

## INTRODUCTION

We are starting today a four part series on spiritual warfare entitled “Battle Stations.” My father served in the Navy during World War II and his primary job was as a cook, but he said when a certain alarm sounded on board and the announcement “Battle Stations!” was relayed that everyone’s behavior changed. “Take your Battle Stations!” My dad would leave the kitchen and the other sailors would leave their regular stations and go to their assigned battle station, where there was a certain kind of equipment that they were to put on and they knew who the enemy was and they knew what to do. My dad would immediately go and man one of the large anti-aircraft guns and shoot at the planes trying to attack that ship.

I wonder today in a spiritual sense if I were to cry out, “Battle Stations! Man your Battle Stations!” I wonder how many of you would just look around and say, “I don’t know what to do. I don’t know where to go. I don’t know what I am supposed to put on. I don’t even know who the enemy is.” The truth of the matter is that there is an invisible battle going on around us all the time. Spiritual warfare is happening even as I am talking to you and in this very room. You just can’t see it with your eyes. The problem is too many Christians are AWOL: Absent Without Love. They don’t even know a battle is going on. For that reason, a lot of Christians, who although they are saved—they have their ticket to heaven when they die, but are living in defeat. They are constantly giving in to temptation and sin and living a miserable, defeated, Christian life. The reason is they are not aware of the spiritual warfare and the devil and his demons are whipping you every day of your life. The Bible tells us about this spiritual warfare and for the next four weeks that’s what we are going to talk about. Today I am going to talk about “Know Your Enemy.” Next week we will talk about “Know Your Armor.” Two weeks from today, we’ll talk about “Know Your Weapons” and then, finally we’ll talk about “Know Your Assignment.” But today let’s learn about our enemy.

Ephesians 6:10-12. “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

If you are going to be successful in battle, you must understand your enemy. I knew a retired military man whose job during the Cold War was to study the Soviets and to know everything about the Soviet war machine. During the Cold War, we suspected if America was drawn into a global war it would be against the Soviet Union. Thank God Communism fell and that no longer seems to be a prospect. The military even had a group of soldiers who would dress like Soviets and would speak Russian and use Russian equipment so that our troops could exercise against them. It’s important to know your enemy. If you are going to have daily victory in the Christian life, we must understand our enemy, Satan! So, today I am going to talk about our enemy. I don’t like to talk about Satan for a couple of reasons. Number one I don’t like to give him that much attention, but the main part of this message is to show you how he is a defeated foe and is completely ruined. The other reason I don’t really like to talk about Satan is because he doesn’t like to be exposed. He is the Prince of Darkness and likes to stay in the darkness and anytime we expose his works and we bring him to the forefront, it makes him angry and he intensifies his

attack against individuals and against churches and really gets serious about spiritual warfare. Nevertheless the Bible teaches the reality of it and so I am bound as a preacher of the gospel to preach to you the truth about our enemy. Let’s learn four things about him.

## **I. SATAN’S ORIGIN**

### **1. Created as an angel**

First of all, what about Satan’s origin? Where did he come from? First of all, he was created as an angel. We read in Ezekiel 28, and Isaiah 14, that Lucifer whose name means “Son of the Morning” or “Shining Star” was created as a beautiful angel and was called, “The Anointed Cherub.” He was originally created as a beautiful angel and guarded the throne of God.

### **2. Corrupted by pride**

Secondly, he was corrupted by pride. The Bible tells us that although angels are created beings, they also have free will—and Lucifer had “I” problems. He had too much ambition and pride. Isaiah 14 says he was not content to be a guardian angel, an anointed cherub. He wanted to be God, and he said, “I will make my throne above all the other stars above heaven. I will set my throne on the mountain. I will ascend and I will be like God. I am going up I am going all the way to the top!” This sinful kind of ambition led to his ruin, because the Bible says, “Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall!”

### **3. Condemned by God**

Lucifer was condemned by God. Lucifer thought he was going all the way to the top, but God said, “You’re going down—all the way to the bottom!” sometimes we get a false theology of the devil. We make him too powerful. The two mistakes you can make about the devil are to underestimate his power or to overestimate his power. Some people think Satan is like a bad god; you have the Lord God and you have Satan, and they are fighting against each other and it’s a real close struggle. Absolutely not! There is only ONE God—the Lord God of Israel. Hear O Israel there is but one God. Satan is but a fallen angel.

The word Satan means adversary. The word Devil means accuser, someone who speaks against. He is mentioned 177 times in the Bible. God cast him out and he became a fallen angel. In the book of Revelation, John say when Satan fell one third of the angels of heaven fell with him and they became what we would call evil spirits or demons. How many was one third? We don’t know, because the Bible never gives the total number of angels. But since that time Satan has tried to induce human beings to be what he originally wanted to be to be like God. To any one of you listening to me today and you are not a Christian, that’s the temptation. Satan is laying all this before you, saying, “You don’t need the church,” “You don’t need the Bible,” “You don’t need Jesus Christ,” “You don’t even need the God in heaven.” “You can be your own little god!” And Satan is active in this world today. God has put him down and he is going down, down, down, more and more, because now he has access to earth and he still has access to heaven. Job 1:6 says Satan appeared before God and he had access both to heaven and to earth but in Revelation 12:8-9, we learn that in the future, God is even going to cast him out of having access

into heaven. He’s going to be cast into the earth and then ultimately he’ll be cast into the bottomless pit.

## **II. SATAN’S ORGANIZATION**

The second thing we need to learn is about Satan’s organization. He is very organized very intelligent. Never make the mistake of ascribing to Satan only those attributes that belong to God. For instance, Satan is not omnipresent. Sometimes people have an idea that Satan is some vague personification of evil or some alter ego dwelling in the heart of every person or that he is everywhere. Only God is omnipresent. Satan is a fallen angel, but his influence permeates everywhere.

### **1. A spiritual army**

It’s like in World War II when we said we were fighting against Hitler. That doesn’t mean soldiers who were over there were hand to hand combat with Hitler. It means we were fighting against his influence, his philosophy, and his army. So when we say we are fighting against the devil and his demons and he has an army, what can we learn about this army? First of all it is a spiritual army, meaning it is invisible.

Look at verse 12 again. “We do not wrestle against flesh and blood,” these evil spirits, demons are real but they are invisible, just as angels are invisible. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood. Satan uses people, but our fight is not against people. For instance if Madalyn Murray O’Hair were here today, we would probably not give her a standing ovation. AMEN! Because Madalyn Murray O’Hair, one of the leading atheists in America, almost single handedly was responsible for making sure prayer and Bible reading was removed from public schools. This bitter old woman who probably will never be able to do it has said her next ambition is to make sure “In God We Trust” is removed from all American currency. So if Madalyn Murray O’Hair were here today I probably would not be inclined to give her a big hug and say, “Madalyn, we love you.” Instead do what I would really like to do? If I can be honest with you I’d love to just strangle her, but I would be wrong, because our battle is not against flesh and blood. The Bible says our battle is an invisible warfare against the forces of evil. The same is true in your life. Sometimes the devil will use people to torment, hurt, aggravate or cause you a lot of grief. Our warfare is not against people. Our warfare is against this invisible, spiritual army. It is a spiritual army.

### **2. A structured army**

Number two it is a structured army; it is highly organized. There is a demonic hierarchy. In verse 12, Paul mentions these different levels of a demonic army. The King James Version says “principalities and powers.” The NIV says “rulers,” which means these are the decision makers. The authorities are ones who pass on the decisions “powers of this dark world.” Just as in the American military there are generals, colonels, captains, lieutenants, sergeants and privates. Satan’s army has the same kind of structure. The Bible says demons are involved in the political process—when it talks about “spiritual wickedness in high places,” that has to do with governmental leadership. In Daniel 10, when Daniel was in Persia, he tried to pray, but he

indicates his prayers were hindered by someone he called “the prince.” He’s not talking about a human being; he’s talking about a demonic spirit over the nation of Persia and Daniel said the archangel, Michael, had to come and fight against this prince of Persia for his prayers to get through. That’s just an indication of this invisible warfare that is going on around us all the time. If there was a demon who was in charge of Persia, I believe there is a demon who is probably assigned over every nation in the world and I think there is probably a demon in charge of the United States of America, whose job is to try to do everything he can to insure we become a godless, unholy, vile, sinful nation. If you’ve turned on these talk shows lately, you’ll know he’s doing a pretty good job of it. Never before have I seen some of the garbage and bizarre behavior being promoted that we see on television today, things that just five years ago would have amazed us now only amuse us. That’s not an accident. Do you think America is becoming less moral just accidentally? No. It is an intentional, organized effort. Just as there may be generals, there are some colonels and some demonic sergeants and privates who perhaps are assigned to every individual.

C.S. Lewis has written a great book called, *The Screwtape Letters*. Some of you have read it. It is a fictional account based on the spiritual truth of the New Testament. Screwtape is a demon who has been assigned to a man. Screwtape writes letters to his immediate supervisor, a demon named Wormwood. In these letters, you learn something about how demons are trying to make us miserable and cause us to be ineffective as Christians. Although it is fiction, it is based on this truth. I think there is a lot of validity to the truth that there are all different organizations in the demonic army. Satan has a highly mobilized demonized sinister army.

### III. SATAN’S OPERATION

Number three. How does the devil operate in your life? What is he trying to do? Some people think that once you become a Christian, the devil doesn’t bother you anymore. He’s trying to keep you from becoming a Christian, but once you become a Christian don’t you think he takes your file out of the filing cabinet and throws it in the trash can and says, “I’ve lost that one.” Absolutely not! When you become a Christian, he takes your file out of the Unbeliever file cabinet and puts it in the Believer file cabinet. He merely changes his strategy. The word there when it says, “the devil schemes” in verses 10 and 11 it’s the word *methodia*, he has methods. He is subtle, shrewd and crafty. The Bible says, “Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.” (1 Peter 5:8) The devil is not a lion, but he is *like* a roaring lion. If you’ve seen lions in the circus or in a zoo chances are you’ve never heard one really roar, but I’m told when lions are ready to pounce on their prey, they let out a deafening roar that is so loud it can be heard for miles. The effect of this roar is to paralyze their prey. If I understand anything about the New Testament, the devil can’t really touch you. He can’t really touch me, but he can scare us. One of his greatest tools is fear, and just as that lion roars when it attacks the prey that’s what the devil is trying to do, he’s trying to use fear and doubt and discouragement as his chief tools against you.

#### 1. He tempts us to sin

Notice three ways Satan operates in our lives. First of all, it is the devil who tempts us to sin. He is the tempter. That’s what we see him doing in Genesis 3. He comes to Eve and he lies to her.

The Bible says he is a liar and he is the father of all lies. He says, “Eve did God really say this?” Anytime God puts a period, the devil always puts a question mark. “Did God really say this? Did God really say if you eat this fruit, you will die? You won’t. In fact, Eve if you eat this fruit, you’ll be better off. You’ll be like God. Go ahead. Eat it. It won’t hurt you.” that’s the same thing the devil does to you and me. He tempts us by putting the opportunity to sin before us and then suggests we sin. He cannot *make* you sin. He only puts the opportunity before us and our flesh is what chooses to sin. He’s a liar and the father of lies and *every time* you tell a lie, it is Satan tempting you and you are giving in to his temptation—but you don’t have to give in to that temptation.

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He hadn’t eaten for 40 days and 40 nights. Satan comes along and says, “Jesus those rocks look just like loaves of bread that have just come out of the oven and they even smell like freshly baked bread to me. Jesus aren’t you hungry?” and he was hungry. “Jesus, you can turn those stones into bread Go ahead and do it!” But Jesus resisted temptation. He was trying to show us and we’ll learn this a little bit later when we talk about the word how you can overcome temptation by the word of God. You don’t have to give in to temptation. Sometimes people say, “Oh all these terrible thoughts that go through my mind. I’m a terrible person.” There is a difference between temptation and sin. The devil puts all kinds of scary, weird, filthy thoughts in your mind. Your job is not to entertain those thoughts. Your job is just push those thoughts aside, because the battleground is your mind. I like the way Billy Graham said it. No one has ever improved on it. Billy said you cannot keep the birds from flying over your head, but you can keep them from nesting in your hair. These tempting thoughts will come, but just don’t let them lodge there and for sure, don’t give in to them.

## **2. He accuses us of being unworthy**

Number two. Not only does he tempt us to sin; he accuses us of being unworthy. The Bible says, “He is the accuser of the brethren.” He accuses us before God day and night. We see that in Job chapter 1. God says, “Satan, have you considered my servant, Job? What a wonderful, upstanding, righteous man that he is?” Satan said, “Sure he’s righteous. But if you took away all his blessings, he would curse you to your face!” That’s what the devil does. He accuses us before God all the time, but we have someone Job never had. We have the Lord, Jesus Christ, our advocate. He is ever-willing to make intercession for us. So whenever the devil accuses us before God today, if you are his child the Lord Jesus steps in and says, “Father, don’t listen to what Satan says. This is my child and he is worthy because I love him.” Also the devil accuses us to ourselves and although accusing us before God has no power because of our advocate, some of you are still listening to the devil’s lies. He tries to make you feel unworthy and rotten. He slips up to you and he whispers in your ear, “You’re no good! You’re no good! You’re no good, baby you’re no good!” He says, “How in the world can you come to church? How can you sit in a Sunday morning church service with all the terrible things you have done in your past? How can you sit up there in the choir loft and sing in front of all those people when all that sin has been a part of your life? How can you teach a Sunday School Class down there at that church with all the failures in your life?” He tries to make you feel unworthy. Don’t argue with him. It takes two people to argue. Whenever he accuses you of being unworthy, just agree with him. Say, “Devil you’re right. I am unworthy. I don’t deserve the love and forgiveness and grace that I received. I’m not worthy of it, but I have accepted it by faith.” So the next time the devil says

you're unworthy and you're a sinner. Just say, "Yes, but my sins have been placed under the blood of Jesus Christ and the blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, forgives me of all my sin." I promise you when you start talking about the blood of Jesus Christ cleansing your sin, the devil won't accuse you much longer.

### **3. He blinds us to the truth**

The third thing the devil does is blinds us to the truth. He is a liar. He hates the truth so he blinds us to the truth. the devil hates you. Why? He hates you, because God loves you and anything God loves he hates. The devil doesn't want you to know that God loves you. "The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ." (2 Corinthians 4:4) Those of you who are not believers, I am calling for your attention, because at this very moment I believe while I am talking to you, the devil is doing everything he can to blind your eyes, ears and your heart to the truth. You're thinking about that business deal next week; you're thinking about the football game; you're thinking about your golf game; you're thinking about lunch...the devil will put everything in your mind to keep you from seeing the truth of Jesus Christ. That's his job! So I want to encourage you today to remove those blinders from your eyes and see that God loves you and receive the free gift of eternal life. Once you become a Christian, he still tries to blind you to the truth. There are some Christians in this room who are blind. The devil tries to make Christians believe that all they have to do is just get born again their ticket to heaven is punched, that all they have to do is sit on a pew for the rest their lives and just wait to die. That's a lie from the pit of Hell! The devil doesn't want you to grow. He doesn't want you to become a dangerous, dynamic witness for Jesus Christ and he's blinded the eyes of many Christians to that great truth. So don't let him blind you.

## **IV. SATAN'S OVERTHROW**

### **1. Commenced at the cross**

The final thing I want to talk about is Satan's overthrow! Satan has been overthrown, but it is a process in motion. The very first prophecy in the Bible is in Genesis 3:15, and it's one of my favorites. Adam and Eve had just been cast out of the Garden of Eden and God said to Satan, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." That means there is going to be an ongoing battle between God and the devil and between Jesus and the devil, but God predicted that Jesus, the Messiah, would crush the head of the serpent although the devil would bite his heel. when Jesus died on the cross that's exactly what happened. That's the first thing I want you to see: His overthrow commenced at the cross. It started when Jesus died on the cross, because when Jesus was hanging on the cross breathing his last breath, the devil surely must have been rejoicing saying, "I've won! I've won! I've bitten his heel! The son of God has been killed!" But Jesus said, "Tetelestai." It is finished. Three days later he came back from the dead to be alive forevermore with the keys of death and hell. He was crushing the head of the serpent and he was "freeing those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death."(Hebrews 2:15)

Sometimes people think this is a great cosmic battle between God and the devil. Do you remember those old western movies where settlers were attacked by Indians and losing the

battle, and then suddenly at the last moment you hear the Cavalry and they come riding over the hill to save the day just at the last moment? Sometimes people think it was that way with God and the devil. It was real close. It NEVER was even close. From the foundation of the world God determined Jesus would be victorious.

## 2. Continued by the church

Number two. It is continued by the church. We are part of the process of overthrowing Satan. The Bible says, “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.” (Romans 16:20) When Jesus died on the cross, he crushed the head of the serpent and now the Bible says we as the body of Christ, the church, have the power to crush the head of the serpent. You can have victory over the devil every day of your life and that is part of the authority God has given to us. You don’t have to fight *for* victory you are fighting *from* victory. Victory has already been won on Calvary. What’s happening now is the devil is retreating—he is a defeated foe. He knows he is beaten, but as he retreats, he is trying to do as much damage as he can. He’s doing a lot of damage in the lives of Christians but he doesn’t have to. He’s on the run and the victory is already ours.

For a long time I didn’t understand that majestic hymn by Martin Luther “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.” I thought some of those words were about God, but they were about the devil. Martin Luther knew Satan was real. I’m told you can visit his home in Wittenberg, Germany, and see an ink stain that occurred one night when Martin Luther became so enraged at the devil that he took a bottle of ink and threw it at the wall. But the devil is not flesh and blood. Martin Luther wrote, “A mighty fortress is our God a bulwark never failing.” That is about God but did you notice he starts talking about the devil? “For still our ancient foe / Doth seek to work us woe / His craft and his power are great.” I used to think that was talking about God, but that’s about the devil “And armed with cruel hate / On earth is not his equal / And though this world with devils filled / Should threaten to undo us.” That’s spiritual warfare. “We will not fear for God hath willed / His truth to triumph through us / The Prince of Darkness grim / But we tremble not for him. / His rage we can endure. / For lo his doom is sure!” And this is my favorite line: “One little word shall fell him!”

We think the devil is such an awful roaring lion scaring us, the Bible says “his rage we can endure.” We don’t have to be afraid of him. “One little word will fell him!” That little word is “Jesus”! That’s right! In the name of Jesus you have authority and you can have victory over the devil. The Bible says, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”

I grew up being deathly afraid of big dogs. I don’t really like them even today very much. When I was about 4 years old, I was running up the sidewalk to my Sunday School teacher’s home to take her a birthday present. I didn’t know she had a big dog who apparently didn’t like people running up the front sidewalk. So that dog attacked me from behind. I never heard it and it mauled me violently! Fortunately, I was knocked unconscious. I just remember waking up at home in bed with a lot of cuts and bruises. Maybe that’s the reason why I was always really afraid of dogs. Later, when I was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, I was walking home from school and had to walk by Mrs. Dean’s house. She had one a big, white German shepherd. I know his name was Stormy, because told me, but I would always go to the other side of the street, because when I

would walk by, Stormy would come running out and barking in that deep, guttural bark. He was always attached by a chain and he would always stop but it scared me anyway. One afternoon I was walking home from school and you guessed it: Old Stormy came running out barking—and he kept ON coming! The chain came loose and he was free and heading straight toward me like a rocket. I just stood there in fear not knowing what to do. I really think it was probably the Lord that gave me the inspiration to do this, because I had never done anything like this before I just pointed my finger at him and in an authoritative voice I said, “Stormy, STOP!” And he did it! I said, “STAY!” That’s all I said. I just went on down the road but my heart was humming it was pumping so fast. Two hours later I started breathing again and was thankful that it worked. I got to thinking about that later. Because I knew his name and I knew something about that dog, I had a little edge. I’m certain to this day that if I had said, “STOP, Fido!” or “STOP, Lassie!” I’d have been dead meat, but he had been trained to respond to his name and to certain commands and I needed to know that.

I want you to know that the devil is just a DOG! He’s a toothless lion and when in the name of Jesus, you rebuke him; he’ll turn and run with his tail between his legs. You don’t have to run from him. He will run from you. Resist the devil. He will flee from you!

### **3. Completed in the future**

Now that’s part of his overthrow, but there is one final thing: His overthrow will be completed in the future. It’s not through yet. He’s still around here. He’s still bothering us, but it will be completed in the future. The Bible says in Revelation 20:10, “And the devil, who deceived them, is thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” That’s going to happen. When Jesus cast the 1,000 demons out of that man and into the hogs, do you remember what those demons said? “Do not put us into the pit before our time.” The devil knows he is headed for a bottomless pit. All the demons know they are headed for a bottomless pit and they are happy about it! They are like a wounded animal trying to do as much damage as they can, but their doom is sealed. The devil is a defeated foe. He is our enemy. Know him. Rebuke him in the name of Jesus—but fear God alone. Why? Because greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world!

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2. Corrupted by pride
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### II. SATAN'S ORGANIZATION

1. A spiritual army
2. A structured army

### III. SATAN'S OPERATION

“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.”  
*1 Peter 5:8*

1. Tempts us to sin
2. Accuses us of being unworthy
3. Blinds us to the truth

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2. Continued by the church

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*Revelation 20:10*



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For the Joy...  
Pastor David Dykes