

Title: It's War!

Text: Luke 22:31-38

Illustration: A decade before WWII broke out Winston Churchill saw that war was coming. In a speech he gave in 1934 he said that the "one-sided" pacifism will not make war less likely, but would have the opposite effect."

Seeking to avoid war with Germany, Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain had a policy of appeasement → allowing Hitler to expand German territory unchecked. 1936 he entered the Rhineland, 1938 he annexed Austria and later that year Chamberlain signed the Munich Agreement which allowed Germany to occupy the German speaking part of Czechoslovakia. 1939 Germany invaded Poland and because of a treaty England entered the war.

We are right now at War and the stakes are much higher

Big Idea: We Must Actively Engage in Battle (Now – we can't put it off)

In this War, there are two battle fronts occurring simultaneously

- I. The Battle Within (for our souls)
- II. The Battle Without (for the souls of others)

I. **The Battle Within** – In the Battle Within we have two enemies -

A. Enemy #1: Satan

Satan is Determined –

(vs. 31) "Simon, Simon, behold, **Satan demanded to have you**, that he might sift you like wheat..."

"Pleading with every fiber of his being"

Satan is not content to simply hurl insults at us – he is determined to do everything he possibly can to destroy your faith.

Satan is in Discriminate –

(vs. 31) "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have **you**, that he might sift **you** like wheat..." "each of you" (2x)

If you have a pulse he's coming after you...

He went after JESUS in Luke 4

He went after JUDE earlier in Luke 22 ("bottom tier disciple")

He's going after PETER in today's text ("top tier disciple")

Satan is Evil –

(vs. 31) "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, **that he might sift you like wheat...**

Sift us like wheat – He wants to shake our faith so violently that it would crumble and be blown away by the wind.

1 Peter 5:8 "...Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." (kill, steal & destroy)

Satan is a Strategist –

the timing of his attacks are carefully thought out

Jesus – John TB – just proclaimed Behold the Lamb.... / HS descended / God spoke
Now he's in the wilderness → "*departed until an opportune time*"

Peter – Dinner party with Jesus / washed feet / "eat and drink in the coming kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Transition: In The Battle Within: We have Two enemies – Enemy #1 is Satan... as bad as this enemy is, we actually have an even greater and more subtle enemy than Satan...

B. Enemy #2: Spiritual Pride

JE "Undiscerned Spiritual Pride": The first and worst cause of errors that abound in our day and age is spiritual pride. This is the main door by which the devil comes into the hearts of those who are zealous for the advancement of Christ. It is the chief inlet of smoke from the bottomless pit to darken the mind and mislead the judgement... Until this disease is cured, medicines are applied in vain to heal all other diseases.

(vs. 33-34) ³³ Peter said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death." ³⁴ Jesus said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me."

Peter's attitude: "Though they all fall away because of you, I will never fall away."

If you are here this morning & you feel weak & broken & you question whether there's any hope for you → there's hope for you.

But if you are here & you feel spiritually superior to those around you → you are in trouble.

→ "Therefore, let anyone who thinks that he stands, take heed lest he fall."

Paul understood this:

(54 AD) 1 Corinthians – “For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle...”

(62 AD) Ephesians - “To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given...”

(Mid 60s AD) 1 Timothy – “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.”

But for the grace of God, there go I... “Bradford – actually unknown”

“I’m the scariest person on the planet. Because I am the biggest danger to myself...”

Transition: In The Battle Within – We have two enemies: Satan & Spiritual Pride

There is profound encouragement in the middle of these two enemies: JESUS

Now, we want Jesus to step in with a Satan – crushing miracle like the calming of the sea or raising the dead...

(vs. 32) but I have prayed for **you** that **your** faith may not fail. And when **you** have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”

In (vs. 31) the “you” is *plural* - Satan demanded to have “each of you” / to sift “each...”

But here in (vs. 32) it’s singular – *in other words, this is not some sort of blanket prayer but it’s intensely personal.*

- At the same time, this isn’t just for Peter...

Rom 8:34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Heb 7:25 Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.

But what is he praying for????

Jesus steps in and prays → not with a Satan crushing miracle – like the calming of the sea or raising the dead... not praying for our comfort, he’s not praying for our physical or relational healing →

He’s praying for us that our faith would not fail. “run out or die out” / “collapse into nothingness

& Notice how confident his prayer is: *When you have turned again, strengthen your brothers...*

...you're going to mess up big time and your faith will be battered and bruised but it will immerge as a repentant faith..."

The Battle Within is a battle for our very souls → (nothing can separate us from the love of Christ)

The Solution: Jesus is praying for us!

Transition: It's War – and there are two fronts: The Battle Within &

II. The Battle Without

(vs. 35-36) ³⁵ And he said to them, "When I sent you out with no moneybag or knapsack or sandals, did you lack anything?" They said, "Nothing." ³⁶ He said to them, "But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one..."

Here's a paraphrase: "Hey, remember when you went out before first the 12 of you and then 72? Remember how awesome it was? People provided for all your needs, even feeding and housing you. And remember when you returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" Well it's not going to be like that anymore. You are going to experience stiff opposition:

Let's start with what he's not saying here:

It's going to be tough now and so you are going have to bring a sword and hold it to their throats and make em believe the gospel!"

Not → *Things are going to get really tough so you better accumulate weapons and establish an arsenal in your basement for the days ahead!*

He's not talking about accumulating physical weapons: It's ok to buy guns but don't think there is a biblical mandate to buy guns.

This is what he's saying!

The context here is sharing the good news of the gospel and Jesus is speaking metaphorically about accumulating weapons. How do we know for sure?

- When the greatest injustice came just a couple hours later (his own betraying with a kiss) – if there ever was a time to resort to violence, it was then and there. Jesus told Peter to put the sword away!
- When the disciples (in this text said, "Lord, Lord, here are two swords.") he didn't said, "There are 11 of you, what difference could 2 swords possibly make?! Rather, he said, "It is enough" or "*enough of this kind of talk!*"

- All of his were mistreated and most were martyred and yet none of them resorted to using physical weapons.

Acts 4: (Peter & John) - ...rulers, elders & scribes w/ Annas the H.P. & Caiaphas & John & Alexander and all who were of the high – priestly family.... (only 2 swords???)
 → grant your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness... while you

Jesus is talking about a mindset:

German Theologian: “In time of war, a warrior will give everything he has for the weapon that he needs in order to be able to fight – even the shirt off his back.”

2 Cor 10:3-5 → ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵ We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,
 Eph 6 → the sword of the spirit

But, If you are spending more time building an arsenal to protect you from hostile neighbors than equipping yourself to share the gospel with them then you have missed the thrust of this passage.

(there’s a sifting that is taking place right now and Jesus is praying that your faith will stand. Will you rely on yourself (putting your faith in other things, or will you put your faith in Jesus?)

Transition: It’s War – and there are two fronts: The Battle Within & The Battle Without
 The first is a battle for our souls and the second is a battle for the souls of others...

III. The Gospel

(vs. 37) For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in me: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors.’ For what is written about me has its fulfillment.”

Isaiah 53:

Jesus was despised and rejected by men;
 He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;
 He was smitten by God,
 He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities
 The LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all

He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth

Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush him; he has put him to grief;

12b he poured out his soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet he bore the sin of many and makes intercession for the transgressors.

Reflection: It is true that if you are a Christian – nothing can separate us from the love of God & no one can snatch us out of Jesus' hands.

Reflect on the fact that this is only true because Jesus died in our place and is now interceding for us (24 – 7).

Application:

We should pray as well: Spend less time praying for secondary things that lead to comfort and more time praying for protection against unbelief.

The Battle Within:

Lord's prayer: "And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one..."
"Pray that you may not enter into temptation." / "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

The Battle Without:

Jesus looked out and said the fields are white for harvest therefore pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers...