

# Resistance

## Do You Know Your Enemy? • Message 1

### Bryan Jones

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#### Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

1. Pray God will use Brookwood powerfully as we discuss spiritual warfare.
2. Pray for the protection of God's people as we fight against the enemy.
3. Pray for people to be aware, not afraid of the enemy.

#### Scripture Reading:

Good morning. My name is Scott Lowery, and I am a trustee and lead the Life Link Community Group. Our Scripture reading today is Revelation 12:7-9 and says:

*Then there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels. And the dragon lost the battle, and he and his angels were forced out of heaven. This great dragon—the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world—was thrown down to the earth with all his angels.*

#### Revelation 12:7-9 (NLT)

This is the Word of the Lord.

#### A. Introduction

I have a deep conviction that I want to press deeply in our church... and here it is...

**When you take a step towards God, the enemy takes a step towards you. When you take God seriously, the enemy takes you seriously.**

Satan doesn't attack dead soldiers. He attacks living ones.

As God pours out His Spirit, we are seeing people come to faith. We are seeing healing and wholeness; we are seeing God work in ways... and as that happens, we are going to face resistance...

I was talking to a guy who surrendered his life to Jesus at Brookwood, and he said that it was actually harder after. He felt like he didn't know what was going on... and what he was facing was spiritual warfare...

And you might believe in spiritual warfare or not... but regardless, there is a spiritual realm outside of this one, and when you take a step toward God, he will take a step toward you.

Now, as many of you know... my favorite team is the Dallas Cowboys... but I've made a commitment to not talk about them as much on stage because every time I do, we lose... but throughout the year, some of you have sent me encouraging messages on my team and here is a couple of them...

Now, one of the things coming up is the Superbowl... and football teams all do one thing the same: They watch game films on their enemies. They study, and they game plan for them... Do you know Satan watches your life? Do you know you have demons assigned to you? That Satan has a tailor-made strategy to do you in?

I want you to understand who your enemy is, who your opponent is.

You have demons who are watching your life, your game tape. They are looking to exploit your weakness... they know your past, they know your struggles, they know your childhood and your insecurities.

There is a book called *The Art of War*... and in it... he says if you know yourself and not your enemy, you will win 50% percent of the time. If you know yourself and know your enemy, you will win 100% of the time, but if you don't know yourself or your enemy, you will lose 100% of the time.

The title of today's message is, **Do You Know Your Enemy?** So, I want to help you to understand some truths about Satan and his strategies so you can fight from victory...

## **B. Do you know your enemy?**

### **1. Satan tried to OVERTHROW God.**

(Revelation 12:7-9. C/R: Isaiah 14:12-15; Revelation 12:4)

*Then there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and his angels. And the dragon lost the battle, and he and his angels were forced out of heaven. This great dragon—the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world—was thrown down to the earth with all his angels.*

#### **Revelation 12:7-9 (NLT)**

Notice what it says: *there was war in heaven*. Now, this passage refers to the tribulation to come, but it also talks about what has happened to Satan and what will happen to Satan.

Notice it says that he was thrown down to earth.

Listen to what Isaiah says about Satan...

*"How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning! You have been thrown down to the earth, you who destroyed the nations of the world. For you said to yourself, 'I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God's stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north. I will climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.' Instead, you will be brought down to the place of the dead, down to its lowest depths."*

#### **Isaiah 14:12-15 (NLT)**

Notice it says at the beginning *you have been thrown down to earth*. There was a war in heaven. Satan lost.

And then, at the end of Isaiah, it says he *will be*. This is the idea that Satan will be conquered once and for all by Jesus when our time on this earth is done...

And let me point out... at the center of Satan... is what? Pride.... It's *I will, I will*...

Listen, most of us miss the subtleties of the demonic. It's an *I will* spirit. *I will do what I want. I will get this thing. I will make this right. I will go here.*

Even one of the things I've started doing is saying, *as long as God wills, I will do this*...

Satanism, at its core, is a worship of the self, and by that definition, that is something a lot closer to us than this thing out there. So, we must be aware... we must know ourselves and our enemy.

In Revelation 12:4:

*His tail swept away one-third of the stars in the sky, and he threw them to the earth.*

**Revelation 12:4 (NLT)**

Now, quite a few commentators believe this verse is a reference to 1/3 of the angels that were cast down... angels in Revelation are stars. So, Satan and 1/3 of his angels are fallen...

So, you pray about it, but a way to think about it is there are two times the amount of angels as demons.

But I want you to understand there was a war in heaven. Satan rebelled; he tried to overthrow God, but he couldn't, so he was cast out of heaven.

**2. Be AWARE, not AFRAID of your enemy.**

(1 Peter 5:8; 1 John 4:4)

C.S. Lewis says there are two extremes:

- 1.) To give too much attention to Satan.
- 2.) To give too little attention to Satan.

I was talking to a pastor who told me that he has people come up to him every week and say...

*Pastor, I need prayer... the devil's attacking me.... Okay, what's going on? The devil keeps attacking my finances... What's going on?*

*I don't have money, but I keep buying things... good news and bad news. The good news is that the devil is attacking your finances. The bad news is that you're the devil...*

Satan might not have caused a flat tire, but he will influence how you respond... how many know a difficult person...how many of you are sitting next to them... but seriously, Satan might not have caused the disagreement, but he will influence your thoughts and feelings...

C.S. Lewis simply says don't assign everything to Satan... but I feel like our church is more at risk with the second part... We tend to be blind to the attacks of Satan...

We need to wake up and be more aware of the demonic...

*Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

**1 Peter 5:8 (NIV)**

Notice Satan is looking to devour and destroy you... He's watching you... but you don't have to be afraid...

Ways Satan is different from God:

**Satan**

- 1.) Satan isn't eternal.** [He isn't God's equal. He was created by God. He would be more on the level of Michael or Gaberial, the Archangel.]
- 2.) Satan isn't omniscient (all-knowing).**
- 3.) Satan isn't omnipresent (everywhere at once).** [He isn't everywhere at once. Notice it says prowling. He's powerful but limited.]
- 4.) Satan isn't omnipotent (all-powerful).** [God will destroy him one day.]

God is...

## God

- 1.) God is eternal.
- 2.) God is omniscient (all-knowing).
- 3.) God is omnipresent (everywhere at once).
- 4.) God is omnipotent (all-powerful).

*You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.*

### **1 John 4:4 (NIV)**

One of the major points of Revelation 12 we agree on, regardless of how you interpret Revelation, is Satan is a defeated foe. But he's still active...

Think about it like this: on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1945, do you know what happened? World War 2 ended. Germany and Hitler were defeated... but you know what's crazy? Many Nazi soldiers kept fighting long after their nation was defeated. Some fought because they didn't believe the war was over, and others fought because they wanted to create as much death and destruction as possible.

You know that phrase, *We may have lost the battle, but we have not lost the war?* It's the opposite in faith... We have won the war but still have to fight the battle.

And if you are blind to Satan and his attacks, you won't live the life God has in store for you.

### **3. Satan ATTACKS what is most like God.** (Revelation 12:9)

*This great dragon—the ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, the one deceiving the whole world—was thrown down to the earth with all his angels.*

### **Revelation 12:9 (NLT)**

So, there was a war in heaven. God won. But now, the war is here on earth. Everyone is born into this war.

Since Satan couldn't overthrow God, he goes after that which is most like God... which is you and I, God's sons and daughters... when you become a Christian there's a target on your back.

Think about it... if you want to hurt me, you can say some things to me... but if you really want to hurt me, you would go after my kids... Since Satan couldn't overthrow God, he goes after His family...

See, I think we do people a disservice when we say, *Give your life to God. It makes everything better...* I met with a guy recently who accepted Christ, and he was excited about faith and what God was doing... and I said to him, *you need to watch out...*

I said, *Now that you are in Jesus, Satan is going to come after you.* I told him, *An opposing army isn't worried about dead soldiers; they are worried about living ones... Satan wasn't worried about you until God transformed your life...*

If you are a Christian, don't be surprised at the resistance you face... you have an enemy that wants to take you out...

And let me practically illustrate this... whenever you try to pray and read the Bible, have you noticed how many distractions you have... you know what that is... it's demonic... it's Satan trying to attack you...

**Satan's plan for you is to put you in spiritual checkmate.**

You can pray about this... but we talk about *God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life...* but did you know Satan hates you and has a horrible plan for your life...

I think what he wants is to put your life in checkmate... In chess, you won't get someone's queen in checkmate, so they can't move, so they are trapped, and that's how you win.

I think this is what Satan is trying to do with you spiritually. He wants you to be trapped in sin, so weak and ineffective that you can't do anything for Jesus. He wants to cut you off from the life of God.

There is a painting that once hung in the Louvre Museum in Paris, painted by Friedrich Moritz August Retzsch. Today, the painting is popularly known as *Checkmate*. The painting depicts two chess players. One is Satan, who appears arrogantly confident. The other player is a man who looks sad. If Satan wins, he wins the man's soul.

Though the devil seemed to be the obvious victor, he was, in fact, not winning. The man who thought he was losing was actually winning. According to the arrangement of the pieces left on the chess board, his king had one more move. This fateful move would make him the winner of the game. The grand master called the curator and determined that the title *Checkmate* did not fit the scene because the sad-looking player actually had the ability to defeat his opponent, though he didn't realize it yet. His king had one more move.

I want to remind you... every one of us was in checkmate... we were dead in sin. Satan had us trapped... there was no hope... Satan smiled when he thought he had us beaten... but church, the king had a final move... You might be trapped or overwhelmed, but Jesus has come to set you free!

I want you to be aware of your enemy... but I want you to step into the life and power that Jesus has for you this morning!

Here's the application- don't try and do this alone... you need community...