

The Spiritual Battle is Real and it is Close.

Introduction

We are busy with series on Spiritual Authority

Many people sit on pavilion. We all need to realise that we are not spectators, but we are on the field. We are in the battle.

Enemy uses clever strategy to deactivate us in this spiritual war: **Twin Tools – Ignorance and fear.**

When we talk about the Devil and his demons, you must not get scared. No need to be afraid, because we are in Jesus' team.

However, the person who ignores the existence of the devil and his forces are in danger. **1Peter_5:8** Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

It is a broad subject, but I want to focus on 3 points:

1. Jesus started the fight
2. His followers must continue the fight
3. The fight is closer than you may think.

Jesus started the fight

Satan was there right from the beginning of humans. We read of him in Genesis 3, where he tempted Eve. However, the rest of the Old Testament does not say much about the conflict with Satan and his demons.

From the time of Moses onwards, God's prophets performed many miracles that foreshadowed the ministry of Jesus. They had healed the sick, raised the dead, made miraculous provision for multitudes and demonstrated God's power to control the forces of nature. But there is no record that any one of them had ever cast out a demon. This was reserved for Jesus. It was a unique demonstration that the Kingdom of God had come upon the people of His day.

I want to show you from scripture how the battle with demons were part of Jesus ministry, right from the beginning.

After he was baptised he was tempted by the devil, and after that his ministry started. In 3 of the Gospels, his dealing with demons are recorded in the very first chapter of his ministry.

Jesus' ministry starts with an encounter with the devil. After he was baptised he was tempted by the devil **Matt4:1-10; Mark1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13**

In 3 of the Gospels we read in the very first chapter reporting on the ministry of Jesus, of him driving out demons:

Matt4:23-25 ²³Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, **the demon-possessed**, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them. ²⁵Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

Mark1:21-28 ²¹They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach. ²²The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law. ²³Just then a man in their synagogue who was **possessed by an impure spirit** cried out, ²⁴“What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!” ²⁵“Be quiet!” said Jesus sternly. **“Come out of him!”** ²⁶**The impure spirit shook the man violently and came out of him** with a shriek. ²⁷The people were all so amazed that they asked each other, “What is this? A new teaching—and with authority! He even gives orders to impure spirits and they obey him.” ²⁸News about him spread quickly over the whole region of Galilee.

Mark1:32-34 ³²That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. ³³The whole town gathered at the door, ³⁴and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. **He also drove out many demons**, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.

Luke 4:31-36 ³¹Then he went down to Capernaum, a town in Galilee, and on the Sabbath he taught the people. ³²They were amazed at his teaching, because his words had authority.

³³In the synagogue there was a man **possessed by a demon, an impure spirit**. He cried out at the top of his voice, ³⁴“Go away! What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!”

³⁵“Be quiet!” Jesus said sternly. **“Come out of him!”** Then the demon threw the man down before them all and came out without injuring him.

³⁶All the people were amazed and said to each other, "What words these are! **With authority and power he gives orders to impure spirits and they come out!**" ³⁷And the news about him spread throughout the surrounding area.

Luke4:40-41 ⁴⁰At sunset, the people brought to Jesus all who had various kinds of sickness, and laying his hands on each one, he healed them. ⁴¹Moreover, **demons came out of many** people, shouting, "You are the Son of God!" But he rebuked them and would not allow them to speak, because they knew he was the Messiah.

The ministry of Jesus continued and we read how he went around preaching, healing and driving out demons.

His followers must continue the fight

Jesus gave authority to his followers to drive out demons.

Luke9:1-2 ¹When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to **drive out all demons** and to cure diseases, ²and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

In Luke 10 Jesus sent out 72. **Luke10:17** The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

Even after his death and resurrection

Mark16:14-18 ¹⁴ Later Jesus appeared to the Eleven as they were eating; he rebuked them for their lack of faith and their stubborn refusal to believe those who had seen him after he had risen.

¹⁵ He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. ¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these signs will accompany those who believe: **In my name they will drive out demons**; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

Quote Derek Prince: "Let me say, as graciously as possible, that evangelism that does not include the casting out of demons is not New Testament evangelism. I will take this a step further and apply it to the ministry of praying for the sick. It is

unscriptural to pray for the sick if one is not prepared also to cast out demons. Jesus did not separate one from the other.”

In Acts we read of many accounts where the disciples casted out demons:

Acts 5:16 *Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and **those tormented by impure spirits**, and all of them were healed.*

Acts 8:4-8 ⁴*Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. ⁵Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Messiah there. ⁶When the crowds heard Philip and saw the signs he performed, they all paid close attention to what he said. ⁷For with shrieks, **impure spirits came out of many**, and many who were paralyzed or lame were healed. ⁸So there was great joy in that city.*

Acts 19:11-12 ¹¹*God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, ¹²so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the **evil spirits left** them.*

We see clearly that Jesus came to bring freedom to the captives. He expelled demons and unclean spirits right throughout his ministry. He then instructed his followers to do the same and given them authority in His name to do it in.

Can you imagine if this church has a reputation that all the sick and demon-possessed are welcome here, because they get healed!

The fight is closer than you may think.

Many of Jesus’ encounters with demons were in the synagogue.

Almost every encounter the demons knew exactly who Jesus was. They shouted things like:

- “I know who you are – the Holy One of God”
- “Jesus, Son of the Most High God”

The demons are everywhere.

End of with this last scripture: **Matt 6:9-13** ⁹In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done

On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us this day our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. ¹³And do not lead us into temptation, **But deliver us from the evil one.** For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Just as often as we pray for and consume bread (eat), we should pray for and protect ourself against the evil one.