seeking His power to overcome the enemy.

Actively engage in battle, by equipping ourselves with the spiritual armor and standing united in Christ.

"In me, you may have peace. In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world!" **John 16:33**

### **Walking in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ**

Idolatry. It is not the image, it the spirits behind them. Those spirits are activated when we put our faith in them. Our God carry us not the other way around like in the case of idols.

People: It is not people, it's the spirit behind people. **Elijah and Jezebel**. Some people we fear even though they are not match for us physically.

Animals: Animals have an instinct to perceive evil. Jesus and the Pigs, Houses, Dog, when praying for deliverance, make sure that there are not animals in the room or near you.

**REMEMBER**: "We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers. There are spiritual powers of darkness who wage war against God and seek to destroy His people. **"Stop fighting people and start fighting the kingdom of darkness."**

### **Call to Action: Let's Equip Ourselves.**

Rooted in God's Word. It is written!

Wearing the armor of God

Remember that the prayer of the righteous are powerful and effective

Do not engage in Spiritual Warfare without the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Come Holy Spirit.

### **ANNOINTING TUESDAY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **CONCLUSION**

- Understanding the necessity of spiritual warfare prayer
- Remember that the prayer of the righteous are powerful and effective
- Let's become a Battleship Church, not a Cruise ship by committing to develop a prayer life instead of prayer times.

# PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we come before You today humbled by the revelation of the power of spiritual warfare. We acknowledge that we are not wrestling against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of evil. Grant us wisdom and discernment to recognize the enemy's tactics and to resist his deceptions. We thank You for the authority and power You have given us in Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, fill us with Your Holy Spirit, and equip us with Your armor to stand firm in the battle. Help us to unite as a body of believers, fighting together against the forces of darkness. May Your victory be our confidence, and may Your glory be manifested through our lives. In Jesus' mighty name, we pray. Amen.

## **Benediction:**

May your faith be unwavering, trusting in the promises of God and confidently declaring victory through Christ.

May the assurance of your salvation be a constant reminder that you are sealed in Christ, eternally protected by His grace.

May His Scriptures be your guide, a sharp and powerful weapon to expose darkness, demolish strongholds, and bring forth truth and healing.

May you stand firm, rooted in the truths of Ephesians 6, knowing that your battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the forces of darkness that seek to steal, kill, and destroy.

May the power of Christ flow through you, enabling you to triumph over every obstacle, every temptation, and every attack of the enemy.

And finally, may the love of our Lord Jesus Christ surround you, empower you, and lead you to triumph in every area of your life. May you walk as a conqueror, living in the victory that Christ has already secured for you.

In The Mighty and Triumphant Name of Christ, Amen.