

Freedom in Christ
Session 5
The Battle for our Minds

1. SLIDE 1 - TITLE

2. SLIDE 2

1. We're in a Spiritual Battle:
 - a) A battle between Truth & Lies
 - b) And that battle takes place primarily in our minds

3. The Battle is real, and it's not just against:

- a) The **world** & the **flesh**
- b) But against the **devil**

4. SLIDE 3

1. We're in the battle whether we like it or not. Paul tells us explicitly *we're not fighting flesh and blood but the spiritual forces of evil in the Heavenly realms* (Ephesians 6:12).

5. These 3 - the **world**, the **flesh** and the **devil** were present when Jesus was led into the desert after being Baptised.

6. SLIDE 4

- a) Jesus calls the devil ***the father of lies*** (**John 8:44**).

7. SLIDE 5

- a) However, the really good news is that Jesus, ***the Son of God came to destroy the works of the devil*** (**1 John 3:8**).
- b) The devil doesn't have any real power, he cannot read your mind.

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- c) All interaction in the Bible between angels and people or demons and people is done out loud. Only God knows what's in people's minds.

8. SLIDE 6 - BLANK

- a) In Daniel 2, King Nebuchadnezzar demanded that his sorcerers reveal the content of his dreams before interpreting them.
- b) But they couldn't because their normal sources of power and information (demons) couldn't read the king's mind.
- c) If satan had been able to read the king's mind, he'd have been able to keep Daniel from advancing in the king's service — but he couldn't.
- d) The only power he has is the power we give him when we agree with his lies and deception.
- e) He puts lies and half-truths in our minds to deceive us and make us believe what he wants us to believe.
- f) He does it subtly and with cunning. He plants lies in our head to confuse us about our identity or give us an identity crisis!
- g) So the battle is not so much out there with our spouse, friends, boss, colleagues, as it is in our mind.

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- h) Our mind is the enemy's preferred battleground, and thoughts are his weapon of choice.
- i) But we need to understand this; there's nothing to fear from the devil — he's a defeated enemy.

9. SLIDE 7

- a) **James 4:7** says; *Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*
- b) How do we do that? The first part of the verse tells us.

10. SLIDE 8

- (i) Firstly, *Surrender to God,*
- (ii) Secondly, *stand up to the devil, resist him*
- (iii) Finally, *he will turn and run away from you.*

11. SLIDE 9 - BLANK

- 12. It should come as no surprise then, that we live in 2 realms at the same time.
- 13. We're permanently living in both the natural realm and in the spirit realm.
- 14. Permanently living in the interplay of both realms. There really is nowhere you can go on the planet where you're free from the influence of the spiritual realm.

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15. Back in the beginning when Adam and Eve were created, they were given dominion over the earth and over the spiritual realm.
16. It was their job to resist the snake in the garden and protect the garden. But when they gave into temptation and gave into sin, they rebelled against God and effectively handed to the evil one the authority that God had given them. Which is why he has authority on the planet.
17. Paul refers to him as *the god* (small 'g') *of this world* (see **2 Corinthians 4:4** NLT).
18. But we need have NO fear because what has happened through Christ, as part of our inheritance — through the incredible impact of the death and resurrection of Jesus — we've been lifted up and seated with Christ in the Heavenly realms
- 19. SLIDE 10**
 - a) (**Ephesians 2:6**)
20. So we have:
 - a) Authority over the powers of darkness,
 - b) Authority over the earth to begin to live and reclaim the dominion that Adam and Eve lost.

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21. This is how Jesus lived.
- a) He had authority over the enemy,
 - b) He had authority over sickness,
 - c) He had authority over death and
 - d) He had authority over poverty.
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- e) So He multiplied food,
 - f) He healed the sick,
 - g) He drove out demons and
 - h) He raised the dead.

22. SLIDE 11 - BLANK

23. He walked as God's vice-regent on the planet with all His authority in the spirit realm.

24. And amazingly, that very authority has been restored to His church and to the people of God.

25. So we can live in these 2 realms at the same time **with confidence** and **with peace**,

- a) knowing who we are in God,
- b) knowing our position in Christ and
- c) knowing the authority we've been given.

26. Now it would be very easy to assume that only certain types of people — get to live the supernatural life. It's for some and not for others!

27. But the truth is because we're in Christ we've been given this new nature.

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28. A nature designed to enable us to live in both realms at the same time in a very **conscious** and **intentional** way.
29. So we're learning a new way of living. And this takes time and indeed practice.
30. *We might want to live in a world where we participate in Signs and Wonders. But perhaps at the outset it's more a case of Signs and Blunders. But that shouldn't stop us.*
31. In that same way we learn anything, we have to learn the basic skills. So too with regard to living a supernatural life.
32. It's about training and developing those skills if we're going to live this new type of life.
33. Bishop David Pitches, the visionary for the New Wine Network of churches, described church this way — **The Meeting Place — is the Training Place — for the Market Place.**
34. Jesus didn't die so we could simply meet up on a Sunday! It's here we learn and then go out with the power of God's Spirit to make a difference in the world around us, whenever, wherever and whoever we are.
35. We worshipped earlier and sung this refrain;
 - a) **Yours is the Kingdom**
 - b) **Yours is the Power**
 - c) **Yours is the Glory**
36. These words of course are absolutely and ultimately true.

37. But in a very real way the following refrain is also true to a certain degree;

38.

39. SLIDE 12

a) Ours is the Kingdom

- (i) *The Kingdom of Heaven is **near** (Matthew 10:7)*. Jesus tells us to pray; *Your Kingdom come, ... on Earth as it is in Heaven (Matthew 6:10)*.

40. SLIDE 13

a) Ours is the Power

- (i) *The Kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of **power** (1 Corinthians 4:20)*

41. SLIDE 14

a) Ours is the Glory;

- (i) We being Created in God's image all carry a degree of glory and furthermore *We are being transformed ... from **glory to glory** (2 Corinthians 3:18)*.

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43. Jesus is the archetype, the perfect representation of a human living in the realm of the spirit and bringing change around Him.
44. When Jesus was living He did not accept everything as it was.
- a) When He saw sickness — he resisted it.
 - b) When he saw poverty and lack of food — He multiplied bread and fishes.
 - c) He raised the dead.
 - d) He brought the Kingdom of God into the practical realities of life. There was a practical outworking of the supernatural.
45. What often happens to us is that we're so used to the atmosphere of the fallen world — that we accept as normal those things that God would not call normal from His perspective.
46. We are not to accept the standards and the ways of the kingdom of darkness and of the fallenness of this world as our norms.
47. Jesus never accepted such things as the norm — He brought change and transformation, and that's our mandate too.
48. What God is teaching us to do is to:
- a) ***Re-assert our authority and dominion as children of God.***
 - b) ***Bring about change around us.***

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49. **Let me ask us all a question;**
- a) ***Where might you have accepted a standard or a way of living that isn't God's best for you and thought — that's just the way it is?***
 - b) **Ask for God's forgiveness.**
 - c) **Take hold of your inheritance in Christ.**
 - d) **Give thanks to God for His incredible love and provision.**
 - e) **Rebuke the spirit behind the cause of your troubles.**
50. We're to stand up in our authority in Christ and bring about radical change. This is the way the supernatural works. This is the way we are to operate — in agreement with God — as we resist the powers of darkness.
51. The Kingdom of God encounters the kingdom of darkness. We're living in the tension of that warfare that we experience day in and day out.
52. There are a couple of things we can do.
53. **Firstly**, if we're going to learn how to live in the supernatural realm — we need to know that the word of God sets the plumb line for what we're to expect in within the Kingdom of God.
54. So we don't accept as our inheritance fear — because that's not what Christ died for. We have

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an inheritance of **hope** and **faith** and **joy** and **love** and **peace** and **righteousness** and ...

55. In this way we begin to ***allow the word of God to shape our experience***, rather than our experience shape what we think is normal.
56. The word of God has to become absolutely foundational for us if we're going to live in the supernatural realm — because it helps us see clearly what is true and what is not true.
57. What is of the Kingdom and what is just to do with the fallen world and the ways of the fallen world.
58. **Secondly**, we have to learn to train our senses. Just as we use our senses like smell, sight and hearing in the natural realm — so too we are to develop our senses for the spirit world around us.
59. If our home is in a polluted environment then that becomes normal to us. If we have trains going past the end of our garden or we live by a busy road — then that noise becomes normal.
60. But if we're used to clean air or quietness then when we go into differing atmospheres we will react.
61. So we are to become aware of what is the taste and the smell and sense of Heaven and what is the taste and the smell and sense of the fallen world and the kingdom of darkness. So our senses begin to become alert.

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62. We can smell the aroma coffee or freshly baked bread or the fragrance of a beautiful flower. Our senses are alert to that. We look and we can see and our eyes are picking up all the time what's going on around us.
63. Peter says *be self-controlled and alert* (see **1 Peter 5:8**). It's the alertness of our senses and our minds looking at life and seeing what's going on and picking up on the senses.
64. We've probably all walked into places and said '*Wow this has a great atmosphere*' conversely we may have walked into another place and said the exact opposite. Our senses are picking up intuitively on the spiritual atmosphere in those places.
65. And so it is with pretty much everywhere we go. We learn to have our senses alert to what is happening.
66. We're not simply being passive but ***engaging intentionally with the spirit realm***. Living in the tension between the 2 dimensions of the natural and the spirit realm.
67. We see what's happening in the physical or natural realm but we become increasingly aware of the atmosphere of the spirit around us.
68. **Finally**, lets briefly consider the way Jesus operated — hearing the Father's voice and being led by the Spirit.

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69. So whatever our senses discern or whether we simply see stuff and say *'that's not right, I'm not accepting that, that's not what God has for me'*.
70. We still then have to key into the Lord and say, *'What do I do? What's really going on here?'*
- a) And if God says there's a spirit of fear then we take authority over the spirit of fear.
 - b) If God says it's the spirit of death then we take authority over the spirit of death.
 - c) If God says release anointing, release grace, release power, release life, then we release those things.
71. We're looking to track with the voice of the Lord and let Him direct us as to what to release.
72. We watch and we look and we're alert.
73. We listen for the voice of the Lord and allow Him to show us how to exert the authority He has given us by bringing His purpose and His Kingdom to bear.
74. If you listen to Jesus when He prays he hardly ever prays, *'Father would you do this'*.
75. He says things like; *'Get up', 'Be healed', 'Storm be still'*.
76. He exerts authority through His voice by faith as He prays and it's all in direct relation with the Father who is showing Him what to do.
77. And that's what will win the battle for our mind. Listening to Father and doing what He says.

Ending

78. SLIDE 16

- Because of Jesus' obedience,
 - ***You are God's righteous¹ and highly favoured child²***
 - ***You are mighty in His Kingdom³***
 - ***You are lovely in His eyes⁴***
 - ***You have a sound mind just like His⁵***

¹ *For He has made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him* (2 Corinthians 5:21).

² *He... has blessed us in the Heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ* (Ephesians 1:3b),
He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight (Ephesians 1:4)

He adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ in accordance with His pleasure (favour) and will (Ephesians 1:5b)

The statements are not a reality because we say them — we say them because in Christ, they are our reality.

³ *Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power* (Ephesians 6:10).

Be supernaturally infused with strength through your life-union with the Lord Jesus. Stand victorious with the force of His explosive power flowing in and through you (The Passion Translation).

⁴ Simply put we're made in God's image, therefore we're glorious! We are *being transformed into the same image from glory to glory by the Spirit of the Lord* (2 Corinthians 3:18)

⁵ *We have the mind of Christ* (1 Corinthians 2:16)