



JESUS VS. SATAN

Part 49 of Luke's Gospel: Investigating the Man Who Is God

Pastor Mark Driscoll | Luke 11:14-28 | October 10, 2010

Luke 11:14-28

¹⁴ Now he was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. ¹⁵ But some of them said, "He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons," ¹⁶ while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven. ¹⁷ But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. ¹⁸ And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. ¹⁹ And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. ²⁰ But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. ²¹ When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; ²² but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil. ²³ Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.

²⁴ "When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' ²⁵ And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. ²⁶ Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first."

²⁷ As he said these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which you nursed!" ²⁸ But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

INTRODUCTION

Now, today we continue in Luke's gospel, chapter 11, verses 14-28, looking at Jesus versus Satan. I'll pray and we'll get to work. Father God, thank you for the Scriptures. We love your Word. We receive it as full, total, complete, authoritative truth. We want to wield it well as a sword in battle against our enemy. So we invite you, Holy Spirit, to illuminate the Scriptures, which you've inspired to be written, to inflame our hearts with passion for the person and work of Jesus, in whose name we pray, Amen.

AN EPIC, COSMIC BATTLE

Now, as we get into it, you're going to meet a demon today and his work in someone's life. And I want to begin by saying that there is an epic, cosmic battle that preexists the creation of the heavens and the earth, that preexists the creation of the man and the woman, that God, who is uncaptured, uncreated, and eternal created angels, immaterial spirit beings, to honor, to serve, to obey and assist his work in creation. And there was this epic, cosmic battle in the heavens, where a lead angel named Satan had joining with him a number of other angels in rebellion against God, wanting to usurp and supplant God, to rule and reign in his place, receiving the glory that is due only to him. God put down this insurrection of lesser, created beings and they took their fight to the earth to our first parents, Adam and Eve. And there Satan, their commander in chief, tempted our first parents and they aligned with him, rebelling against God in sin.

The result is that from that moment forward, human history is marked and marred by satanic, demonic sin, folly, rebellion, destruction, and devastation. And this epic, cosmic battle rages. We are each born into it. And furthermore, we see the effects in the lives of people. And so as we see biblically this cosmic battle, we need to also see its effects in the lives of average, ordinary, normal, everyday people.

And so the way this works as well is when there is correspondence from a war correspondent, let's say someone works for A&E, Biography, the History Channel, what they like to do is introduce us to this massive battle that they're covering. But then to help us relate to it emotionally and sympathize with people practically, we're introduced to certain people who are, in effect, victims or those who suffer from the battle.

So a good war correspondent will tell you about a battle and then introduce you to particular people. Here's someone who was suffering. Here's someone who was affected. Here's someone who was devastated. It's what a good war correspondent does and if you've ever seen something like *Band of Brothers* and docudramas, that's what they do. They take the big battle and they show us the implications in individual lives.

Luke writes like that. He's telling us the true story of this epic battle between the God of the Bible and our great adversary and enemy. And he begins in Luke 4 by showing Satan comes to Jesus and there's this battle between Satan and Jesus to see who will rule and reign as king. And Jesus disarms and defeats Satan by resisting temptation. And the story continues that the battle rages throughout the continual ministry of Jesus as Luke faithfully records

it.

So in Luke 4, we see a man who is suffering from demonic oppression and attack. Jesus liberates him. We see also in Luke 4 that there are many who are sick from diseases brought by unclean, unholy, unhelpful spirits called demons and Jesus defeats them and heals people. We see this as well in Luke 8, where we meet a woman named Mary Magdalene, who had no less than seven demons. We also meet a man who is a demoniac. He had so many demons involved in his life that this man was living like an animal and the demons collectively refer to themselves as Legion. We also saw in Luke 9 where there's a little boy who has a series of seizures that come from demonic attack and Jesus heals him and frees him.

And then it culminates thus far in the book, though Satan will continue in the storyline till the end, with us being introduced to another man who is a casualty in this great, epic, cosmic battle. He is a man who is rendered mute, unable to speak because of demonic oppression.

TWO KINGS

And so we meet him and we realize that in this great battle there are two kings. There is King Jesus, the King of Kings, and there is Satan, our adversary and enemy, who rules and reigns over demons. And though he is a lesser authority than Jesus, he is a higher authority than human beings. And so though he is not in any way to be regarded as equal to God, he is still concerning to us.

We meet him in Luke 11:14–16. “Now he,” that is Jesus, “was casting out a demon that was mute. When the demon had gone out, the mute man spoke, and the people marveled. But some of them said, ‘He casts out demons by Beelzebul, the prince of demons,’ while others, to test him, kept seeking from him a sign from heaven.”

So we meet the man. This epic, cosmic battle rages and the camera pans in to introduce us to one person who finds himself and the story of his life interwoven with the storyline of the epic battle, a mute man. We know so little about this man. We don't know if he was this way from birth or infancy. We don't know if this was a more recent development and condition. We know that he is incapable, unable to speak. If he is a husband, he can't tell his wife that he loves her. If he's a father, he can't sit down and educate his children. If he's a preacher, he cannot proclaim the goodness and glory of God. If he is a believer, he cannot sing the praises of God in worship. This man's whole life is negatively affected.

And the spiritual battle manifests itself in a physical way. You are spirit, that which is immaterial, and you are material, that which is physical. You are two parts. And to be sure, there are some people that have physical problems that are entirely, if not almost entirely, physical. It's not demonic or spiritual or satanic. It's just a physical problem. So if you fall down and you break your leg, you need a cast. You don't need to cast out demons, right? It's just a physical problem.

But there are other occasions where people have physical suffering that cannot be resolved through physical solutions. And this is from Luke, who is what? A doctor. He's a medical doctor. He's a physician. That's his clinical training. That's his professional vocation. He's a doctor. And he looks at this man and he realizes he doesn't just need speech therapy. He doesn't need medication. He doesn't need surgery. There's no way to physically heal him. His problem is spiritual, that the spiritual attack is causing physical complications. That's why we pray for healing for people. Sometimes it is just healing, but sometimes it is the spiritual healing of someone that inevitably results in physical healing for them as well.

ABUSE AND TORMENT

And so this man is suffering. And he's suffering something that I will call torment. The Bible uses that language, torment, to speak of certain demonic attacks. Let me explain this to you. I believe there is a distinction, a differentiation between abuse and torment. And one of the things that we love to do at Mars Hill Church is help those people who have been abused, particularly women, especially women who have been sexually abused. Our theology of strong male leadership and love and attention and protection and affection means that we want to be a church culture that is safe for women in general, but safe for abused women in particular.

And abused people in general, they will have something done to them that is horrendous and devastating, but it ends. And I'll use a lot of human illustrations for spiritual principles because if I'm just talking about Satan and demons, you may get confused. So I want to use illustrations from our life together to show you that Satan and demons, though they're immaterial, they're still persons. They're beings who do evil and we need to understand and relate to them in a way that is like dealing with those who are dangerous and abusive.

So abuse is when something happens, but it comes to an end. I'll give you an example of a woman who I know, and I could give you a list of a lot of women like this at Mars Hill, but her story was she was out with girlfriends and out with a guy she didn't really know and he slipped something into her drink and next thing you know, she wakes up the next day and she has no idea where she is and she could tell physically something horrendous has been done to her. She has been abused, but her attacker is gone. So she's safe. Now, she's wounded and hurt and damaged and she needs help and love and support and cleansing through Jesus, but her attacker is gone. That's abuse. It's an event that comes to an end. Though traumatic, and we don't want to minimize that in any way, it comes to an end. Now, the consequences may endure, but the event comes to an end.

Torment is abuse that continues without any hope of escape. So I'll give you another illustration from another woman that I know. She was repeatedly physically, sexually abused by her stepfather, beginning when she was a very young girl. But for her, this is a case of torment. It's not like the abuse happened and her attacker left. Her attacker happens to be her adoptive father. And so the abuse continues, but she's in torment. She's trapped. She can't get out. She's a little girl. She can't just run away. She's trapped. She's trapped.

Abuse is horrendous and torment is abuse without end or hope of an end. It's like the difference between someone who is captured in war and then tortured but released, and someone who is captured in war, tortured, thrown into a POW camp to be repeatedly tortured indefinitely.

Now, back to the story. This man is suffering torment. He doesn't just have moments of demonic attack. He's rendered mute. Every moment of every day, he's under assault. He's held captive. His life is negatively affected and he is physically suffering because of demonic attack. That's torment. That's torment. He can't get rid of this unclean spirit, and I assure you of this, this man has tried to get rid of this unclean spirit and he can't get rid of his attacker. He can't get rid of his abuser.

You'll read about it in just a moment in Luke's gospel. There were other exorcists. There were religious spiritual leaders who would come around and try and cast out unclean spirits. The people were familiar with them. The text implies for us that he could have tried all of these means and measures and there was no liberation. There was no freedom. There was no healing for him. He's in this torment condition. He can't speak. He's suffering. This demon is oppressing and harming him.

And we know not why. Was it because he sinned? We do not know. Was he simply being attacked though he was innocent? We do not know. But we know that he needs help.

THEY REJECT JESUS

And so Jesus comes. The second member of the Trinity, the Son of God shows up, comes to this man. And Jesus perceives that the problem is in fact spiritual in cause and it is physical in consequence. And he commands in his authority, he commands the unclean spirit, the demon, away. Because, you see, this is Jesus' authority. Only Jesus has that kind of authority. What this man could not do, what the Jewish exorcists could not do, what religion and spirituality and morality could not do, Jesus could do, the exercising of spiritual authority over an unclean spirit.

And the spirit departs from him and the man is able to speak. He is spiritually and physically healed. He can now sing the praises of God, proclaim the goodness of God, and share the love of God with others. And the crowd is watching. And, like you, they have to now determine in their heart and their mind and their soul, what do we think of this man Jesus? Who do we believe that he is?

And some come forward and they, in a very cowardly way, reject Jesus, as perhaps some of you may. They say, "Well, we don't know if Jesus is good or evil. We know he has spiritual authority. He's very intriguing, but maybe he's not altogether good. Maybe we can't fully trust him. Maybe he is not in fact God as he declares. We just don't have enough evidence." They take the classic agnostic position, which is that "I am God, I sit on a throne as a judge, and Jesus needs to present to me all of the facts and findings to my liking so that I can render a verdict of deity or not deity." Be very careful that you don't sit on a throne, judging Jesus. That's not our position.

Be very careful that you don't reject Jesus, simply saying, as they do, "We want to see more evidence." He was born of a virgin. He lived without sin. He walked on water. He rose the dead. He cast out demons. He himself died and returned to life three days later. The evidence is sufficient, though the heart and mind may be unwilling to receive it. But the problem is not with the evidence. The problem is with us if in fact we reject him.

Some are more overt in their rejection of Jesus. They say, "Jesus does mighty, powerful, spiritual things, but he's not altogether good. He is not altogether God. Perhaps he is good and evil. Perhaps he in fact is Beelzebub, the prince of the demons." Some of you would say that Jesus is powerful, but not necessarily altogether good. Some of you perhaps would even impose pantheism, panentheism, paganism. It is that God is good and evil, darkness and light. Because you don't have two categories, creator, creation, light, darkness, holiness, unholiness, truth, lies. You only have one category and everything and everyone fits in it and it's all oneness. And so for you, Jesus would be good and evil. And he's not. He's not.

Jesus has spiritual authority, but none of Jesus' spiritual authority is derived from that which is demonic and evil. He's only altogether, always, and continually good. But they have a sense that he is powerful. Perhaps some of you do, but you wonder if Jesus is good.

BEEZEBUL

And they attribute to him his power from Beelzebub, the prince of the demons. That name actually goes back many, many, many years prior, way back in the Old Testament, hundreds of years prior to an ancient Canaanite deity. And the name literally means the lord of the flies. You ever heard of that? The lord of the flies. That's Beelzebub.

Because in this great, epic, cosmic battle, Satan is ruling as a commander in chief and there is working under him a chain of command for unclean spirits and Beelzebub is the name, along with Legion, we met earlier, of some of these unclean spirits, Beelzebub being one who rules in spiritual authority over others who serve under his command.

Now, what is fascinating is that demons will elicit spiritual power. Demons will sometimes take a name. Demons will inspire miracles, healings, what the Bible calls counterfeit signs and wonders. They will actually establish religions for people to worship them. So I believe there's a god named Allah, for example, that's a demon god, just like I believe that in the ancient days of the Greeks, there was a demon named Zeus, who took on the identity of a Greek god. Right, that different religions will worship different gods, but they're not different gods. They're different demons masquerading and parading deceptively, covertly as angels of light, as servants of God.

And so people will ascribe worship to them and they will honor them and they will appease them. They'll receive miracles, healings, power from them and they'll think they're worshipping God when they're not. They're worshipping lower, lesser, created beings, demonic spirits, servants of Satan.

All right, this hit me in this curious moment. I'll do something interesting here. I was in Turkey last November and I went to this location and I saw this very interesting site. This is actually in what is modern day Turkey. In your Bible, it's called Pergamum. Pergamum is one of the locations of the seven churches of Revelation. I'm gonna lead a tour there in June or July next year. I think it's in July. And when we went to this location, there was this

huge amphitheater overlooking the city. The city is mentioned in the Bible in the book of Revelation. And in the book of Revelation, it says that that is where Satan has his throne. I always wondered, what does that mean? Satan has his throne. He's not all-present like God, so he has to set up headquarters on earth for this battle somewhere. And in that day, it was Pergamum.

So you go to Pergamum and there was this location there and we were told that, in that very spot, there was previously an altar to Zeus. There was an altar to Zeus. So Zeus was a demon god worshiped among the Greeks, brought to ancient Turkey, the city of Pergamum. And the altar of Zeus was established and sacrifices were made and he was a pagan deity. And that's where Satan had his throne.

You say, "Well, where is it?" Well, it's not there because the Germans took it and when Adolf Hitler went to create a pulpit from which to preach to the nation, to rule the nations, he used it as his model for his own pulpit. So here's what I'm telling you. Demons don't die like we do. They work from one generation to another. They can empower the Greek worship of Zeus. They can empower paganism at Pergamum. And they can empower Nazi Germany to try and extend the kingdom of darkness.

Some of you will be freaked out by this. Let me just say this. Be freaked out by this! Satan and demons are real. They're really at work in the world. The nations, the false kings, the false religions, the false prophets, the false apostles, the servants of darkness are real. And so is Jesus. Be concerned. Be aware. But do not be afraid. Instead, realize, even from the story of this man, though Satan and demons are at work, Jesus is more powerful. Jesus is more authoritative. When Jesus commands them to leave, they must. So we love and worship and serve Jesus. And we walk soberly and we walk humbly and we walk repentantly, but we don't walk filled with fear. We can't.

TWO KINGDOMS

The story then continues. That not only are there two kings, there are two kingdoms at war in this cosmic, epic battle that we are born into. Luke 11:17–20. "But he, knowing their thoughts, said to them, 'Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and a divided household falls. And if Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that I cast out demons by Beelzebul. And if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your sons,'" the Jewish exorcists, "'cast them out?' Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom,'" there it is, "'of God has come upon you.'"

So Jesus casts the demon out of the mute man. He is healed and the people are rendering a verdict in their own hearts and minds, is Jesus good or evil? And Jesus knows their thoughts. Do you know that Jesus knows your thoughts? Jesus to this day still knows our thoughts. He knew their thoughts. And looking at them, he said, "I know exactly what you're thinking. You're wondering whether or not I'm good or evil, whether I work for the God of the Bible or the lord of the underworld."

And he said, "It doesn't make any sense for you to think that I cast out a demon using evil power." Here's his point. Why would a servant of Satan cast out another servant of Satan? Doesn't make any sense at all. Why would an American soldier shoot an American soldier? Doesn't make any sense at all. Jesus says, "You just saw me command the demon away and he left. The demon was doing a really good job harming someone. If I work for Satan, I would give him a promotion, not a pink slip. He's doing a good job. This doesn't make any sense."

He says, "So you don't deny the fact that I have spiritual authority over demons. Now you have to ask yourself, where does it come from?" And he says, "I cast out demons by the finger of God." Matthew 12:28 gives this same account and it says that he cast out demons by the power of the Holy Spirit. So the finger of God is the metaphor for the person and work of the third member of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.

God is not a man, the Bible says, but this is an analogy. It's what we call an anthropomorphism. It's where God speaks to us in human language. John Calvin called it "baby talk." God's trying to talk to us in a way that we understand and it's like God the Father's reaching down into human history to serve us and liberate us and the finger of God reaching down to us is the presence and power of the third member of the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit.

So here's the truth. Demons have to obey Jesus and the Holy Spirit has the authority to command them away. This is really good news for the Christian, really, really good news for the Christian. That if we are in Christ, his victory is our victory. He died and rose to take away our sin and take away Satan's right to us and demons' access into us.

Furthermore, the same presence and power of the Holy Spirit that was at work in the life of Jesus is at work in the child of God. So this is fantastic. So by being positionally in Jesus and practically filled with the Spirit, we can command Satan and demons to leave us and they must. It doesn't take a priest. It doesn't take holy water. It doesn't take a crucifix. It doesn't take something goofy like *Rosemary's Baby* or *The Exorcist*. It takes somebody who belongs to Jesus repenting of sin, filled with the Holy Spirit, saying, "In the name of Jesus, I command you to depart from me." And because of his authority and the finger of God in our life, they must obey, not because we are great, but because our God is great; not because we have authority, but because he has all authority; not because we rule and reign, but because we belong to the one who does. That's the good news.

And so Jesus tells them, "How in the world does this make any sense unless I am working on behalf of God as God." And he says, "This is evidence of the kingdom," that this world was built, created, constructed very good. And then Satan, sin, and death came into it and we aligned with our enemy through sin, folly, and rebellion. And our God is a king who is bringing his kingdom to bear upon the nations of the earth. And here the kingdom of God is intersecting in the life of this man in the presence of these people. And it's all about the kingdom. We have a king who is coming to establish a kingdom. His name is Jesus.

TWO ARMIES

So there are two kings. There are two kingdoms. And ultimately, there are two armies. Luke 12:21–23. "When a strong man, fully armed, guards his

own palace, his goods are safe; but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil. Whoever is not with me is against me. Whoever does not gather with me scatters.’”

Jesus uses analogy. You’re living in the middle of a battlefield. You live near the frontline of a war. And this war is raging. And you are trying to defend your home. You’re trying to keep invaders from coming in and taking over. So you decide, “I will establish myself as a strong man. I’m gonna get a bulletproof vest. I’m gonna get a gun. I’m gonna get a dog. I’m gonna get a security system. I’m gonna get all the seasons of 24. I’m gonna take Jack Bauer notes. It’s gonna be lockdown at my place.” And you defend your place for a while and none of the invading forces get into your home.

But then one day, you look out and there’s a guy comin’ and you know it’s gonna be a loss for you. He’s big with a tank and a black hawk helicopter and a rocket launcher and a bunch of soldiers and you realize, “My house is now sieged. I am taken. This is the day that I lose.” What you need at that point is someone to defend you, someone bigger and stronger and tougher than you are because you have come to an end regarding your own abilities.

And what he is saying is this, that Satan and demons are stronger than you. They’re more powerful than you. They’ve observed human behavior and mannerism for thousands of years, since the first parents of ours walked the earth. They have tricks and tactics and they have soldiers, spiritually speaking, in the battle. You can’t win. You can’t defeat Satan with morality. You can’t defeat Satan with spirituality. You can’t defeat Satan with religion because he invented those things. Those are all demonic deceptions, thinking that somehow you can beat Satan by being spiritual.

Spirituality without the love of Jesus is the worship of demons. That actually makes it worse. That’s why we’re not into spirituality. We’re into Jesus. If you just pick a spiritual life and worship a spiritual being and open yourself to a spiritual power, you are by definition just inviting destruction and your enemy. You need someone stronger than you. You need someone to defend you. You need someone to liberate you, to redeem you, to come and set you free. His name is Jesus. Jesus is the strong man. Jesus is the king. Jesus brings the kingdom.

And Jesus is the one who doesn’t even need an army. He himself defeats the army of darkness all by himself. And he does this through his death. He does this through his resurrection. He does this through his open, public spectacle, defeat of Satan and demons. That’s what Colossians 2:13–15 says. Jesus went to the cross and there he won our victory. And Satan has no right to the children of God because his right to us is through our sin, but Jesus dies for our sin, cancels our debt, and sets us free.

Now, number one, do you belong to Jesus? Are you a Christian or a non-Christian? Spirituality is demonology. Do you know Jesus? Number two, are you repenting of sin? Are you walking with Jesus? Are you living in relationship with him? And number three, are you using your exercised authority in Christ? Are you commanding unclean people, beings, spirits to be away from you? If not, you’re inviting defeat.

TWO BATTLEFIELDS

Two kings, two kingdoms, two armies, and two battlefields. Luke 11:24–26. “‘When the unclean spirit has gone out of a person, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and finding none it says, “I will return to my house from which I came.” And when it comes, it finds the house swept and put in order. Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and dwell there. And the last state of that person is worse than the first.’”

Here’s the analogy. You were made with a soul, so you have a spiritual, immaterial part of you called a soul and a physical, material part of you called a body. And your soul was meant to be Spirit-filled. That’s why Genesis 2:7 says that when God created the first man, our father Adam, he breathed his spirit into him and the man became a living being. But because of sin, we are not filled by the Spirit of God and that vacancy is sometimes filled with unclean spirits, demons.

For the non-Christian, this means actually that you can come to the point where you so yield yourself that your identity, your personality, your decision-making, your appetites, your longings, and your lifestyle are dominated by your enemy. See, in America, we call this freedom. It’s actually slavery.

For the Christian, you cannot be controlled, mastered, owned, filled by a demon, but you can be influenced through succumbing to temptation and believing lies and habitually practicing sinful unrepentance.

And Jesus here uses an analogy like a home. So back to the big analogy, there’s this epic, cosmic battle raging. And you and I are born into the war, but we’re born on the side of folly and rebellion and death. We need to be born again onto the side of victory and Jesus and forgiveness and life. And it is as if our home, where we live and dwell, this could be our physical home and also the body that we inhabit, it is right in the midst of the battle.

So to use Jesus’ analogy, assume that you live in a home. See yourself, picture yourself, position yourself living in a home in the midst of a war. And you do not secure your home. You leave the windows open at night. You leave the door open. You’re very foolish and unguarded. One morning, you come down and sitting on the couch is a soldier. One of the soldiers in the midst of this battle has decided he’s gonna live at your house. Tired of sleeping on a cot, in a tent. And so when he feels like it, he shows up at your house. He eats what’s in your fridge. He sleeps in your bed. He’s decided that he’s gonna be your roommate.

And at first, it’s not that bad. But after awhile, it gets very bad. He becomes abusive. He becomes harmful, becomes terrifying, becomes threatening. You feel unsafe and you realize, “I have to kick him out. I can’t live with this forever.” And somehow, some way, you kick him out and he leaves. But you’re foolish. You don’t shut the windows. You don’t lock the door. You don’t secure the house. Eventually, the soldier goes out looking for another place to stay and he realizes, “Where I was was a pretty good place. Now, if I go back there, I could get kicked out again, so I need to go get seven

buddies and we're gonna take siege of that home and we're gonna overwhelm that resident and then it'll be our house and we can live there and do whatever we want and he can't stop us."

For some of you, this parable illustrates your life. There is something dark in your life that you are living with, but it is destroying you. It could be a sin proclivity. It could be an unclean spirit. It is someone or something that works in alignment with Satan to destroy you. And you come to the conclusion, "I can't live with this any longer. I need to get rid of this." And so you get rid of it, but you don't invite the Holy Spirit to take up residence in your life. To use the analogy, you don't invite the Holy Spirit to move in.

See, some of you have tried self-help, self-esteem, which is just pride. You've tried morality. You've tried religion. You've tried spirituality. You've tried doing better. You've tried doing harder. You've tried to be more disciplined and more productive and more serious and more devout. And for awhile, you clean out your house. But you don't know how to defend and protect it. So for some of you, the story of your life is this, "It started pretty good and then it got bad. But then I made a change and it got better. And then it got worse." Then it got worse. Why is that? Because you can acknowledge there's a problem, you can clean out the proverbial house, but if the Holy Spirit, the strong one, does not move in to defend you, the guy comes back with seven friends.

How many of you, that's your life? So that makes sense, doesn't it? Your life was bad. It got better. And then it got really bad because your enemy has access and opportunity and you—friends, you cannot protect yourself from Satan and demons. They are more wise, powerful, shrewd, and capable than you.

So here's a prayer. This is not a mantra. You don't need to write the words down, but you need to get the big idea. Here's a prayer that I pray. Your pastor prays this all the time. I pray out of Luke 11 all the time. My wife would tell you every night I snuggle up in bed, I kiss her, I hold my wife, and I literally pray for our home and I pray for my body as the home of the Holy Spirit. And I start with repentance of sin. "Father God, I'm convicted. Whatever the sin may be in that moment, I'm convicted of this sin. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for telling me of this sin so that I could repent of it. Thank you, Jesus, for dying for it. And I pray, Father God, please close all the windows that I've opened. Lock the door that I have left unsecured. I command the enemy, his servants, and their works and effects to depart from me, to depart from my home, to depart from my life, to depart from our family, to depart from our church in the victorious name of Jesus. And Holy Spirit, I invite you to dwell in me. I invite you to dwell in us. I invite you to keep us clean and to make us like Jesus and to protect us from our enemies."

I pray that prayer all the time, that my sin would be forgiven, that my life would be cleaned up, and that the Holy Spirit would take up residence and that he would be my defender and protector. I've been praying this way offensively for twenty years. And God has repeatedly answered that prayer. You need to pray offensively. You need to pray biblically. And you need to examine your own life and ask questions like, "What windows do I leave open? What doors do I not lock? What things have I tried to clean up, but have not invited the Holy Spirit to replace? And in so doing, how have I invited seven more demons?"

I've had many meetings with people where they say, "I just want you to get rid of this unclean thing in my life." And sometimes these are people who have night terrors, they hear voices, they see things, demonic manifestations, very obvious demonic presence in their life. I'll say, "But do you want to live for Jesus? Do you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Do you want to obey God?" And their answer is often, "Not really. I just want to get rid of the bad thing." "Well, I can't help you then because that would not be helpful. All we would do is clean up the house and invite seven more enemies to take up residence." There are two battlefields. One is in your home. The other is in your life.

TWO CHOICES

And there are two choices to make, dear friend. Luke 11:27–28. "As he said these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, 'Blessed is the womb that bore you, and the breasts at which you nursed!' But he said, 'Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!'"

In hearing and seeing all of this, a woman cries forth, "Jesus, your mother, Mary, she's blessed to have you as a son." The truth is, we all want to live in such a way that people will say that our mother is blessed because we love and serve and honor God and our mom. And ladies, isn't it true? If God made you the mother of Jesus like Mary was, wouldn't that be a great honor and a blessing? What a great honor and a blessing.

Jesus says, "I have a means by which you can be more blessed than my mom, more blessed than Mary." How can that be? Two things. Hear the Word of God and keep it, or obey it. Hear the Word of God and keep it, or obey it. Because what? Faith comes by what, friends? Hearing the Word of God. You say, "Why does Mark yell at me for an hour?" "Cause Mark deeply loves you. He really does."

Hebrews 4 and Ephesians 6 say that the Bible, the Word of God, is what? It's a sword. So you're born into a battle. You have a great enemy. You need a mighty weapon. And faith comes by hearing the Word of God. It's how you become familiar with the sword, so that when the enemy lies to you, say, "No, that's a lie. God's Word is true." When you're tempted, you say, "No, no, no. That's my enemy. That's not my ally." When you would be accused of past sin that Jesus died for, thinking that you were unforgiven, the answer is, "No, all my sins are covered in Christ."

Friends, the sword is no good if you do not learn how to wield it. And so, in hearing, we take hold of the Word of God and, obeying, we use it for battle. When your enemy comes to you, it is the Word of God that protects you. We see this illustrated all the way back in Luke 4, when Satan comes to Jesus, tempts and tests him, and Jesus repeatedly quotes from what book of the Bible? Deuteronomy. From memory. Jesus knows the Word of God well, so when the enemy comes, he is ready. He is ready to defend himself.

So it is exceedingly important that you know the Word of God and obey it. James, Jesus' brother, in the book bearing his name says it this way: "Do not merely listen to the Word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." So for us, Sundays tend to be about hearing the Word of God and community group and life during the week on mission tend to be the doing of the hearing of the Word of God. They go together, absolutely, inextricably.

How's it going? This is why we want you to hear the preaching of God's Word. We want you to listen to the Bible recorded, to redeem your commute and workout. We want you to listen to good Bible preachers and teachers. We want you to listen to good classes that teach you the Bible. We want you to hear the Word of God, but Satan and demons hear the Word of God and the differentiation between a worshiper and a demon is the obedience. We don't just listen. We obey. We act in faith, out of trust. We fight our enemy. How's it going? How's it going?

STOCKHOLM SYNDROME

Let me end with three questions for you to consider in your community group and with your family. Number one, where are the evidences of the enemy's work in your life? Where are the evidences of the enemy's work in your life? See, in the storyline of Luke, not everything is blamed on Satan and demons, so we can't blame everything on Satan and demons. But some things are blamed on Satan and demons, so we have to blame some things on Satan and demons and we need discernment to distinguish what is just the result of human sin, but what is the result of demonic oppression, attack, or possession?

Again, we've seen it repeatedly. Luke 4, Luke 8, Luke 9, Luke 11. In the storyline of the life of Jesus, Satan and demons are involved. Satan and demons are involved in your life. Satan and demons are involved in your life. Satan and demons are involved in your life. Where? Where have they been at work? Where are they at work? What lies are they telling you? What temptations are seducing you? What vain regrets are destroying you? What false spirituality is tempting you? Where is religion binding you? Where have the enemy and his servants been at work in your life? Where are the enemy and his servants at work in your life? They're there. Look for them. Don't blame everything on them, but ascribe to them that which they merit.

And this comes with deep passion and love for you as your pastor. And it comes out of a recent conversation I had with a woman, who Jesus does love and she does love Jesus, but she had become very discouraged and very depressed and very dissuaded and she had lost sight of the goodness and the glory of God. It's because she was being demonically, spiritually attacked and oppressed. And she only had two categories, herself or God. Those were her only two categories to consider everything in her whole life.

So some days she would think, "Well, it's all me. I'm cursed or crazy." Cursed meaning there's no hope for me. I'm just cursed. And she would see things and hear things and she would be attacked and see manifestations and she had a history of demonic spirituality. Some of you ladies are here, your past is in Wicca. Some of you come from cultic backgrounds. Some of you have thought that spirituality is helpful and you didn't know about demonology. That was her history. She thought, "I'm cursed or I'm crazy. I'm making stuff up. I'm sick in the head. I'm seeing, thinking, hearing things that are untrue and I'm losing my mind."

And then other days, she would put everything into the second box of it must be God. So maybe God is evil, God is cruel, God is mean, God is against me, God hasn't chosen me, God doesn't forgive me, God doesn't love me, God has abandoned me, God has betrayed me, or God would like to help me, but God is impotent and incompetent and incapable of delivering me. And she would literally start to go crazy trying to figure out all the problems and pain points in her life. "Is it me or God?"

And the truth is the third category, hear the Word of God and obey it, the Word of God gives us a third category, Satan and demons. All right, I told her, "You're not crazy or cursed and God is not evil or impotent. Satan is real. Demons are real. They're at work in your life. You're being attacked. You're not crazy. You're not abandoned. You're in war. That's why you're bleeding and suffering and crying and dying." Where is Satan? Where are demons at work in your life? Where have you not even considered the third category that the Bible clearly, repeatedly, emphatically gives you?

Number two, how have you aided your enemy? How have you participated with him? Some of you say, "I belong to Jesus. I don't participate with Satan." You can belong to Jesus and participate with Satan. Peter did, the leader of the disciples. Jesus looked at him on one occasion and said, "Get behind me, Satan." Was Satan possessing Peter? No, but he was influencing Peter and Peter was somehow, in that moment, complicit with his enemy. And Jesus saw it.

I'll give you a strange analogy. Again, back to one of my earlier points that when I talk about spirit beings, some people get very confused. So I like to talk about human beings to illustrate a point of how people work, beings work. And then we can apply it to spirit beings as well. So let me give you a human analogy that then has a spiritual implication. You ever heard of something called the Stockholm Syndrome? From August 23rd to 28th, 1973. In Stockholm, Sweden, a bank was open, doing its business. And thieves rushed the bank, seized it, took it over, and held the teller and the bank workers hostage. According to the report, they strapped dynamite, explosives, bombs on the bank workers and they ushered them into a vault and they held them for five days. Five days. And they threatened their life.

But eventually, they were redeemed, to use the language of the Bible. They were liberated. They were delivered. They were set free. And what happened was some of the people who had been held hostage and captive, they were in that torment condition that I explained at the beginning of the sermon. They actually defended their captors. "Do we have to testify against them in court? They're not all bad people." What? And the psychologists, the sociologists, and the case workers, they're all very confused. "They strapped explosives to you and held you captive for five days. How could you defend them? How could you become sympathetic toward them?"

And they were so mesmerized by this that they created something called the Stockholm Syndrome. They said that sometimes people who are in abusive

relationships, they become sympathetic toward, affectionate with their captors. See, this is true in human relationships. Let me tell you this as well. Having been in pastoral ministry for over fourteen years now, it's true in spiritual relationships as well.

See, 'cause what happens in a situation like that, someone is in the position of lord or god or king or ruler. And when they're up in that position, they literally rule as lord. They'll decide, do you live, do you die? Do you sleep or stay awake? Do you eat or starve? Are you free or are you in bondage? They literally are like a god. They rule over you. And so what you try to do is appease them. You try to become friends with them or make them happy or not set them off. And then, once in a while, they'll do something that is seemingly nice for you and you think, "Okay, they're not altogether bad."

This is why police will tell you that the most dangerous call is a domestic violence call. Cops get a call, they'll go out. Let's say, for example, they go up to the door and a woman answers the door and she's covered in tears and sweat and snot and blood. "What happened, ma'am?" "Well, he assaulted me." "Who did?" "Well, my boyfriend, who lives with me." "Okay, well, thank you very much. We need to speak to him, perhaps arrest him." Turn your back on the woman and she'll shoot the cop. Say, "Why would she do that? Why would she defend her abuser?" Because the human heart is prone to deception. And Satan is a deceiver, so he deceives.

See, human beings are prone to deception. You're a human being. Ergo, you're prone to deception. And we can look at the Stockholm Syndrome or we can look at a battered woman and say, "That's crazy. How could you not see this as an abusive, tormenting relationship?" Yet we all lose perspective in our own life and some of us think Satan isn't that bad, sin isn't that evil, darkness isn't that dark, and God isn't that good.

I talked to one woman who was a battered woman and she said, "Well, he wasn't always bad and I think maybe he cared about me and he did do some nice things." I said, "Like what?" She actually said this. She said, "Well, he let me live." "He's not supposed to kill you." But for her, not being killed was a gift, so she thought that that was affection.

See, Satan is a murderer. Satan is a liar. Satan is a deceiver. Satan is an abuser. Satan has people in a condition of torment. And then we, because of our own self-deception, we can begin to view him in a position as lord to where we actually become sympathetic toward him and complicit with him.

Remember the story of Patty Hearst? Maybe you remember that story? She was taken hostage for two months. She was held against her will. And then she participated in a bank robbery, helping her captors. People ask, "Why?" Because of the proclivity of human beings to be deceived.

You know what? Some of you have been taken captive by Satan. You're being tormented by him. You're in an ongoing abusive relationship, spiritually speaking, and you know what? You're participating with your enemy.

And so that leads to my third point. Will you command the enemy to leave, repent of sin, and invite the Holy Spirit? Let me test this. Do you really want to get rid of all of your sin? All of it. Your favorite sin, your secret sin, your most pleasurable sin. Yes or no? You see, the truth is most of us have a list with all of our sin on it and we want to go to Jesus and check all the boxes of sin that we want removed and leave the boxes unchecked of sin that we prefer and enjoy. We say, "You know what? I want most of my sin gone, but I want to keep a little bit." Do you want to know the truth and obey all of God's Word? Or likewise, similarly, do you want all of the verses of the Bible listed and you want to check all the boxes, saying, "Well, Jesus, I believe in all of this, but there's a few things that if we could just ignore or edit or avoid, I would like to not heed those portions of your Word."

Do you want to just be a Christian or do you also want a little other spirituality or religion intertwined and intermixed, a few practices or beliefs that have really little to nothing to do with the Bible, but for you they're something that you prefer? You have an appetite for them. Do you want to walk in full disclosure, repenting of all of your sin, or do you want to walk in partial disclosure, also having a private, secret life, where Satan is a friend of yours, but only on occasion that conveniences you?

Do you want nothing but light, or do you like a little darkness? Do you want nothing but holiness, or do you want a little sin? Do you want nothing but truth, or do you enjoy a few lies? Jesus says, "You're not for me. You're against me." And he tells you that because he loves you. And he is telling us through this text that there is a cosmic, epic battle raging, and that you and I are born into it on the side of Satan and demons, at war against God. And Jesus comes as our liberator and our deliverer. And he dies in our place for our sins as our savior and he rises in triumphant victory.

And he releases us from bondage and captives are set free and some of us, we don't want to run. We want to look back. We want to go back. Or we want to have a little bit of God and a little bit of Satan, a little bit of obedience and a little bit of disobedience, a little bit of darkness, a little bit of light, a little bit of truth, a little bit of lies. And Jesus says, "You're either for me or against me." So dear friend, who will you choose, Jesus or Satan? There's no third category. There's no other opportunity. If you're so willing, I'd invite you now to bow your head and to pray with me. You can pray out loud.

Father God, I confess that you alone are creator. Lord Jesus, thank you for dying for me. Thank you for delivering me. Thank you for rising for me. Lord Jesus, I repent of all my sin. I repent of all lies. I repent of all darkness. I repent of all religion. I repent of all spirituality. And I invite you, Holy Spirit, to fill me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

[End of Audio]

Note: This sermon transcript has been edited for readability.