



Luke 4:1-13



Overview

This is the third sermon in our series 'Threats to Wholeness'. On Sunday Steve spoke about Sustained Spiritual Attack and the reality of the devil, and spiritual warfare.



Getting to Know You

The following is a quote from a 1995 Hollywood movie: 'The greatest trick the devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist'. This seems to be a fairly valid statement seeing that many people don't believe in the devil. In Britain some of who identify themselves as Christians find it easier to believe in aliens than in the devil, and are more likely to believe in heaven alone, rather than the notion of heaven AND hell. No devil, no hell, no reason to be on our guard right?

Q: Why do you think some Christians would doubt that satan does exist?



Digging Deeper

Read the following passages:

Luke 4: 1-13, James 4:7, Hebrew 4:15, 1 Peter 5:8, Ephesians 6:12

Highlighted from the sermon are the following insights from Luke 4:

- a. There is a devil
- b. He uses temptation as one of his tools
- c. His work is subtle, and even appears reasonable at times
- d. Appropriate scripture stops him
- e. Spiritual attacks tend to come at significant or vulnerable moments

Q: What other questions and/or insights can you draw from these passages?

Q: What are some of the things that have shaped your personal beliefs about the devil?

Temptation comes in various forms to different people. Even those who don't believe in 'evil' around us, know about temptation. Temptation could be as simple as distracting us from focussing on God.

Q: If you feel comfortable sharing, how have you been tempted in the past?

We see that Jesus quoted appropriate scripture each time the devil tempted Him.

Q: If so, how do you use scripture to counter temptation from satan?

Read James 4:7 again.

Q: If it feels at times that we try resist satan, but it's less effective, what could be a crucial step missing in the process?

Satan doesn't just use temptation as a means of spiritual attack, but other things like negative self-talk, division, disempowerment, isolation, and deception.

Both Steve and Jess shared some personal stories of recent spiritual attack.

Q: How have you experienced spiritual attack other than in the form of temptation?

Q: What strategies did you use to counter this attack?

From Me to Us

Steve mentioned that often we think of spiritual warfare as an individual thing.

In Ephesians 6 Paul uses the metaphor of Armour as a way to defend ourselves from attacks from satan. The Romans though, fought together, shielding each other (see picture below).



How can we change our thinking of Spiritual Warfare from a 'me' thing to an 'us' thing?

What satan isn't:

It's important to be vigilant and on our guard (as we've been warned throughout scripture). However, it is equally important to note that:

- A. GOD has already won the victory! Satan is not an equal but he is opposite
- B. GOD created the universe, satan didn't
- C. GOD is omnipresent and all knowing, satan isn't and often works through evil spirits
- D. JESUS destroyed satan
- E. JESUS' NAME IS ABOVE ALL NAMES!
- F. 1 John 4:⁴ But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world.

**Taking it home**

Jesus knew scripture and used it to counteract the temptations that Satan tried to throw at Him. Consider how well you know the Bible. Is this something you can improve? Are there scriptures that you could memorise to help you during times of temptation?

**Prayer**

Spend some time praying for protection and strength for: God's church globally, MABC, and individual forms of attack we may be experiencing at the moment.