

BORROWED POWER

WILLIS 9/11/11

Ep4:27-32

Being that we are 6 days into a 40 day fast to break through the powers of resistance and breakout into a greater love for the lost...we are reminded (spiritually speaking) we were not born into times of peace; we were born into times of war.

- The war I speak of is not a battle of flesh and blood but a battle of principalities and powers in heavenly places. The focus of this war is not nation rising up against nation but the Kingdom of God in cosmic conflict with the kingdoms of this world.
- **However spiritual this conflict might be, the casualties of this war all too often play themselves out in flesh and blood realities.** Death, divorce, destruction and despair would be to name just a few of the casualties this war brings.
- So I don't come to inform you today as much as I come to exhort you. **Spiritual warfare causes you to forget.** It is not the knowledge of a thing we forget, it is the needed awareness we forget. **Consequently though we might be well informed we live as if we were unaware.** (Unaware of our heart condition, unaware of the consequence of actions)

So in light of this spiritual war we fight Paul continues in the Pastoral vein he started in v.17 and begins to hone in on some very key strategies for us to be effective in times of war.

v.17 "Do not give the devil an opportunity."

Though the Bible describes Lucifer as "the prince and the power of the air." He has no rightful ownership of the earth. In leading captivity captive, Jesus rendered the devil powerless. Col3:15 tells us "Jesus disarmed rulers and authorities and made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them through His death."

- **Consequently, the only power the devil has over us is borrowed power and the only way he can borrow power is through:**
 1. **Negative Agreement**
 2. **Illegal Conversation**
 3. **The Compromising of Truth**

4. Unconfessed Sin

In giving the devil opportunity we are loaning the devil power. The only problem with a loan to the devil is the manner in which he pays back. His only power is borrowed power and devastation is the manner in which he pays back.

The good news is borrowed power is limited power. If we loaned it to him through sin we can take it back through repentance. Righteousness is the manner in which we keep him from opportunity; repentance is the manner in which we buy back opportunities given.

Opportunity: a place, a piece of ground. Strongholds cannot be built on air. Lucifer is the prince and the power of the air but strongholds need a place. To build a stronghold a piece of ground must be given. **Never underestimate the power of a place given.**

- In Is14 we read Lucifer didn't raise his throne above the throne of God he simply said "I will" he sought to make a place. He didn't make himself like the Most High he simply said he would make himself like the Most High, his sin was trying to give himself a place
- **Never underestimate the place thoughts give. Never minimize the ground taken through sinful actions. This is war. The strongholds we battle were built upon the ground we gave.**

The story is told of a Haitian home owner who wanted to sell his home for 2000 dollars. The buyer was short the full amount so the owner negotiated a reduced price provided he could retain ownership of one single nail above the front door.

- The deal was reached and after several years the original owner wanted the house back. The new owner refused to sell so the original owner went out and found the carcass of a dead dog and hung from the single nail he still owned.
- Soon the house was unlivable and the new owner was forced to sell.

What you are into may seem as insignificant as a single nail but if it is an opportunity for the devil devastation will be the cost. **Pride, familiarity, negativity, rebellion, anger, ungodly beliefs, bitter root judgments, selling of truth...these and so much more are the "nails" upon which the devil hangs spiritual death.**

In fact this entire passage is a laundry list of what gives the devil borrowed power but in many cases fall under the category of "acceptable sins" (that is they are not murder, adultery, lust). The list begins with lying:

- I think all would agree lying is not acceptable in principle but it is quite the contrary in practice. In the book “The Day Americans Told the Truth” we find out **91% of those surveyed routinely lie about matters they consider non consequential.**
- **36% lied routinely about important matters; 86% lie to parents; 75% routinely lie to friends; 73% lie to siblings and 69% lie to their spouses.** (and the rest all lied)
- Is it any wonder the devil has the foothold on America he has?

Paul rounds out the list that gives the devil a place with anger, stealing, unwholesome words, bitterness, wrath, clamor, slander and malice. If these are not laid aside we stand the risk of grieving the Holy Spirit...v.30 **“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God...”**

The command presupposes that Holy Spirit is not an “it” that doesn’t feel. Rather, Holy Spirit is a person with feelings. Being God, He is not ruled by what He feels but He is most definitely touched...even grieved by He is made to feel.

- **Grieving the Holy Spirit does not change His character or His being as it might you and me. However, grieving certainly does change His mood.** Mood has to do with interaction; mood has to do with relationship.
- Paul didn’t say don’t anger Him. He said don’t grieve Him. Grief is a far more personal, even intimate emotion. We might say to someone we love the most, “I am not angry with you, I am grieved.”
- Anger is an emotion you can feel independent of love but the very nature of grief speaks of unfulfilled love. Though grieved Holy Spirit doesn’t reject or love any less.

Apostle Paul echoes a similar sentiment in 1Thes5:19 where he says “Do not quench the Holy Spirit.” **To grieve addresses His person and our need of intimacy. To quench addresses His function and our need of enablement. To quench suppresses His fire. To grieve breaks His heart.**

- To quench is to limit revelation, resist visitation, reject participation and prevent habitation.
- To grieve is to redefine obedience, reduce ownership, diminish proximity, harden your heart and sell off the truth.

So we see 2 crucial exhortations that take on a magnified importance when in times of war

1. Do not give the Devil an opportunity:

2. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit:

And if we are to do either the remedy is pretty much the same. To either take back opportunities given or restore grieve that has occurred we must:

- 1. Repent: Ac17:30** There are seasons when God seems to overlook the ignorance of sin but when truth is presented the season is over and the only answer is to confess sin and turn away.
- 2. Resist and Disagree: 1Pt5:8-9** Resist the devil, stand firm, do not sell out or reduce truth.
- 3. Release the Opposite Spirit: Rm12:21** Overcome the evil of the opportunity with the opposite good. If anger is the opportunity look for opportunities to love, bless, serve...If unbelief was the source of grief look for any opportunity to release faith.
- 4. Live in Humility and Love: Col3:12** In times of war and spiritual conflict humility is our stronghold of protection and love is always our first line of offense.

If either of these 2 are issues with you today let this moment be your turning point