

OUR FIGHT - SERMON 2

Text: 1 Peter 5:8, Eph. 6:12

MENTION BOOK & PROFITS GO TO MISSIONS

INTRODUCTION: OPENING JOKE: *Perhaps you heard about the lady whose husband came home every night drunk and disorderly. He was making their lives miserable. She tried everything she knew to remedy the situation but nothing seemed to work. So she said to herself, "I'll scare him out of his drinking habit." So one night while he was out getting drunk, she put on a devil's suit. Sure enough at two o'clock in the morning he came through the front door drunk, she jumped in front of him with that devil's suit on and said, "I'm the devil, you'd better be scared of me." "No, he said. I'm not scared of you. I've been married to your sister for forty years."*

Well if you are a believer there is no real need for fear – for greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

The Bible calls us not to fear, but to sobriety and alertness as we consider the enemy.

TEXT: 1 Peter 5:8 (ESV)

⁸ Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

That word Devour means to swallow completely. You look like lunch to demons. Where I see a congregation, Satan seems a buffet.

Paul says it this way in Ephesians 6:12 (ESV)

¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

ILLUSTRATION: I'm a UFC fan...last night I saw one of the best matches I've seen in sometime. It was an undercard fight between Yair Rodriguez and Jeremy Stephens. At times it would seem as though nothing was happening, one would have the other in a clinch... and they would freeze. But the truth is - in those moments, every muscle is exerted, complete strength is leveraged... and when it's over the fighter with the greater stamina prevails.

NOW - do you believe Paul when he says our battle is NOT against flesh and blood but against these demons he's described? IF YOU DO - you should never get angry with your husband, or your wife, or your boss. They are NOT your enemy. In this series let's get vividly clear on WHO the enemy is.

KNOW YOUR ENEMY -

- In his autobiography, “Made in America” Sam Walton said that as he traveled from store to store to visit various Wal-Mart’s, he would often stop inside the local K-Mart stores. Why? Because he thought it wise to study the competition.
- When Alabama defeated Florida in 2009, Coach Saban met Tim Tebow on the field and he said, “Son, we’ve been studying and strategizing all year for this game”.
- Somewhere in Washington D.C. people are studying Islam and Middle Eastern thought.

If you are going to survive - you MUST know your Enemy and how he operates.

There are basically 3 things Satan can do... Not 4 not 5... 3
Possession, Obsession and Temptation

The first type of influence that Satan and Demons wield is called...

1. **Possession** –

This is a legal term of ownership. In other words Satan is laying claim to his legal right as an owner to take up residence and control a physical space.

1 John 5:19 (ESV)

19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

Ephesians 2:1–2 (ESV)

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

Do you remember when Satan took Jesus to a high place and showed him the Kingdoms of the worlds and said that he would give them to him if Jesus would simply bow down to him? Jesus didn’t say, “They aren’t your’s to give”. No they were.

Every unbeliever is property of Satan. Unless, a believer is present. Remember in 1 Corinthians, Paul goes into this lengthy explanation about what to do if two people are married and one comes to Christ and the other does not?

1 Corinthians 7:14 (ESV)

14 For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

He is speaking in terms of spiritual ownership - when there is no believer in the home, the home is under the authority of Satan. But one believer sanctifies the home. Do you see?

NOW - Satan has limited dominion on this planet. Unbelievers are under his command. But he also has limited speciality. He is not omnipresent. He can only be in one place at one time.

From time to time, he will claim his legal right over an actual person... and take possession of them.

Mark 5:1–13 (ESV)

¹ They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes. ² And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit. ³ He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, ⁴ for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. ⁶ And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him. ⁷ And crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me." ⁸ For he was saying to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!" ⁹ And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion, for we are many." ¹⁰ And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country. ¹¹ Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, ¹² and they begged him, saying, "Send us to the pigs; let us enter them." ¹³ So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.

Notice Several things:

- a. **A Retreat from Community** - We are told in scripture that solitude is a good thing, but isolation is a dangerous thing. Jesus would often pull away from the crowds to pray and seek the Father. That's not what this man was doing. He had isolated himself from the world.
- b. **Supernatural Abilities** - We are told that this man exhibited peculiar strength. In **Acts 16:16** a young girl had a spirit of divination and was a fortune teller.

ILLUSTRATION: I was in Jackson Square in New Orleans many years ago, witnessing to a homeless man. A man walked up and said, "leave here now, I know you bring the Word and it burns".

- c. **Torment** - This man cut himself with stones. Some in the New Testament would convulse, in Mark 9:22 a demon would through a young man into the

water to drown him or the fire to burn him.

NOW THINK ABOUT THIS: When I was a teenager it seemed that demon possession was a silly thing Hollywood would use to scare people. Or it was something you only heard about on the mission field. Here is what I think happened:

In the early to mid 1900s if someone seemed to be possessed or acting insane what happened? They were sent to an ASYLUM. Around the 60's ASYLUMS began to be shut down in the US. Remember that there was a sharp increase of vicious mass murders by the likes of Charles Manson, the Zodiac Killer, John Wayne Gacy, Ted Bundy, David Berkowitz, The Hillside Strangler, Jim Jones.

In the 80's and 90's we replaced the ASYLUM with State owned Psychiatric Institutions along with a sharp increase in Psychiatric medication... We would get people so doped up, they were zombies.

Around the turn of the century - government owned psychiatric institutions began to close down in favor of at home physiological care and prescription medications. What happened? A return of mass murder... school shootings.

Listen to this -

ILLUSTRATION: The Ex-girlfriend of recent Dayton mass shooter says, "He talked a lot about the "dark, evil things he heard in his head"

ILLUSTRATION: Parkland shooter said "Demon in my head told me to burn, kill, and destroy"

2. Obsession

Obsession I choose the word obsession rather than Oppression or Demonization because you are still very much in control despite what Satan wants you to believe - Obsession is an unusual preoccupation or drive to commit a particular sin or to practice a particular attitude of disobedience.

1 Samuel 16:14-15 (NASB95)

¹⁴ Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him. ¹⁵ Saul's servants then said to him, "Behold now, an evil spirit from God is terrorizing you.

- The demon would nudge Saul into fits of **depression**.

Now depression is not something that can be cast out. It's a very real human phenomenon. There are chemical causes and effects. There are helpful

medical treatments and counselors can be a great help.

But demons can use depression, they can work with it, they can encourage it.

ILLUSTRATION: When thoughts come into your mind that seem to be spoken TO you not BY you, beware.

YOU are worthless, YOU will never amount to anything. Always note the personal pronoun... that's not how a person speaks of themself.

- The demon compelled Saul to **attempt to kill David** on several occasions

Now this was not Saul's typical MO. He wasn't given to lawless murder. But the demon pushed him to do things he would not normally do.

- He engaged in **talks with the witch** at Endor.

Now note that the very thing Saul had outlawed, he himself was driven to engage in. I don't think that is uncommon.

People tend to move toward the occult when they are under the influence of demons. They seek answers, they power from other sources than God.

*One other occasion where we see this sort of thing... **2 Corinthians 12:7 (NASB95)** 7 Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, **a messenger of Satan to torment me**—to keep me from exalting myself!*

So you see there that God allowed it to keep Paul humble.

3. Temptation

Temptation is when a demon uses your natural inclination toward sin against you by providing an opportunity and nudging toward disobedience.

- *Now keep in mind that all temptation is not demonic, if there were no demons you would still be tempted because you have a flesh nature and the capacity to sin around you. **James 1:14 (NASB95)** 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust.

Mark 1:13 tells us that Satan tempted Jesus (NASB95)

13 And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan;

Paul warns in 1 Corinthians 7:5 (NASB95)

5 Stop depriving one another, (speaking of marital intimacy) except by agreement for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer, **and come together**

again (WHY) so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

We said a Christian cannot be possessed, they can be obsessed, and I would say they are regularly tempted.

How can you tell the difference between an ordinary temptation and a demonic temptation? Often it has to do with timing. **Notice when Satan tempted Jesus he hit him at the point of his greatest weakness –**

- He had fasted 40 days and what did Satan say? If you are the Son of God turn this stone to bread!
- He knew he was to have to face the cross in order to purchase his kingdom, but Satan said, “Bow down and worship me and I’ll give you all the kingdoms of the Earth”.

Now where is your greatest weakness? That very well may be where demons attack you.

If you pay attention you will know that it is a set up – Satan will over play his hand.

ILLUSTRATION:

- Chuck Swindol told of getting on an elevator and an attractive woman getting on and offering him a “date” for a price.

Don’t you see, it’s a set up!

2 Corinthians 2:11 (NASB95)

¹¹ so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

NOW LISTEN: There are things that are going on in your family, in your life, that are not ordinary... they are demonic. You need to recognize it and deal with it that way.

Learn to destroy what is destroying you.

CLOSING ILLUSTRATION:

Many of you know Sir Edmund Hillary, in 1953, became the first human being in history to scale Mt. Everest. But many do not know that the first time he attempted to scale Mt. Everest he failed, and lost one of his best friends and team members in the process.

He returned to a heroes welcome in London, England. A banquet was held in his honor. It was attended by the Lords, and the Ladies and powerful people of the

British Empire. Behind the speakers' platform was a huge blown up photograph of Mt. Everest. When Sir Hillary arose to receive the acclaim of this distinguished audience, he turned around and faced the mountain, and said, "Mt. Everest, you have defeated me, but I will return, and I will defeat you, because you can't get any bigger, and I can." Hillary did get bigger than that mountain, and he did scale it.

LISTEN: The temptation is not going to change, but you can change. You can grow. You can say, "Greater is He who is in you, than he who is in the world." Whose fault is it when you sin? It's your fault. But when you admit that, and get the help you need from Jesus, you can win the victory.