

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

Good morning Life Fellowship. It is so good to be with you here this morning. Last October, which feels like a decade ago, our staff met together for a staff retreat in order to make plans for 2020. We had all these plans and ideas, and one of the things we did was we broke up into three different teams. And each team came up with some things we thought our church needed to hear from God, because we are a church that ultimately wants to hear from God through His Word. We prayed and we talked and we shared ideas of what we thought our church needed for 2020 in our teaching series.

And every group said they thought we needed to study spiritual warfare. Every staff member and every pastor in our church felt that they sensed something, and they saw things that were happening, and felt that we needed to understand as a church that we are at war. And we need to understand that there are things happening all around us. Maybe you can sense it. Maybe you have noticed that when you try to do something right that there seems to be something standing in your way, that there seems to be opposition and oppression.

So one of the things that we want to do with this series is to become aware of the spiritual warfare that is happening in us and around us. Eugene Peterson said this: *"The basic nature of history is warfare."* And that is not just nation against nation. See, sometimes we as people do fight against each other, but also every single day every single one of us are engaged in a spiritual battle.

This has been one of the things that the church has taught about for centuries. And it has only been recently that we may have lost our sense and sensibility of understanding what kind of battle we are truly in. Obviously we can trace back to a lot of the philosophies that came upon us in the last two hundred fifty to three hundred years. There have been things like the enlightenment and modern secularism that has tainted our thinking into believing that the material world is all that there is.

And many people believe that every problem, every issue that is going on, whether it is psychological or moral, we can boil it down to something that happens psychologically to someone and that there is just a wiring issue in their brain. And I am not minimizing that there isn't a science behind our lives and some of our actions, but when we adopted the enlightenment in secular humanism as our primary philosophy of life, what we did was throw out this understanding that we live in a world that is not just physical, but spiritual.

We as Christians, when enlightenment happened and secular humanism starting pouring itself into the philosophies in our schools, and in our institutions, maintained a sense of spiritual good, that there is God and His angels. But maybe what we have forgotten is that there is a spiritual bad, that there is a real spiritual thing that is called in the Bible Satan and the devil. And he has angels as well. The Bible from the first to the last shows that there is a spiritual realm that is attacking humanity and wants to keep us enslaved.

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

You know as followers of Jesus we can read about the reality of the spiritual realm, but sometimes we forget how it intersects with our daily lives. I remember several years ago at my other church we had a very strong relationship with an orphanage in Uganda. We would take groups to Uganda almost every year to work with this orphanage. I never got to go myself, but one of the other staff pastors thought of this orphanage as his baby, like Pastor Dan is with missions. So my friend, Bobby, would go there, and he would tell me that when you go to Africa you can sense this spiritual struggle going on. It is very vibrant, and you can feel the powers of darkness and the power of God both being front and center in Africa. And you feel it in such heavy ways.

A few years ago we had a contact in Uganda, and we brought him here to help raise support for the Uganda orphanage to be expanded. When he was here my friend Bobby told me that when he is in Africa he feels this heavy spiritual struggle going on. Every morning when he woke up he sensed it, but he didn't sense it here in America. And this contact who had grown up in Uganda told us that the spiritual struggle was here too, but that it was just shinier, and it doesn't want you to see it. But it is here and it is real and it is heavy. And I think we have become numb to this cosmic war that is involving all of us, and whether you are a follower of Jesus or not, all of us are in a spiritual battle.

So we are going to be taking these next couple of months to deal with the issue of spiritual warfare. Now what do we mean by spiritual warfare? Here is a quote I want to give you from Chuck Wallace, who is a professor at one of the seminaries here in North Carolina. He has written a wonderful book on spiritual warfare, and here is his definition of spiritual warfare: *"It is the ongoing battle between the church and the devil and his forces, with the church standing in the armor of God defensively resisting the devil, and offensively proclaiming the gospel in a battle already won."*

That is what we have to remember. And if this struggle involves the church, and we are the church and we are not feeling the struggle, or we are not involved in the struggle, we are not doing our part. What I think has happened is that so many of us have been ignorant, or passive, or overcome with our own sin struggles that we don't know how to fight anymore. We have forgotten who we are and that God has called us not to wrestle against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers and rulers of this world.

This morning we are going to do a quick overview of what spiritual warfare is. And I have four points, which are - there is one outcome, there are two kingdoms, there are three entities, and there are four applications. One, two, three, four - that is not hard to remember, is it? One outcome, two kingdoms, three entities and four applications is what we are going to be talking about this morning.

I am going to be reading a lot of Scripture. This is not a typical exegetical or expository sermon that I am going to be giving to you this morning. I am going to be all

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

over the place from Genesis to Revelations because I want you to see the grand narrative of spiritual warfare in Scripture. It is found from the very first book of the Bible to the last book of the Bible, and we need to see that. So we are going to be reading a lot of Scripture because there is so much in the Bible about spiritual warfare. And in a lot of these passages that I am going to be introducing this morning we will be digging deeply into week by week. What we want you to understand, and what we all need to understand, is that we have a power from God and through Jesus that is available and accessible to every single human being on the face of this earth.

Maybe you are in here this morning feeling overwhelmed, feeling overcome, feeling defeated because when you try to take a step forward you are met with opposition, you are met with accusations, and you feel in bondage. God does not want you to feel that way. There is a victory that Jesus has won for us and He wants us to experience it.

And that leads us to our first point - there is one outcome. There is one outcome that we can have faith in. So we need to understand the whole story of Scripture and how spiritual warfare is a part of this narrative. The Bible is a story, and when you open up the Bible it is not just a collection of stories; it is a story. It is a story of God creating a universe, a world, and of humanity. It is a story of man and woman rebelling against God and deciding to do their own thing. And it is a story of God coming to man every generation and letting us know He is here to save us. Finally He sends Himself, His own Son, Jesus, to come on this earth, to die on the cross for our sins, vanquishing and conquering sin and death for us so that we might have victory over our greatest enemy.

We will see that this is a universe that has a physical nature and a spiritual nature and they are intertwined. This is not just a physical world with physical beings; we are spiritual beings as well. And the Bible makes clear that there are spiritual beings around us. Humanity sinned and it brought death not just to the body but to the soul. If we go back to the beginning of the Bible in the book of Genesis we will read how God creates the Garden, He puts man and woman in the Garden and tells them not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because the day that they eat of it they will surely die.

Adam and Eve go to that tree, the serpent tempts Eve and she takes the fruit and then gives it to Adam. And it brings death to them, not physical death immediately, but it brings spiritual death and separation from God immediately. And then eventually it would bring physical death as well. So death came into the world as a result of what Adam and Eve did when they rebelled against God. And the war was on because they had chosen to rebel against the Father.

God had something to say in Genesis Chapter 3 and verse 15 which is the first mention of this power struggle. This is God talking to the serpent, talking to the devil who had deceived them into temptation and into rebellion against God. It says: ***“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”***

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

The offspring of woman is a weird thing to say, because an offspring is of men and women. But it meant that there would be someone that was born merely of just a woman which was the foretelling of Jesus. And this person who was the offspring of a woman would have a battle, would have a struggle, because it says, ***“He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”*** *‘He will destroy what you have started today, serpent, but it will cost Him because it will bruise His heel.’* This is a foretelling, the first mention of the cross of Jesus Christ.

And we see this struggle being played out through the chapters of the Old Testament until Jesus comes. And when Jesus comes He will go to the cross. He pays the penalty for our sins and He dies our death on the cross. Then He comes back to life three days later. But what happened in that moment? We see in that moment in Colossians Chapter 2 and verses 13 through 15 that God secured the victory that was foretold in Genesis Chapter 3 and verse 15. Listen to what it says:

***“And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses.”*** He is saying the sin debt entered into the world, the sin that we are cursed by, and the death that we deserve, He has done something about that. He has done something about our pain and something about the curse that is upon us. Listen to what it says in verse 14:

***“By cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross.”*** The penalty of our opposition, of our rebellion against God, Jesus took care of. What Jesus did on the cross was not merely salvation for us; He did something to the spiritual powers of this world as well. Listen to Verse 15: ***“He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him.”***

Where Jesus on the cross was supposed to be put to open shame, He actually put them to open shame. The very thing that was supposed to bring death to Him He turned it on them and defeated their power at the cross. There is something supernatural that happened, something spiritual that happened in the heavenly realm when Jesus died on the cross for our sins. There was a victory that was won.

We have this conflict that we are all in, but the outcome has been guaranteed by Jesus on the cross. Therefore man’s sinful rebellion doesn’t have to be our story; our story doesn’t have to be enslavement to sin. It can be God’s redemption. Our story doesn’t have to be death; our story can be resurrection. That is the story that Jesus bought for us, that He won for us. And He defeated the powers in our lives that would keep us enslaved, that would keep us in bondage to death and sin. That is what Jesus did.

And we see this secured victory that Jesus won played out in this image in Revelations Chapter 12. Now this is a big passage of Scripture and I am going to read it because it is heavy imagery, and it is not an easy passage to understand. But it is very

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

simple in its message that there is something that was happening behind the scenes. Have you ever watched a movie that you love and then at the end they show some behind the scenes footage? And you can see what is really going on and how they really do things.

We see behind the curtain, so to speak, of the spiritual struggle and battle that was going on when Jesus went to the cross in Revelations Chapter 12 and verses 1 through 12. It says this: ***“And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it.”***

Now what is going on there? We see this illusion being played out. Remember in Genesis Chapter 3 and verse 15 it talks about the offspring of a woman. What do we have here? We have a woman about to give birth, and we have a dragon that is seeking to destroy this child. It says the dragon has a tail that swept down a third of the stars. What does it mean by that? That is a picture of angelic beings, and when Satan rebelled against God he took a third of the angels with him to stand against God and what He wanted to do. And when this woman, who we know is Mary, was about to give birth, this dragon was seeking to destroy this child. We see this played out in the book of Matthew when King Herod hears about a king being born and he wants to kill this child.

See, this is important for us to see because where we see humans doing wicked things, we need to understand there is a spiritual darkness that is behind these things. We are not wrestling against flesh and blood, and we need to understand that whenever we see wickedness in this world that it is not just merely humans. There is something dark and sinister and devilish in this world that we need to understand.

In verse 5 it says: ***“She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days. Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world -- he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.”***

So where is the devil right now? He is here. A lot of times people think the devil is in hell. No, the devil is here on this earth. His angels are here on this earth. This is where they are maneuvering and operating in this world.

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

Verse 10: *“And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, ‘Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!’”*

We have in this passage a summary statement of what is happening in this world. This summary statement tells us that what happened was a great battle. The victory that Jesus won for us on the cross has determined his outcome. Satan knows he is defeated, that he cannot defeat God. There was a war and he lost. He comes down here to deceive man but Jesus has come to redeem humanity and to redeem His creation. So now we have salvation and power and kingdom and authority that is now from God through Christ that is accessible to us.

We need to understand this outcome because this matters to us. This matters to us because we need to understand that we wrestle against a defeated foe. We wrestle against someone who is going to lose. And that matters to us because so many times when we struggle against our own flesh and sins, and we see what is going on in the world, see what is happening in our communities and our nation, sometimes we feel like darkness is winning. But here is what we must understand - that if darkness is winning it is because the church of Jesus Christ is doing nothing.

I am going to say that again. When we see darkness winning, it is because the church of Jesus Christ is doing nothing. Because if the Bible is true, and we believe it is true, then we need to understand that there is a power and an authority that we have access to that is greater than the powers of darkness in this world.

Pastor Justin preached this a month ago - greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. So why aren't we seeing it? See, this is where we have to do internal reflection and ask ourselves, *‘What do I believe?’* This matters, because many times what the enemy wants to do is to deceive us into thinking the power of darkness is greater than the power of God. He wants us to feel that the sin we have been struggling with for decades is just going to be our life. He wants us to feel that things are going so badly in our nation and they are just going to keep getting worse. So we better hide, better crawl in our corner and start building a shelter. We better run and hide from the conflict. But that is not the way God has called us to live. There is one outcome and we need to live and believe and act like it.

Not only is there one outcome, there are two kingdoms that we see at play. There are no neutral parties in this war. We need to understand that we want to divide people today into certain groups into certain political parties, or certain political ideologies, or

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

certain ethnicities. But in God's economy there are only two kingdoms. There are no other divisions between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness. You are either part of one kingdom or you are part of the other.

We see these kingdoms explained in Matthew Chapter 12. This is where Jesus is being attacked as He is casting out demons. In thirty-two chapters across the New Testament Jesus' life is talked about. And in those thirty-two chapters Jesus is engaging with spiritual forces. That is a full third of the gospels. Part of Jesus' main role was to confront the spiritual warfare that was going on around Him.

People were accusing Him of casting out demons in the name of Satan, in the name of Beelzebub. And Jesus responds to this in Matthew Chapter 12 and verse 26 when He says this: ***“And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?”*** Right there Jesus declares that Satan has a kingdom. Verses 27 and 28 say: ***“And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges. But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.”***

What is He saying? He is saying that there are two kingdoms - the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. C. S. Lewis said this: *“There is no neutral ground in the universe. Every square inch, every split second is claimed by God and counterclaimed by Satan.”* God is saying that it is all His, and Satan is trying to take every square inch he can because he knows he is a defeated foe. He knows his time is short, and he is a dirty player so he wants to do everything that he can to stop the power of the kingdom of God from advancing. And this kingdom that Jesus explained in this passage is lived out not just spiritually but it is lived out in our very own souls. Our own salvation is tied to a kingdom.

I have another passage I want you to hear. In Colossians Chapter 1 and verses 13 through 14 Paul is talking about what happens when we follow Jesus, when we give our lives over to Him, and when His blood sanctifies us. Listen to what it says: ***“He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”***

You see what happens to us when we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior is not just being given a new name, not just being washed clean, not just having our sins forgiven, but there is a spiritual reality that we are no longer part of the domain of darkness. We are no longer under the rule and the control of the evil one. We have now been transferred to have a new power, a new family, and a new identity. That is what happens.

Ephesians Chapter 2 explains it this way in verses 1 through 3: ***“And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the***

## SPIRITUAL WARFARE Power Struggle Series - Part 1 Ben Rudolph

---

*sons of disobedience -- among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.”*

Listen, here is what we have to understand - when people are not following Jesus they are under some kind of influence and control of the evil one. And he doesn't care if they are nice or kind or good or bad or wicked or evil, he does not care, as long as they do not belong to Jesus. And we have to start seeing people, seeing our friends, our family, and our neighbors, knowing they are either part of the kingdom of God or the kingdom of the dark one.

We also need to look at ourselves and ask, '*Am I a part of the kingdom of God or am I under the influence and control of Satan?*' This is where we find ourselves. There is a conflict that is being played out around us every single day and in every human life, in every family, in every church, in every community, and in every nation. We are in a battle, a struggle of two kingdoms against one another, and we have been called by God to be warriors.

In II Corinthians Chapter 10 it says we are to destroy strongholds. There are things that are around us that we don't see. We don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world. There is something about these two kingdoms that we need to be aware of when we wake up every single day in order to see the conflict of these two kingdoms being played out around us. We need to change our perspective, change our worldview to see what is really happening.

Even though the outcome is determined we are still in this middle struggle. I Corinthians Chapter 15 does a great job of explaining this struggle. In verse 25 of I Corinthians Chapter 15 it says: "***For He (Jesus) must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.***" He is reigning now but then He is going to put all things under His feet. When Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead, He conquered sin and death, and He defeated Satan completely and totally. But now is the process of Him taking over everything that was lost in Genesis Chapter 3.

So now there is a process. Hebrews Chapter 2 says the same thing - that all things were put in subjection to Him, and there is not anything outside of His control. But we don't see all things in subjection to Him. In verse 25 of I Corinthians Chapter 15 we read: "***For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.***" And that is where we find ourselves today. We find ourselves in the process by which God is putting everything underneath the feet and the reign and the authority of Jesus. Every day when you wake up God is saying that He wants to put more things under His authority. And it starts with us, with our hearts, our wants, and our desires.

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

I Corinthians Chapter 15 and verses 27 through 28 says this: *“The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For God has put all things in subjection under His feet. But when it says, ‘all things are put in subjection,’ it is plain that He is excepted who put all things in subjection under Him. When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself will also be subjected to Him who put all things in subjection under Him, that God may be all in all.”*

We are in the process of God putting everything under His control and under His authority. That is what God is doing right now. That is what He is doing in our lives, the struggle that we are feeling against sin and against our own flesh, the struggle against the world that we find ourselves in. God is working to establish His kingdom and we are either going to be a part of that process or we are going to tap out. But there is no cease fire, there is no armistice, there is no downtime. The devil and his angels do not take a day off, and neither does God - but sometimes we do. And we have to make sure that we are a part every day of the kingdom that is advancing.

That leads us to number three which is three entities. You know sometimes when we think about there being two kingdoms, lots of time we can falsely believe that God and Satan are co-equal powers in this world. Nothing could be further from the truth. We need to understand that even though there are two kingdoms, God is above all. God is greater. Satan may have power, but God has all power. Satan may be created, but God is eternal. There is this time told about in Job when Satan goes to God’s throne room and all the angels are coming to report to him. And Satan has to show up and report to God. See, Satan is not out there doing whatever he wants and doing his own thing. Yes, Satan is in rebellion against God but he has to show up to God’s throne room often to tell God what he has been doing. That is our enemy, and that is our God. God is all powerful and He knows all, He sees all, He is in all, and through all. And there is nothing outside of His power or control.

And we need to understand that there are three entities - there is God, there are spiritual beings and there are humans, but God is at the top. C. S. Lewis wrote a book called, ‘The Screwtape Letters.’ And if you want to read a very interesting book during this pandemic season, I would encourage you to read that book. It is a fictional account of two demons that are writing letters back and forth to each other about how they are working against this person to get him to not obey God. It is a wonderful book, and a wonderful narrative, and there are a lot of things you can learn about spiritual warfare from that book.

C. S. Lewis mentions in this book that there are two great extremes that we can do as people. Number one is to completely ignore the spiritual world. And number two is to completely become enamored with it, and everything that happens to us becomes a demon. You know sometimes we may not have gotten the parking spot because we were late. You know sometimes we do stupid things because we are just stupid. The person

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

that says, *'Oh man, the devil is after me today,'* that is not true. We don't need any help from the devil to do stupid things.

And sometimes we can blame every single thing that happens wrong in our lives on the devil, and that is not reality. And that means sometimes we give more power and more credence to the devil. My dad was a youth speaker and he would travel all around the country speaking at youth camps, and he told me this story one time. He spoke to this youth group and lots of kids came forward to give their lives to Jesus. And some guy gets up afterwards and said, *'Now I am just going to tell you kids, when you get back home the devil is going to be waiting for you.'* And he went on for about fifteen minutes about how great the devil was, and how it was going to be attacking them and trying to destroy their lives.

Is that true? Yeah, but let me tell you something - God was waiting for them back home too. God is waiting for us every morning when we wake up. Listen, we need to understand that when we are in Christ, when we are under the authority and the power of God there is something even more supernatural that we have access to than the spiritual forces of darkness. And we need to see God as this all powerful being who loves us, who has redeemed us, and who is working in us personally so that we may experience the fullness and the abundance of life that He gives to us.

So we have angelic beings. We saw in Revelations Chapter 12 that there are good and bad angels. Satan has a third force of them after there was a battle between the angels. And in Ephesians Chapter 6 we see that there are categories of spiritual beings. We will be going into that deeper in a few weeks. But in verses 10 through 12 of Chapter 6 in Ephesians it says this: ***"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places."***

Listen, there are four categories of spiritual beings mentioned here. There are rulers, there are authorities, there are cosmic powers and there are spiritual forces of evil. Those are four categories of spiritual beings that are working in this world against the kingdom of God. Now do I know how all of those work? No, I don't. God pulls the curtain back a little bit for us every once in a while to show us something but not everything.

Daniel Chapter 10 is a great illustration of this. If you want to read this later it is Daniel praying to get a vision from God. It is a scary vision and Daniel immediately prays for God to help him with it because he didn't understand it. And about twenty-one days later Gabriel, the messenger angel of God, appears to Daniel and tells him that the moment Daniel prayed for a response from God, he was sent from God's throne room into Daniel's presence. And Gabriel said that he was opposed by the prince of Persia.

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

Now that is not talking about a human prince; it was a demonic prince, some kind of ruling demon that was overseeing this geographical area. And he fought against Gabriel for twenty-one days until Michael the archangel came and with his help Gabriel was able to overcome the prince of Persia. And Gabriel said he was now there to tell Daniel what God wanted to tell him.

What? I don't understand it all. I don't understand why God answers prayers like this sometimes, or why it took twenty-one days, but we got a little picture behind the curtain. It also shows us that our prayers affect the spiritual world. And if we are not praying we are not battling, we are not fighting. One of the greatest things that Satan wants is for us not to pray.

So we see these forces attacking us and that there are angelic beings. We don't have enough time to go into all of it, but we see that Satan and his forces are working to tempt us, to lie to us, to deceive us, to oppress us, to attack us, to accuse us and to steal, kill, and destroy us. And that is their job every single day. Chuck Wallace said this: *"The summary I commonly use is that the enemies want us to mess up and fall into sin, give up and get discouraged, get puffed up and live in arrogance, split up and divide, or shut up and quit worshipping and evangelising."* Every single day we are going to be tempted to do one of those things. We can fight it and if one thing doesn't work we can try another way. But not fighting is what the enemy wants us to do.

So here is what we need to understand - in the grand order of things we have God at the top, we have angelic beings which are powerful (and they are more powerful than we are), but here is what is so beautiful - through Jesus we have an access to a power that is greater than them. Therefore we don't have to be afraid of their power.

And I think one of the things we need to understand is the power that we do have as we move forward. That is why we are calling this 'Power Struggle.' What God wants us to see and understand is that there is an authority and there is a power that we have available to us that we have not been using. And if we see the enemy winning it is because we are not using the power that God has given to us through Jesus.

So four applications, and these are going to go fast. Number one - we must no longer be ignorant. We just read in Ephesians Chapter 6 that God does not want us to be unaware of the schemes of the enemy. We no longer want to be ignorant about the schemes of the devil. In I Peter Chapter 5 it talks about how we need to be sober minded because the devil is like a lion seeking someone to devour. Sober mindedness is to have an awareness of the schemes. We must no longer be ignorant and realize that there is something working against us.

Number two - we must no longer be passive. We are at war and we are a part of a kingdom. We will either be a part of this battle or we will opt out. And even if we opt out and decide to be passive, we are still going to get attacked. We need to understand

# SPIRITUAL WARFARE

## Power Struggle Series - Part 1

### Ben Rudolph

---

that we have this responsibility. In II Corinthians Chapter 10 it says: ***“to destroy strongholds.”*** We need to understand that we don’t just play defense, but that we need to play offense as well against the spiritual forces of darkness. James Chapter 5 says this: ***“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”*** There is an active offensive resisting that we must do. So we can no longer be passive. When we wake up every morning understand we are people at war. But that is okay because we have a power that has been given to us.

And that leads us to application number three - we must no longer be overcome. I love what it says in Revelations Chapter 12. It talks about this grand battle and Satan has been thrown to the earth. Man, that scares me! It is a scary thought that Satan has been cast to earth, and he accuses us. It says in Revelations Chapter 12 and verse 10 that Satan ***“accuses them day and night before our God.”*** He wants us to live defeated lives. He wants us to feel so overcome. He wants us to feel that God doesn’t love us, that we are failures, that God regrets saving us, that we are helpless and hopeless, that there is nothing that God can do because He has failed us.

Satan will try to do everything that he can to accuse us, to oppress us, to get control of our thinking and of our minds. And yet we have this reality that even though we have this accuser day and night, no matter how many times we sin and fail God, He loves us. The accuser says, *‘Look at what he did last night. He is at church today but you should have seen him last night talking to his wife the way he was. You should have seen him last night and what he was watching on TV.’*

Every day and night the accuser is seeking to attack us. But we have Jesus who stands at the right hand of God and says, *‘Wait a second. You can accuse them but they are under my blood. They are mine!’* And we can overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. Listen, overcoming is in our nature. Overcoming is in our nature now when we are in Christ. We no longer have to feel defeated. We no longer have to feel overcome because there is something greater working in us. There is a power that we have to understand that Jesus offers us through His name, through His blood, through His resurrection, through His Spirit, through His Word, and through prayer that is accessible to every single one of us. We just have to use it.

The fourth application is this - we must no longer be enslaved. The greatest act of offense against spiritual forces of darkness is to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. You work with enslaved people. You have enslaved people in your family, in your neighborhood, and one of the greatest acts of spiritual warfare, and one of the most simple ones is to proclaim that Jesus is Lord and that He is risen. Will we do that? Or will we remain silent?

I love what it says in Philippians Chapter two: ***“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*** There is no one and

**SPIRITUAL WARFARE**  
**Power Struggle Series - Part 1**  
**Ben Rudolph**

---

there is nothing that is not going to bend the knee to Jesus. And that is the authority we need to leave with this morning.

*The preceding transcript was completed using raw audio recordings. As much as possible, it includes the actual words of the message with minor grammatical changes and editorial clarifications to provide context. Hebrew and Greek words are spelled using Google Translator and the actual spelling may be different in some cases.*