

KENDALLVILLE ASSEMBLY OF GOD
THE STRATEGY OF THE KINGDOM
LUKE 22:1-13

I want to talk to you about **Strategy in the Kingdom of Heaven.**

I want to touch on this topic specifically as we look at the topic of the Kingdom because so MUCH has been written and taught about the topic of Spiritual Warfare and our need to have Strategy.

- *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Eph 6:12-13*
- *for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but **divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.** 5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ 2 Cor 10:4-6*

Typically this evokes imagery that looks something like this.....my point is that as we ponder the idea of battle and warfare - what comes to mind for most of us are the ideas of

- **Resistance**
- **Force**

A couple weeks back I was doing a daily reading and read Luke 22 not really expecting to get much out of those first few verses....but I was caught by verse 3. And as I began to meditate pray on the remainder of the chapter I was floored by what I began to see - **the strategy of of the Kingdom of Heaven and here is my point beloved it does NOT look like the strategy of the world.**

Just an hour north of London is a Sherwood Mansion that in the early 90's had fallen into such a state of dis-repair that it was being considered for demolition. And while that seemed to make sense for this old English estate it was discovered to be a mistake that was narrowly avoided. This mansion known today Bletchley Park was another large home in the English countryside town of Bletchley. Yet on this park something so significant occurred that most historians would say it shortened World War 2 by 2 to 4 years - saving countless lives but securing freedom for the Allies. It was on this property that the first computer in the world was built and it broke the unbreakable German code – Enigma.

It's said that the Ultra important information provided by Bletchley far out paced any other specific battle of the war! It remained a government secret for 60 years! While all the books and movies had been written about the most significant strategic efforts of Generals and armies....**the most significant remained unknown to most of the world until the 90's.**

In over 20 small buildings behind the mansion known then and now as 'huts' men and women accomplished more than a General leading an army of soldiers could have accomplished. They deciphered the secret codes of the enemy. In hut 11 the first computer was built - after the war it was destroyed. And the entire project remained a secret until it was de-classified.

Now I recognize that every illustration falls:) **But my point beloved is that one of the most significant victories of WW 2 was not the result of force or resistance and yet it resulted in the collapse of force!**

And the secret is simply this Christ in you!
Yes, Christ in you bringing with Him the hope of all the glorious things to come.
Col 1:27b JB Phillips

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When we are talking about this topic of Spiritual Warfare and Strategy in the Kingdom of God one of the first things I want to invite you to take note of is how little Jesus talked about 'strategy' but revealed in his life the brilliance of the strategy of Heaven.

Luke 22:3 *And Satan entered into Judas.....*

Most of us have read or heard this verse read - **but have you ever stopped to consider what Jesus response was?**

- **Hell has just unveiled its strategy something that Jesus warned His friends about in Chapter 21 - betrayal.....and death!**
- Here is what I want us to see.....**Jesus seemingly did NOTHING!**

He did not resist push back....He seemingly did not even notice.....!

What does the strategy of Hell look like?

- typically it is marked by
 - Manipulation
 - Strength
 - And Control

People are a needed tool to accomplish the greater goal

- in Judas case many speculate he was impatient with the idea of Jesus NOT pushing for the establishment of a Kingdom.

After all He said He was Messiah....therefore that means He is a King of His Kingdom.

- When you consider that 30 pieces of silver was not like a huge pay off it was more about his personal passion to make something happen.

I have known many whose interpretation of the Jesus invitation to enlarge the Kingdom upon the earth often winds up sounding really similar.

- Looking at the worlds system they lean heavily into the ideas that **if we can muster enough influence - politically - economically - in the media** - use of forms of media that I have heard referred to as the '**greater works**'.....sorry don't buy it.

One of the greatest points of the Sermon on the Mount was Jesus declaring that this Kingdom operates by a Grace and Authority completely differently than Kingdoms of the earth.

- So much so that Paul makes this incredible proclamation in 1 Corinthians 1 that God has actually 'Chosen' the things that are weak, despised, foolish the things that are not to reveal the Wisdom of God!

Beloved we need to settle this deep in our heart!

- **This Kingdom operates in a strategy that is so completely different than anything we see in the worlds system that we need to change our mind about what His strategy looks like in Spiritual Conflict!**

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Luke 22:3

Satan enters Judas.....now this can feel pretty unsettling.

Yet Paul makes statements like this in 2 Timothy 2:24-26

24 The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

So he seems to make clear that it is indeed possible to be held captive by the adversary.

- **How?**
- Strong-holds = **systems of belief in the mind and heart.**

How can someone say I am a follower of Jesus and see no problem with say lying or cheating in a business deal?

- Because they are being held captive to a belief system in their own heart that says this is what I have to do to be successful.
- Sin? Yes – what is Sin? Choice to trust in something else other than God to meet my needs.
- Becomes for many a system of belief....a strong-hold of the mind.
- This is why Paul says in 2 Cor 10:5 – *our weapons are mighty....*
5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

You see the primary location of Spiritual Warfare is not ‘**out there**’

- but in here and in those things that I choose to agree with in my mind and heart!

Genesis 3 - those things that accuse God and condemn man.....

Luke 22:3

- Judas surrendered his mind and heart to a lie!

Now I have mentioned this already but I want to linger for a moment on this reality -

What did Jesus do when the strategy of hell was being played out in front of Him?

- Did He resist the forces of hell?
- Did He rally a prayer gathering to rebuke hell?

He choose to believe the Strategy of Heaven!

- God how would I face betrayal?
- How could I face death?
- How could I face opposition that is too much for me?

I want to point to three obvious realities in Jesus at this point....He knows what is going down...

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1 - He chooses to Submit to His Father

- We see this a bit later in the Garden of Gethsemane.....as He is laboring in Prayer*never the less not my will but yours be done*....vs 42
- This is not Jesus saying OK....**You win**.....I lost at Rock, Pater Scissors.....Your will be done in the original language reveals something profound....
- **It was not just a giving up....**
- **But an active affirmation - Father I agree with You!**
- **So it was for the Joy set before Him that He endured the Cross.**

Not an endurance contest - but an active affirmation....

- I will agree with Heaven while my humanity is screaming ‘ you want to see power?’
- I will show you Power....the Person who spoke worlds into being is the very Person you are trying to manipulate.....!”

Beloved what is the first positional response to ‘Spiritual Attack’?

- Our impulse....**resistance and force**
- Jesus reveals something in His lifestyle so much so that his brother in James said it this way
- James 4:7-8
7 Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

I am under attack....you better stand up....

- **Actually the strategy of Heaven is Submit!**
 - The path of resistance is Submission to God beloved!
 - *Draw near to God and He will draw near to you!*

The Strategy of Heaven? Submission to the Father

- Jesus knows what is going down....all of Hell is plotting for this very moment.....He submits to His Father and then....

Luke 22:14-ff **look at the Strategy of Heaven that occurs next.....**

2. He Served His Betrayer!

- This is summed up so well by John in his gospel in Chapter 13:1
 - Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, **He loved them to the end.**
- How did he love them? **He Served them**.....He picks up a towel and wash’s their feet....even Judas beloved!
What is it going to look like when we agree with the strategy of Heaven?

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Lord I feel under attack -

-and the Spirit of God invites us to Serve them? To lay down our life.....to be poured out as Love.....
- How did Heaven respond to the Strategy of Hell?
- **He submitted to His Father and He Served!**

3. Finally He sacrificed His life!

He willingly sacrificed all He had to give on a Cross taking the reproach of everyone....

- I have often heard Revelation 12:11 quoted as a call to becoming an overcomer...

We overcome - hallelujah by the **Word of our Testimony and the Blood of the Lamb....**

- But all too often I fail to hear the rest of the sentence proclaimed in verse 11
“...and they did not love their life even when faced with death.”

They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death...

If I am honest do you know how much I shrink from death?

- I want to avoid the things that cost me and seemingly produce nothing?
- The nights spent in hospital rooms - the evenings spent pleading with someone who choose to reject my counsel anyway.....

They did not love their life even when faced with death.....oh beloved

- Here is where this begins to hit real time for most of us....

Who's strategy will I choose to believe and live by when the wheels come off and life does not make sense?

- Dr Phil or my Heavenly Father?
- Wall Street or my Heavenly Father?
- the White House or my Heavenly Father?

His invitation is simply - will you choose Kingdom Strategy?

When 'attack' is coming in my direction.....

1 - That instinctive initial gut reaction.....

- looks like Defense
- Looks like resistance
- Looks like force...

Those are not the tools of the Kingdom!

- Power, Control, Manipulation those are all the trademarks of the flesh and the adversary....
- Jesus invitation and example? Do not resist an evil person - that is do not respond in kind.....
- Blessing for cursing
- The point is that we invited to **respond in the Opposite Spirit!**

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When 'Attack' is coming my way

- Lay aside my 'gut' reaction

2. Remember that the Kingdom of Heaven was literally birthed in the Face of Hell!

- Jesus death - that **looked like sure defeat** was the means of the Greatest Victory over Hell
- His death defeated forever Sin, sickness, separation and the grave!

Jesus is in the Garden....under the weight of pressure....yet beloved His reaction is not like mine often is....

- Father where are You?
- Father do you see this?
- His eyes were fixed on the Fathers heart!

I do not know how the days ahead of us individually or corporately will play out but I am confident of this....His invitation is to live Col 3 with our gaze fixed on Him!

3. Finally I want you to see this....

Spiritual warfare is NOT primarily about knowing the Strategy of Hell....

- **Rather TRUSTING the Strategy of Heaven beloved**
 - In Submission to our Father
 - In choosing to Love and Sacrificially Serve what He loves....
- **Simply put beloved The strategy of Heaven is Not war as we have known it.....its choosing His leadership.....**
 - Put singers in front
 - Walking around a City

All of those crazy simple invitations were about choosing to Trust the Leadership of our Heavenly Father above anything else

- **It is not as complicated as we might want to make it....this is about choosing to be a One Thing People!**
- **Psalm 27:4**

*I'm asking GOD for one thing,
only one thing:
To live with him in his house
my whole life long.
I'll contemplate his beauty;
I'll study at his feet. MSG*

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