

The Kingdom of God, pt.4, 7.22.07
Kingdoms In Conflict

Introduction

- Pre 911, counter terrorism experts were saying we might have a terrorist problem in our country. Nobody was really listening until 9/11. As a nation, we didn't realize we had an enemy that hates us so radically; this enemy wants to see the destruction of America
- We have an enemy who wants to destroy our lives. He motivates Osama ben Laden; inspired Hitler; is behind abortion; he has his eyes set on you.
- His desire is to bind you up in defeat; lead you down the road to apathy; curse you with sickness and strip you of your authority.
- WE are in a war zone where 2 kingdoms are in conflict.

I. The Original Kingdom

- a. Script: Gen.1 -2
- b. Mankind was given dominion over God's creation - Gen.1.28 - and he was given responsibility to care for it - Gen.2.15.
- c. God gave Adam & Eve freedom on how they were to do this. God set parameters both instructively (specific instruction) and inherently (genetically), but he didn't specify every point. Adam & Eve took care of creation as they saw fit.
 - i. God didn't walk through the garden and mention all the things that needed to be done and how they were to be done.
 - ii. Adam & Eve didn't expect God to do their job. God gave them both responsibility and authority to do the work.
- d. There was a partnership between God & humanity. God created the earth and man was responsible for managing the Garden of Eden -not all the earth- and expanding the Garden over the entire planet, "be fruitful & multiply."
- e. God didn't warn them about satan. He didn't tell them his history. He didn't need to, b/c they were given authority over

him. Satan was a part of the created order and therefore was subordinate to humanity.

II. The Conflict

- a. Script: Gen.3
- b. Satan led mankind away from obedience to God. God cursed Satan (3.14) but not Adam & Eve. He cursed the ground so that mankind would have to work it for production.
- c. At this point in history, Satan is no longer subordinate to man.
- d. At this point in history, the war between God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom was engaged. It became a war for mankind's allegiance. Will he serve God or Satan?
 - i. Gen.4 is the first indication of his plan at work. 1 J.3.12 says Cain belonged to the devil;
 - ii. Gen.6 was a part of his plan to contaminate mankind's seed so that the prophesied offspring of Gen.3.15 would not be born (he inspired demons to take human wives; some believe these are the angels who were cast into hell mentioned in Jude 6);
 - iii. Gen.10 – 11 (the Tower of Babel) was his attempt to inspire mankind to rise up against God.
- e. Rev.12.17 – He has declared war against you. He isn't neutral toward believers. He hates you and wants you destroyed.
 - i. If you had a neighbor like that, how would you live? In a constant state of awareness and fear.
 - ii. Bad news – every person w/o Christ is now under the control of the devil (John 8.44, Eph.2.1–3, 1 John 3.8a) and lives in the devil's neighborhood. I'm not saying they're demon possessed or can't make good choices, but he has the ultimate control of their destiny until they choose to follow Jesus. Satan controls the block these people live on and has them bound up for his purposes. Luke 4.6–8; 1 Jn.5.19.

- iii. Good news – every person with Christ is no longer dominated by Satan (John 12.31, 1 John 3.8b). In fact, God moved you out of Satan's neighborhood and if he ever shows up at your house, you have authority to kick him out. Not only that, he's given you authority to go into Satan's neighborhood and depopulate it.

III. The Enemy's Tactics

a. He is the author of sin – Gen.3; 1 John 3.8-10

- i. Wherever there is sin, he has access. Sin is what gives the devil legal authority to our lives to establish a stronghold.
 - 1. Even with Christians – Eph.4.26f; 1 Cor.5.1-5; 2 Tim.2.23-26
 - 2. The example of Job – 3.25. I believe this is what gave the devil legal authority to bring sickness & evil upon Job. This type of fear isn't from the Lord and it opens our lives to demonic influence. God hasn't given us a spirit of fear – 2 T.1.7.
 - 3. The blood of Jesus cleanses me from sin, but when I dwell in a sin, as is true in the above examples, I'm opening the door wide for demonic influence. I can be forgiven of my sin, but not freed from it if I continue to make a place for it in my life. When I accommodate the sin, I'm opening the door wide.
 - a. Example of garbage – If I leave trash in the garbage can it not only begins to stink, but it becomes a breeding ground for flies.
 - b. We must deal quickly & decisively with sin.
 - 4. People w/o Christ live in sin, thus they are under the control of the author of sin.

b. He is a liar – Gen.3.1-5; John 8.44

i. He is always questioning the truthfulness and clarity of God's words.

1. Gen.3.1 – Did God really say?
2. He calls into question the truthfulness of God's word. This places doubt in the minds of believers so that their faith walk is negatively impacted.
 - a. Adam & Eve – religion or philosophy professors
 - b. Noah & the flood – scientist
 - c. The resurrection of Jesus – the sarcophagist of Jesus & family; the Da Vinci Code
 - d. Hell – Carlton Pierceston
 - e. Our faith can take the questioning and there are reasonable answers based upon scientific, historic & philosophical understandings.
3. He tempts us to question our trust in a clear promise of Scripture through another's negative influence or a personal disappointment.
 - a. Example of sharing a promise with someone who dismisses it.

ii. He lies about God's goodness – Gen.3.4f.

1. This is one of the hardest lies to escape when you succumb to it. When a person is convinced that God isn't good, their spiritual, physical & emotional life dry up like a leaf.
 - a. Example of people who were believing God for a promise and it didn't happen as they anticipated. Satan begins to put doubts in your mind, "If God is so good then why..." One presses into God despite the questions; the other lingers in that place & grows cold, depressed & angry.

b. This is always why it's important to praise God & thank him for his kindness, even when you're in the middle of disappointment & don't feel like it. It keeps your heart tender. Otherwise, if you remain in anger & lingering disappointment it will grow into a cancer that eats at our heart.

2. During hardship, believers & unbelievers tend to see nothing but the negative. We become like children who cry out, "No one loves me" while standing in a room full of presents

iii. **He deceives us into believing that God is withholding something good from us.** He tempts us to be discontent with the present revelation or manifestation of God in our life. We become like a 5 year old wanting his driver's license..."you deserve it; you've been faithful to the Lord"...this causes us to question God's **goodness.**

iv. **He deceives believers into submission.** He makes us question: who we are in Christ, how God views us, and our authority & victory in this life. He convinces us to wait for these realities for heaven when they are now ours on earth.

c. **He gives God credit for his activity (& we believe it)**

i. He is the one who steals, kills & destroys – John 10.10.

ii. God cannot give what he does not have. God doesn't have sickness, isn't impoverished, destroy marriages...these things aren't in His nature and therefore are a part of His will. Don't assume just because something negative happens to you that is a part of God's will for your life. We're in a war with a real enemy and there are casualties.

iii. We take the bait and we think God is the source of the misery we experience. We say, "It must be God's will"

when it isn't His will. Remember, the devil has access where there is sin.

1. If you're in a struggling marriage, you both need to deal with the sin personally & generationally that are contributing to the problem and actively follow God's word and aggressively resist the devil.
- iv. God has given us the responsibility to close the doors of sin and aggressively resist the devil's assaults. Like Adam & Eve in the Garden, we shouldn't ask God to do something that he's given us the authority & responsibility to do. They should've had a clue something was up when a snake started talking to them. They had authority over satan & should've taken it.
 - v. Some of you are tolerating things that you think are God's will for your life. You need to deal with sin issues in your life or from your past, resist Satan's assault, start living for God, get the help you need & quit giving God credit for the devil's work.
 1. Story in Breaking Christian News about doctor who God used to raise a man from the dead. It wasn't time for that man to die!
 2. Don't assume that when a person dies that it was God's will for them to die at that time. We say, "It was his time to go...God called him home" and it was neither. There is God's sovereignty, man's free will & satan's rage which all play into this.
 3. My grandfather died when I was five & I don't believe it was God's will for him. He was a smoker and it led to his premature death. Was it God's will that he should die? No. He made choices and didn't deal with sin that led him to an early grave.

- vi. There are casualties in this Kingdom conflict which were never part of God's will. Satan convinces you that his activity is actually God's. It is a lie!
- vii. Jesus' life revealed the will of God. Everything he did & was is a revelation to us what God's will is on a subject. Jesus comes to give life & life more abundantly. Jesus gave away salvation, healing, hope, direction, miracles, truth, etc.

IV. God's Reunification Strategy - on earth as it is in Heaven - next week.