

## Sermon Study Guide

The Story Houston - March 10, 2019

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### Intro to 'This Is War'

Welcome to this new, 4-part sermon series about the spiritual battles of everyday life. For the next month, we will study what the Bible says about the spiritual realm, and we'll pay close attention to what Jesus had to say about Satan, angels, demons, and the epic struggle of light against the darkness. I know this subject will be uncomfortable for some people; you might not believe in creatures like demons at all. If that's the case, all I ask is that you approach these teachings with an open mind. Remember: you can always bring questions, feedback, or push-back to the 5:00 Q&A service, or email me at the above address.

Before hearing this sermon, what did you believe about demons, Satan, and the spiritual realm? On what knowledge or experience did you base your beliefs?

Why is it impossible to take the Bible and Jesus seriously without taking Satan and demonic forces seriously?

### 'The Satan'

What does the Bible say about "the satan", our enemy?

If you know the enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.

- Sun Tzu, The Art of War

Matthew 4:1-11 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot

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against a stone.”

Jesus answered him, “It is also written, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’” Then the devil left him, and the angels came and attended him.

What event immediately preceded this story in Matthew’s gospel, and why does that matter?

Who led Jesus into the wilderness, and for what purpose?

Why is “tested” a better word than “tempted”?

What do you think it means that Satan tested Jesus with good ideas (food, fame, power, etc.), and that he used the Bible to do so?

Have you ever been spiritually tested or tempted to believe or do something just because it felt good at the time? What happened?

To combat Satan’s advances, Jesus also quoted the Bible. Why do you think it’s important to study, know, and even memorize scripture passages to use during moments of testing?

*Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

- James 4:7

*Your Notes:*