



The Church is Always at WAR

By

Bishop Larry H. Jordan, Sr., D.D.



P.O. Box 1230
Upper Marlboro, MD 20773
www.TBWC.org

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What most Christians face today is the challenge of Satan taking away what needs to be visible, and that is holiness and sanctification. Christians do not think there needs to be a difference between their appearance and that of the world's. There should be a distinction outwardly and inwardly between the Christian and the world. The scriptures tell us in 1 John 2:15-16, do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father but of the world. The scripture brings out three manifestations: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. These are three areas that present themselves in a visible manner and there are far too many Christians who love to indulge in the flesh, lust, and pride as a lifestyle. Also, there are too many Pastors who do not teach that the love of God is not in those who practice life in these areas. This is the main reason why worldliness is in the church today and ministers do not address it enough.

Galatians 5:19-21, describes every sin that can manifest through us that can be seen in the physical realm. These verses teach us that those who practice such things will not enter the kingdom of God. When we see these sins in our lives, we have got to make adjustments for improvement and live a life of sanctification. If this is necessary to enter into God's Kingdom, then why do Christians continue in sin? Mainly because sanctification and holiness are not the edification of most preachers today. Christians must be taught that they must sanctify themselves and live a holy life. If not, then it opens up a door of warfare to the devil, and this is where the power of darkness and principalities of wicked spirits begin to build strongholds and dominion in the church.

We are confronted with warfare from strategic areas of Satan based on how people think of life in the flesh, and not a life based on God's word for spiritual growth. The works of the flesh I can see, but an evil spirit I must be able to discern. In 1 Corinthians 12:10, the gift of the Holy Spirit can give me the ability to discern a spirit I can't see, meaning demons can be revealed. That's right! The power of God's Spirit, as a protector, reveals demonic influence in the lives of people. The devil works in the mind of man. Thoughts are not seen, but God can reveal them. This is why evil behavioral patterns can not work in the administration and organizational structure of the church I pastor. Through the knowledge of God's word, I understand the works of the flesh and I have been delivered from the practice of the works of the flesh. The practice of the works of the flesh is the old man, the former way of life before the "born-again" experience. However, there are times when people are going to come in the church demonically oppressed, possessed, and depressed, and the Holy Spirit will discern that spirit to protect the church. What does that mean? Demons have to be cast out and off of people so they will not overwhelm a congregation or family. Examples of this are in Matthew 17:14-21, Mark 5:1-15, and Acts 16:16-18. Christians must understand that we are in a spiritual warfare, and we must have the knowledge of God to deal with the devil.

Today in this modern world of technology, sermons have changed too much for natural preparation and not the spiritual. 2 Timothy 3:1-7 warns us of how people will become in the last days of the church. Christians feel that these perilous problems do not exist for the church in this modern era. It is often preached that Christians should not go through anything, and that they are not blessed if they have trials and tribulations. This heresy of teaching is described in 1 Timothy 4:1. There is a great falling away from the faith today, with apostasy and hypocrisy stronger in the church than it has ever been before. The popular doctrine of today is to teach

Christians to focus on treasures of the world instead of heaven. This is why warfare is invisible to them and they can not see the devil's attack. When you fall away from the faith, it is based on what you hear. Read Matthew 13:18-22 and see why Christians fail. They are taught according to verse 23 that they are suppose to receive wealth and money a hundred, sixty and thirty fold; they are blind to understand God is talking about Christian character, not money. Read Galatians 5:22 to see the fruit that describes the character of God's Spirit. When you read John 15:1-8, if you are to receive from God, you must first become fruitful to be identified with Him. Your fruit has the ability to win a hundred-fold (10,000) souls to Christ. To get there, you must first be pruned from carnality. Carnality is an enemy with God, and an enemy presents warfare.

Jesus said in Me you may have peace, but in the world you will have tribulations (John 16:33). Simply because Jesus overcame the world, it does not mean that you are not going to go through anything. He overcame the world, and now we must overcome it. This is why the devil tempts us, because we must overcome him. In this life Christians will suffer and listed below are some scriptures for understanding and spiritual growth:

1. Matthew 11:12 – Means we are of the kingdom of God and we will face violence, hostility, and attacks as a result of our faith in Christ. Christians face violence and hostility because of homosexuality, lack of prayer in schools, the atheist attack to remove the name of God from America's currency, the U.S. Constitution, the Judicial System, and the legalization of same-sex marriage. The Bible can't be read on our jobs and in some public places. The violent are always trying to take the Kingdom by force. There are two good examples in the Bible of the kingdom of heaven suffering violence, and the violent taking it by force. According to Matthew 14:3-11; 26:48-56, 66-68 we see that

Bishop Larry H. Jordan, Sr., D.D.

February 2009

John the Baptist and Jesus were victims of violence. John was beheaded in prison and Jesus was betrayed, beaten and put to death. Both suffered a violent death as a result of preaching the truth for the Kingdom of God.

2. Acts 9:15-16 – The Lord said Apostle Paul must suffer many things for His name.
3. Romans 8:16-17 – The Holy Spirit bears witness with us as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. We will suffer for glorification.
4. 2 Corinthians 1:6 – We suffer to comfort one another.
5. 1 Timothy 4:9-10 – Christians suffer reproach because they trust in the living God.
6. 2 Timothy 1:8-12 – Ministers should not be ashamed because of the suffering for the gospel of Christ.
7. James 5:10-11 – The prophets and Job were our examples of suffering with perseverance to receive the Lord's compassion and mercy.
8. 1 Peter 2:20 – When a Christian suffers for good, this is commendable before God.
9. 1 Peter 3:14-17 – Christians will suffer because of righteousness.
10. 1 Peter 4:1-2 – Since Christ suffered, arm yourself mentally for suffering.
11. 1 Peter 4:15-19 – Don't suffer as an unrighteous Christian, but suffer according to the will of God knowing judgment will begin at the house of God first.

Matthew 5:10-12 of the Beatitudes describes that a Christian is blessed when they suffer persecution for the kingdom of God. Many Christians have fallen away from the faith as a result of false doctrine that declares that we are not supposed to suffer or that we are not blessed because we suffer as a result of righteous living. The body of Christ is at war with the devil and his

kingdom of darkness. Christians must renew their minds to understand the closer they get to God, the more the devil will devise attacks. The battle heightens in warfare. Christians think they are blessed because they have a new car, house, clothes, or a job, but there is another side of being blessed. Matthew 5:10-12 is an example of the blessing plan of Jesus Christ. I often tell Christians if you want the blessing of Jesus Christ read all the Beatitudes. Focus on verses 10-12 because it deals directly with warfare. ¹⁰“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ Blessed are you when they revile and persecute and say all kinds of evil against you for My sake. ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” What a great reason to not complain about spiritual warfare; understand it is a part of the Lord’s blessing plan. You will suffer as a Christian! You have the knowledge of it from the word of God. Therefore, know that you are blessed and have a reward in heaven as a result.

Satan was and is cast out of heaven

Now if we are in a warfare that means the devil is not bound. When we look up the word bound it means confined, secured, restrained, and limited to a specific territory or place. Revelations 12:7-12 states ⁷ And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. ⁹ So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. ¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they

Bishop Larry H. Jordan, Sr., D.D.

February 2009

did not love their lives to the death.¹² Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” In the book of Jude verse 6, fallen angels (also called demons) are confined in everlasting chains in darkness for the great Day of Judgment. In Revelation 9, we can observe two different occasions where demons are bound in the abyss (bottomless pit) and confined to a limited territory where they are bound at the Euphrates River. The River flows from Turkey, through Syria and Iraq, and is near the Persian Gulf. This is probably why this region in Asia has so much war. In Revelation 9:1, an angel in heaven sounds the fifth trumpet and a star falls from heaven. A star according to Revelation 1:20 reveals that it is an angel. The fallen angel is probably Satan who has been given the key to the bottomless pit to release demons bound in hell to have power on earth to inflict mankind. When reading Revelation 9:13-15, an angel sounds the sixth trumpet, and the four angels bound at the location of the Euphrates River are released to kill a third of mankind. The point is proven that some demons are already bound by God, and will not be released on earth until God says so according to His time of release. Christians must understand the warfare is spiritual. 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 and Ephesians 6:12 explains and gives us clear understanding. Our entire mentality must approach this war with Satan with the knowledge of God.

The reality of binding and loosening

Observance of the word ***bound*** allows further exploration into the doctrine of Christ on binding and loosening. I must reiterate again concerning Satan and demons that God Himself has not bound Satan and his demons, they are on the loose to inflict warfare on Christians. I remember in my early days of ministry, I used to follow man’s wind of doctrine by saying what was popular in prayer, whether for myself or while I was praying over someone else, “Satan you

Bishop Larry H. Jordan, Sr., D.D.

February 2009

are bound”, only to see him come back again with the same trials and temptations. When reading Matthew 4:1-11, my understanding became clear that Jesus was led of the Holy Spirit to be tempted by the devil. To be tempted means to be enticed and allured by the things of the world, the very thing in which Satan is in control. The devil uses the same enticement today on Christians that he used to tempt Jesus. He is not bound! The devil and his demons will keep trying to tempt us until he is bound by God according to Revelation 20:1-3 and completely done away with in accordance with Revelation 20:7-10. Please read to understand Revelation 20:1-3 and verse 7, only God Himself had the key to bind Satan to the prison of the bottomless pit and to release him until the final judgment.

Now the word *key* must become a point of focus, because God uses it as authority. The word key means something that controls the entrance to a place; to lock and to unlock. In Revelations 1:18, Jesus makes it clear that He has the keys of Hades (Hell) and Death. 1 Corinthians 15:55-57 also states that Jesus gives us victory over death and hell, which means Jesus is in full authority. According to Revelation 3:7, Jesus makes it clear He is a King and has the key of David, the authority to open and close doors. All churches should depend on the Lord as did the church of Philadelphia with faithfulness in the work of the ministry. There are some things that need to be made clear about the key of authority. When reading Luke 11:52, the scriptures reveal that false teachers have taken away the key of knowledge for people to enter into the pure salvation of Christ. False teachers present doctrine that hinders people’s full understanding of knowing Christ. Therefore, not having the knowledge of Christ, you cannot enter into His kingdom nor operate in His dominion because you do not have keys to unlock the door. A good example of the key Christ has for the church is in Mark 1:21-28. Notice Jesus went into a synagogue on the Sabbath (church on a Sunday) to teach. The people were

astonished at His teaching because it was with such great authority, and not according to the false teaching of the scribes. As Jesus said to the church of Philadelphia, He has the key as king and can open doors no one can shut, and shut doors no one can open. Observe His authority! The Lord opened the door to command an unclean spirit to come out of man and the scribes' authority could not shut the door of His authority. The knowledge of God caused the people to say what new doctrine is this? For with authority he commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him. Now just think if every church on Sunday morning would operate in the knowledge of this authority, Satan wouldn't have a chance. The Lord loved the church of Philadelphia, because they were faithful in the work of the ministry with the knowledge of who had the key of David. Satan had to succumb to the authority of Christ, and worship at the feet of Jesus.

The keys of the kingdom cause people to enter in

In John 7:16-17, Jesus made it clear that His doctrine was not His own, and if anyone wills to do His will, he should know God's doctrine and from where the authority comes. Anyone that is involved in ministry should understand Matthew 28:18. All authority has been given to Jesus in heaven and earth. It is clearly understood that Jesus holds the key of authority. Keys to the kingdom mean authority, which also means position. Peter was called to the position of an Apostle, which meant he was given the authority from Jesus Christ to perform the kingdom of God on earth as He (Christ) did. A good example of Jesus giving authority is in Matthew 10:1. Jesus gave His disciples power over unclean spirits to cast them out of people. In Luke 10:1-2 and verses 19-20, Jesus also gave power to seventy disciples, the same authority to cast out demon spirits. In Revelation 12:7-12, God gave the archangel Michael and his angels the authority to cast Satan out of heaven. In Luke 10:18-19, Jesus mentions it again, giving

Bishop Larry H. Jordan, Sr., D.D.

February 2009

authority over Satan and his demon spirits to His chosen disciples. Verse 20 reveals that all born- again believers should rejoice that their names are written in heaven and not just because unclean spirits are subject to them. It does not matter if you are a Pastor or an usher, as a born- again believer you have authority over the devil and his unclean demon spirits. Let's revisit Revelation 12:7-9 and Matthew 16:19. These two scriptures reveal Satan being kicked out of heaven and the keys of the kingdom of heaven given, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. The question is how can Satan be bound in heaven when he was kicked out? Revelation 20:1-3 and 7-10 reveal in the near future Satan will be bound for a thousand years, released on the earth again for a season, and then bound forever in the lake of fire and brimstone. Until then, Satan is not bound on earth.

In Matthew 12:28-29 Jesus said the kingdom of God has come upon you when you cast out demon spirits by the Spirit of God. He goes on to explain how to bind the strong man and plunder his good, which means to defeat Satan. Binding the strongman is casting out demons; stopping them from exerting their power and influence in one's life. Read Luke 11:20-22. Also in Luke 11:24-26, unclean spirits were cast out of someone, but came back with seven other spirits more wicked than himself to re-enter the person. Demons come back to try to repossess people once they have been cast out. Even though the minister did bind them, meaning stopping them from possessing someone's life by casting them out, they come back again. Why do they come back again? Because they are not bound! The verse proves they came back to try and enter the person again. In Matthew 26:47-56, we see Jesus was betrayed, apprehended and given to be crucified. This proves Satan was not bound. Even though we have the power of deliverance, it does not mean Satan is not coming after us. Remember, *the church is always at war*.

In Matthew 16:18-19, Jesus tells Peter that He (Christ) is the rock for the church, and the gates of Hell cannot prevail against it. Hell cannot prevail over Christ and the church. The devil can't win! After Jesus told Peter this, He said He would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Peter was told whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Doctrinally we have heard so many different views on this scripture. Earlier, I said I was taught the popular quote, Satan I bind you in the name of Jesus, and I loose the power of God on whatever I wanted liberated, only to find out the devil would keep coming back. I realized this scripture was dealing with something else and I had to find the meaning of the scripture for spiritual warfare. In Matthew 4:1-11 Jesus never said I bind you Satan, He just spoke the word of God and kept moving. The only attention He gave the devil was the word of God and resistance. Verse 11 reveals the devil left Him. As a minister of the gospel, a Bishop and Senior Pastor of a local church, I have been given the keys of the kingdom to cast out unclean spirits. I have been given that authority, but I resist the temptation of the devil and endure his attacks. God's word teaches us in James 4:7 to resist the devil and he will flee. In 1 Peter 5:8-9 it says the devil roars like a lion seeking whom he may devour, but we are to resist him. What the believer needs to do is the same thing Jesus did in Matthew 16:23. The Lord said "get behind me Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." Just rebuke the devil and move on in the righteousness of God.

Judas was the son of perdition and he was used by the devil the entire duration of Jesus' earthly ministry. Even when Satan entered Judas to possess him to betray Jesus, the Lord did not bind him or stop him. Jesus was showing all believers there is an appointed time wherein Satan would be bound in Hell. Until then we must learn how to live through his attacks and ignore

him. Jesus was always aware of Judas, but never stopped him from his wicked deeds. Christians need to have the mind of Christ, know what to expect from a deceitful person full of envy and strife, and keep building ministry and manifesting the will of God. John 12:3-6 reveals that Judas was a practicing critic who murmured and complained, had no respect for authority, sat amongst the righteous, but was a traitor and walked among the religious, unrighteous Pharisees. Jesus did not say I bind you Judas and Satan I command you to go to the pit of Hell. Jesus just said, let her alone, she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but me you do not have always. What the Lord did was put Judas in his place and comforted Mary with regard to what must take place in His future. We must follow the footsteps of Jesus and walk in the knowledge that God has an appointed time for Satan to be bound; therefore, all we have to do is resist him.

Now we know the keys of the kingdom have nothing to do with binding Satan on earth to be bound in heaven, because he was kicked out of heaven. So if we are binding Satan on earth, how can we bind him in heaven when he is not there? This doctrine is inaccurate and Christians need to acknowledge that. Keys of the kingdom mean authority, but what kind of authority? The keys of the kingdom do not mean binding Satan, but your gift from heaven given to you for service. My authority of service is not bound on earth, so it is loosed from heaven. “Keys of the Kingdom” mean the authority of Christ given to men to perform ministry in the earth. The Apostles were given the key to unlock the power of God to perform miracles, healings, casting out demons or unclean spirits, and the knowledge of God. Apostle Paul was given the key to reveal the mysteries of the kingdom of God, the authority to write the epistles, ordain men for ministry, explain the church as the body of Christ, gifts of service, gifts of the Spirit, fruit of the Spirit and the list goes on of the authority given to him. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were

given the authority to write the four gospels. The Apostles Peter, James, John and Jude were also given authority to write epistles. Apostle John was given the key to write the book of Revelation or the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the book of the past, present and future, the judgment of God and the future Kingdom. Revelation 1:19 says, write these things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. Look at what was loosed from heaven to Apostle John while exiled in prison on the island of Patmos. Read Revelation 1:1-20 and feel the power of revelation being deposited into Apostle John's spirit while he was in prison. Feel the power of God as he begins to write the words of Christ given to him for all mankind to read. These words of revelation are coming from heaven, and Jesus Himself is speaking to him. Open your heart and mind to absorb the authority given to John to write this blessed prophecy. Feel how Jesus is giving him the keys of the kingdom to reveal destiny. Wow! What an experience to be given the keys of the kingdom as a vessel to write what Jesus said personally to you. Apostle John was personally chosen by Christ and given this authority to write the prophecy about the end of time and Satan's rule. Every person that reads the prophecy is blessed to repent and prepare for the coming of Christ and the judgment of God.

Now if Apostle John had a ragged lifestyle as a worldly Christians, this gift would be bound by him in heaven. Yet because he was a sold out, full of the Holy Spirit believer, he loosed his gift of Apostleship on earth for it to be loosed in heaven. The power of God comes from heaven down to us, and we should not want to bind that gift that needs to be loosed in the earth. Read James 1:17 to know and understand that every good and perfect gift comes from above, and comes down from the Father in heaven. All gifts come from heaven to men for service. Keys from the kingdom of God deal with *authority* given to men and not binding authority to bind the devil. Colossians 3:1-2 tells us to seek those things which are above and to

set our minds on them. This means that when we seek God the Father through His Son Jesus Christ, the kingdom of heaven becomes available to us. Matthew 6:33 proves that when the kingdom of God is sought after, God does add to one's life.

To handle the devil and unclean spirits (demons) we must have the keys of the kingdom of God, and only Jesus Christ can give us the keys (areas of authority). Jesus does not give all Christians the same line of authority for the church and for the work of the ministry. In 1 Corinthians 12:5, it says there are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. In Romans 12:6-8 Jesus gave different gifts according to the grace given to us for the work of the ministry. Ephesians 4:11-13 and 1 Corinthians 12:28-29 proves the Lord appoints and gives ministry gifts as service to the church for leadership to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. The Lord does give men specific callings for areas of ministry. All of this is authority! These areas of ministry open doors of deliverance for people and the church (the body of Christ). Righteous, Spirit-filled saints will always defeat the devil and his demons because the gates of hell cannot prevail against the church. The keys of the kingdom and authority have been given to men by God. When reading Romans 8:30, I understand that predestination means that someone was called for a purpose, and God will justify and glorify them. When God justifies you, it's for a purpose. Why would God put you in an area for ministry and not justify you? To justify you means God is involved, and He hand-picked you to glorify Him. To glorify God means He gets the glory based on what He called you to do. When God calls you to do something, He gives you the authority. This means heaven is open to you because you have the key, and now something is going to happen to defeat the power of darkness. We cannot position ourselves for ministry, only Jesus Christ can call a man for purpose and responsibility, and give him keys of the kingdom. The epistle of James gives an example in James 5:13-15. Elders were given an

area of authority to pray the prayer of faith to save the sick, and deal with committed sin to be forgiven. Authority is given to one and the prayer of a righteous individual avails for them. Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. When Christians grow to understand the gospel and sound doctrine, the devil can not penetrate our lives to stop the authority God gave us. To handle the devil and unclean spirits, a Christian must obey 1 Timothy 4:13-16. You must know the doctrine of Christ to win spiritual battles. If you do not know the word of God and it is not in your spirit, then how will the authority of God work? In John 16:13-15, it says the Holy Spirit will not speak on His own authority, so what are you saying for Him to move off of your words? It is the gospel (the doctrines of Christ) that move the Holy Spirit. The Apostles spoke the word of God that was given to them. They operated in the teachings of Jesus and preached His gospel to glorify Christ. Jesus said the Holy Spirit would take what is mine and declare it unto you. How can the authority of the word of God be declared if you don't know it? The authority of God's word and the Holy Spirit work together. Read Genesis 1:1-31 and you will see that everything God said, the Holy Spirit performed. This means the Holy Spirit can only perform off of the authority of God's word. The devil and unclean spirits have to obey God's word, and submit to the power given to us to speak and perform from God's word, and that power is the Holy Spirit.

For warfare, leaders must understand what keys of authority have been given to them according to 1 Corinthians 12:29-30, and saints must understand what gifts were given to them according to Romans 12:6-8 and 1 Corinthians 12:4 so that hell will not prevail against the church. People that are defeated by the devil and unclean spirits lack understanding (Matthew 13:19, Mark 4:15, and Luke 8:12). Christians need to grow to understand that keys of the kingdom are given by Christ, and not through the proclamations of men. We will be fighting

The Church is Always at War

Page 16

this war until Jesus comes back for the church. Remember James 3:15-17 concerning the wisdom of God to defeat the devil and his unclean spirits. Victory belongs to the believers, so let's operate in the knowledge of God to win this battle.