



Empowering People to Change the World

Warfare Christmas

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Christmas Eve 2014 The Road

I've chosen to entitle the sermon this Christmas Eve, "Warfare Christmas" What an odd title. What an oxymoron. If there is any time of the year when the noun "warfare" doesn't fit, it's this time of year right?

- What an oxymoron: warfare Christmas?
- We have been led to believe that the appropriate title would be something like Peaceful Christmas, after all the angels sang out "Glory to God in the highest and peace to all men"
- Ex. You may have heard about the famous "Christmas Truce" in 1914, when the German and Allied soldiers at Christmas stepped out their trenches shook hands, sang Christmas hymns, shared smokes, and played ball together
- The most popular hymn of the holidays is arguably "Silent Night", not exactly a battle hymn
- The scene many of us erect in our homes is The Manger Scene, with Joseph, Mary, shepherds, baby Jesus, and some wise men
- Peaceful, silent, quiet, snow falling, singing in the heavenlies? Yes, I think all of this is true, but I want to look at Christmas from behind the cheery peaceful scene. Lets look a bit deeper, into the 4th dimension

Rev. 12:1

Now a great sign appeared in heaven:

- A "sign" in Greek, a *semeion*, a token, a warning, an omen portending a future event
- John is on the island of Patmos and is having an anthology of visions that speak of the past, present, and future

- John has been told, “Write these things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.” (1:19)
- John has just entered into heaven in Rev 11 and seen what is going to happen in the latter days, with the coming of the Anti-christ, and then he sees in the heavenly realm, the 4th Dimension, he sees the 24 elders falling on their faces and worshipping God
- John now gets a glimpse into what actually happened behind the sweet manger scene of the birth of Christ

a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.

- There is a battle against the birth of Christ. The Dragon, Satan, understands the significance of the birth of Christ
- This is “behind the scene” imagery of a war in the 4th dimension
- We are seeing the spiritual reality of Mary’s birth of Jesus—warfare Christmas. The savior of the world is battling to be born
- John is giving us a glimpse into True Reality—the spiritual reality of the birth of Jesus
- There is a war going on even before Christ entered the world

Vs. 4

His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.

- In Satan’s fall from his lofty place, as the most cherished cherub

in the heavenlies, he rebelled against God, his pride welled up

Isa 14

How you are fallen from heaven,

O Lucifer, son of the morning!

How you are cut down to the ground,

You who weakened the nations!

13 For you have said in your heart:

'I will ascend into heaven,

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;

I will also sit on the mount of the congregation

On the farthest sides of the north;

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,

I will be like the Most High.'¹

- 1/3 of the angels of heaven rebelled with him. These are the demons that are Satan's foot soldiers

And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.

- Satan was hovering over Mary, looking for any opportunity to devour her and the child
 - You remember the story-He is working through the elders in Nazareth to have Mary "put away"
 - Was an abortion considered? Was stoning being considered?
 - Herod is plotting, scheming to take out the promised king—trying to convince the Magi to tell him where the baby is being born
- Satan's unique and focused strategy hasn't changed—destroy, devour, steal, kill, God and his people
- Devour the image of Christ wherever it is found

¹ *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Is 14:12-14). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- This scheme is still at work—he is out to take you out! You are a created beauty of the image of God and Satan and his demons hate you. They are looking for any opportunity to devour you

She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

- Jesus was born in spite of Satan's attempts to take him out. Protected by God
- Herod, filled with satanic power, filled with such satanic strategies, goes after Jesus to find him through the Magi, but after failing there, goes absolutely berserk and has all the male children under 2 murdered in Bethlehem and districts nearby
- An angel appears to Joseph and warns him of Herod's intentions and they flee into Egypt. Jesus begins his life on the run. Jesus begins his journey on the earth fleeing for his life
- Jesus was born to rule the nations with a rod of iron. Jesus came with an intentionality to not only save us but in the process take out Satan and his angels
 - Jesus came to "destroy the works of the devil"
 - We only saw a glimpse of his rod of iron in his incarnation as he pushed back darkness through the proclamation and demonstration of the kingdom of God
 - What is the "rod of iron"? We read about in Ps 2, Rev 2, and now Rev 12. A symbol of authority, a symbol of unbreakable, effective power. Kingdom power.
- No other power can even come close to this power. The irony of our passage is that Jesus is born a helpless homeless baby in

a straw covered manger in a stinky cave to impoverished parents with a rod of iron in his heart!

- He who has all power born this way! Something to be learned. A new way of fighting. A new way of battling the enemy.

Vs.7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 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.

- The sign is no longer just about the male child, Jesus Christ, the Messiah being attacked but that the enemy and all his evil hosts are cast down to the earth. Now deceiving the whole world
- This is the domain of satan and his demons. “Authority and glory” have been given to him
- **And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been²**
- We are in a battle folks! If you haven’t figured this out, take a long look at your life this Christmas
- Don’t be shocked. Life is a battle. Life is a war. This Christmas we are calling it “Warfare Christmas” because was the First Warrior! He came to fight and win. And win he did.
- **The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.³**
- You are in the fight of your life in 2015

² *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Lk 4:6). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

³ *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Jn 10:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- But how will you fight? If you don't fight back with the weapons of God, you will not be here next Christmas...

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.

- The enemy is a devourer, destroyer, and now he is called an accuser—he accuses you day and night
- Saying, “You’re a loser, you’re a failure, you’re a tramp, you’re a liar...”
- But you can cast him out, you can overcome the enemy! We have the kingdom of God and the power of Christ
- Jesus said, “The works you’ve seen me doing, you also shall do and greater works” **YOU’VE BEEN GIVEN THE ROD OF IRON (Pick up the Rod of Iron)**
 - The kingdom of God—that is the rule, authority of Christ and the power of Christ—have come!! This is the rod of iron. You and I have been given the rod of iron, the co-rulership with Christ over this earth
 - **Col. 1 “strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy; giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.⁴**
 - **Revelation 5: And have made us kings and priests to**

⁴ *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Col 1:11–14). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”⁵

- **Read Rev. 20—in the last days it will be the saints ruling over the image, the Anti-christ will be dethroned by us**
 - When we live in the kingdom, as vice regents with the King, we pull down the accuser
 - We can overcome the power of demons through living a warfare Christmas. Warfare Christmas!
- He now shows us how we can do it:

Vs. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. 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.”

- We can rejoice this Christmas—You are an overcomer.
- We can rejoice because we have cast down and overcome the power of demons and satan
- How do we overcome? How do we cast out the accuser of the saints?

First, the basis of our triumph is the blood of Christ “they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb”

- Calvary, the cross! Christ’s completed, finished, all surpassing triumph at the cross is the basis of our power to overcome. It’s what he did, not what we did. This is our confidence, what Jesus did at the cross
- Your sins—past, present, and future—have all been placed

⁵ *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Re 5:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

under the blood, the death, and the resurrection of Christ

- ABC—the Authority, Basis, and Confidence we have to overcome is in Christ—his power his kingdom his kingship
- But just knowing that is not overcoming. It's a good start but there is more to this fight than knowing Jesus, you must now put your knowing into speaking...

Second, our passage says, “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony” You must speak it out!

- It is not going to cut the mustard just knowing this stuff. John tells us that even demons know who Jesus is
- You must speak it out and tell the devil where to go
- You must command demons to leave. You must take charge with your tongue
- This is worship; this is speaking; this is prayer; this is confession; this is loving people, encouraging people, blessing people
- Your tongue releases kingdom power
- When you share your testimony of what God has done in your life, you release power into your own life and the lives of everyone who hears it
- You overcome by telling your story. If you don't have a story then get one

Thirdly, you overcome by not fearing death, not clinging to your life but giving your life completely to Christ. “they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”

- Jesus said, “For whoever desires to save his life will lose

it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it."

- Don't love your life! Is what you're living for worth dying for? Or is what you are willing to die for worth living for?
- I propose today that if it ain't worth dying for then it ain't worth living for
- Live for something greater than yourself. Enter the greater story.
- This Christmas, remember that God became man, that we might become his vice regents on the earth with purpose and power from him
- We can overcome the devil on the basis of what Jesus did on the cross. We can overcome the enemy by speaking out the truth of Christ's kingdom and his power. We can overcome the enemy through having no fear but walking by faith

You've received a Rod of Iron—this is the power and authority of Christ. You are a son/daughter of the King. Let me encourage you to speak to the devil and his hosts and with humility, walk in confidence