

Drawing The Battle Line

- Ephesians 6:10-13

- **We all have goals that we want to achieve not only in our Christian life, but in this ministry and in the lives of the people in our church as well.**
 - New Converts
 - Increased Attendance
 - Ministry Growth / New Ministries
- **But when we begin to talk about those things and we start asking God to bless in these areas, you can almost expect Satan to punch back! I can't tell you the people, not just in the past but even here recently, who have talked about the commitment to God & the resistance that has come their way.**
- **When we commit our lives to God or we determine to make changes in our lives, we have drawn a line in the sand so to speak and Satan is anxious to cross it and disrupt our plans.**
- **Sooner or later, every Christian will come to the realization that the Christian life is a battlefield in which we face an enemy that is much stronger than we are apart from the Lord, and if we are going to be victorious in our Christian life we must fight with the Lord's help in order to survive.**
- **As Christians we face 3 separate enemies:**
 - **The World – The system that is around us that cares nothing about God. It is consumed with sin and seeks to force God out in every way.**
 - More and more we are seeing God continually be pushed out of not just our schools, but our government, our society & sadly even many so called churches.
 - And b/c we have chosen to leave God out, we are seeing dramatic consequences for our actions, and it won't just affect us, but it will continue to affect, I am afraid, the generations that are to come.
 - **The Flesh – The old nature that we inherited from Adam that is opposed to God and can do nothing in and of itself to please God.**
 - Selfishness / Greed
 - Immorality on every hand
 - Driven toward own desires instead of seeking to serve others.
 - Attitudes
 - Thought Life
 - **The Devil – The one who seeks to destroy us.**
 - Accuser – (Rev. 12:7-11) He stands before the throne of God daily accusing us of our sins.
 - Adversary – the enemy of God
 - Tempter – (Matthew 4:3)
 - Murderer
 - Liar – (John 8:44)
 - Lion – (I Peter 5:8) seeking about whom he might destroy
 - Serpent – (Genesis 3:1)
 - The God of This World – (II Corinthians 4:4)

I. The Enemy Is Real (v.10-11)

- a. **We have got to get back to the point in our churches & in our Christian lives where we take serious our enemy!**
 - i. We play with his vices.
 - ii. We laugh at his temptations.
 - iii. We let our guard down & expose ourselves & our families to his attacks.

- b. **There is a real enemy whom we cannot destroy on our own. The Bible encourages us in v.10 that if we are to defeat him we must do it through “the power of HIS might”.**
- c. **The Bible does not encourage us to play around with Christianity, to take it lightly and just to sit around and have a good time until He returns. Instead, Jesus warns us that we had better suit up for battle, b/c we are under attack.**
- d. **We are specifically warned about the “wiles” of the Devil.**
 - i. Wiles: methods, tricks, traps & schemes.
 - ii. When we think about the traps of Satan, we need to understand that he is out to destroy us all, both the saved & the unsaved.
 - iii. We make the mistake at times in thinking that the traps of Satan are obvious in their presentation. But many times Satan can win in the everyday decisions of our life.
 - 1. “You don’t have to accept Christ now, do it later.”
 - 2. “You don’t have to give your life to Christ, just go to church.”
 - 3. “You cannot possibly live a Christian life.”
 - 4. “Look at what you have done in your life and you call yourself a Christian?”
 - iv. These are the things that he uses so that he might destroy you & I, for he knows our weaknesses.

II. The Enemy Is Strong (v.12)

- a. **We should never underestimate the power of the Devil. Though he is not like God, he is a spiritual being who cannot be defeated through our own human efforts.**
 - i. We see the power that Satan has in the life of Job where his home, his family, his possessions, his friends and even his own health was destroyed b/c of Satan’s power.
 - ii. Look at the life of Peter. One of the great preachers & writers of the NT, yet he defeated him as he denied our Lord.
 - iii. Every time we commit to do something for God, Satan will counter with his array of attacks.
 - iv. C.S. Lewis said – “There is no neutral ground in the universe; every square inch, every split second, is claimed by God and counter-claimed by Satan.”

III. We Have Promised Protection (I John 4:4)

- a. **“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”**
- b. **We do not have to hang our heads in defeat but instead should rejoice in the power of God who has given us the victory through His Son, Jesus Christ.**
 - i. I have good news for you, though these 3 enemies may seem fierce and unstoppable at times, I am delighted to tell you that they all have been defeated by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ!
 - 1. **The World**
 - a. John 16:33 – “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”
 - 2. **The Flesh**
 - a. Romans 6:6 – “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.”
 - b. Galatians 2:20 – “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”
 - 3. **The Devil**

- a. Ephesians 1:22-23 – “And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”

c. We can have confidence in Christ b/c the hand of God cannot be moved by Satan.

- i. When we are living for Christ and following after HIS will for our lives, we can rest assured that His protecting hand will be upon us.

IV. The Victory Is Ours (v.10-14)

a. When you are in a battle, one of the hardest things there is to do is just to stand still.

- i. It seems as though it would only make perfect sense to either retreat or press forward, to fight, to run or at least move.
- ii. But here in this passage the Bible tells us 4 times that in the midst of our battles and struggles we should just STAND, to be anchored and immovable.
 - 1. If you read a little further in this chapter, you would notice that at around verses 15 & 16, you hear about “Shoes of the Gospel of Peace” & the “Shield of faith.”
 - 2. What is so interesting about these particular shoes is that when in battle, the soldiers who were to hold the shields up were given special shoes to wear. Why? Well, they needed to have special shoes so that when they held up the shields – that were really, really heavy.
 - 3. They would take these shields and they stand side by side and make a long line of these shields so as to make a wall during battle. If you stayed behind these shields during battle, you would be safe.
 - 4. One of the things you could not afford was for the soldiers who were assigned to hold these shields to slip and fall down, so they gave them special shoes. Shoes that had over 1-2 inch spikes nailed into the soles of the shoe so that upon position, they would sink these spikes into the ground as they held up that shield.
 - 5. In other words, they were going nowhere. They’re not going to budge – even amid the attack. Why? Because they were anchored to the ground.
- iii. We need a powerful army of Christians who are fully committed to going to battle. Committed to standing arm in arm, locked together, as we face the formidable opponent that is Satan.
- iv. The Greek word for the word STAND is also the same Greek word for the word “RESIST” or literally, “STAND AGAINST the devil and he will flee from you.”

b. James 4:7 – “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

- i. “Submit yourselves”: get into proper rank; unconditional surrender.
 - 1. If there is any area of your life that is kept back from God, there will always be battles. But if we will give our lives to Him completely, we can be “more than conquerors”.
 - 2. This is what it means to completely give your life over to Christ. Many times we feel as though that is some huge sacrifice to us. But the benefits far outweigh any sacrifice for us.
- ii. “resist the devil”:
 - 1. What this simply means is do not give Satan any kind of foothold in our life. Once we do, he has an opportunity to fight against God through us.
 - a. II Corinthians 2:11 – “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

2. And if we will do that, the Bible has promised that Satan will flee from us. Not b/c of our own strength, but b/c of our faithfulness to God and being anchored in Him.

- **If you are here this morning and you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you are walking around this earth completely unprotected from the attacks of Satan. Though you may think he is your friend, let me warn you this morning he is out to destroy you.**
- **You need to draw a line in the sand & get spiritual protection from Satan that can only be obtained through accepting Jesus Christ.**
- **If you are saved, I ask you this morning to keep the line in the sand visible and take your stand.**
- **By the way, you don't have to stand alone. Not only has Jesus promised to be there for us, but we have brothers and sisters in Christ who will help you take that stand.**