

# BUILT FOR BATTLE

October 8, 2017 | Pastor Randy Remington

As we have noted in this series, many people, even from our own country that identify themselves as “Christians”, do not believe in an actual Devil or in a spiritual unseen world.

For those who are using this study in another season and time, we just experienced the tragic Las Vegas shooting. (So far 58 dead 489 wounded) No matter where you land on the subject of an unseen world, we were reminded in October of 2017 that evil exists in our world. The real answers for this evil, as we said in our last study, will not be found in any human resource or solution...evil will still exist. One of the keys to overcoming evil is to first admit there is indeed evil.

Remember this is not a battle of equals, God is the Almighty God of all of creation, Satan is a limited created being.

The scriptures tell us that the devil comes to steal, kill and destroy. In contrast Jesus came to bring us life, life to its fullest.

Las Vegas reminds us that what the enemy intends for evil, God uses for good. There has been a spiritual awakening in Las Vegas (of all places) where the city leadership has called on spiritual leaders to gather and pray.

So what does Jesus say about the church, many have forgotten this aspect of who we are. As we look at these next points, keep in mind; “the law of first mention”. For example, we hear the first mention of “marriage” in Genesis. Then we will see it consistently woven through the scriptures.

## 1. THE FIRST MAN MENTIONED IN THE CHURCH AGE

*“Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence, and violent people have been raiding it. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John.” (Matthew 11:11-13 NIV)*

John the Baptist is the first man mentioned and a key from the old testament to the church age. Everything the law and prophets pointed to this moment, it has begun; first John the Baptist, then Jesus. As soon as Jesus shows up, demonic activity starts and increases; why... because they know it’s the beginning of the end. Listen to this passage in the NLT:

*“I tell you the truth, of all who have ever lived, none is greater than John the Baptist. Yet even the least person in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he is! And from the time John the Baptist began preaching until now, the Kingdom of Heaven has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it. For before John came, all the prophets and the law of Moses looked forward to this present time.” “ (Matthew 11:11-13 NLT)*

Notice that the language Jesus uses, is the language of battle and conflict; **has been forcefully advancing, and violent people are attacking it**. The church is to advance against the enemy, “the devil only responds to force”. The Church has been given authority to lay hold and take back from the kingdom of darkness, there is no other way.

## 2. THE FIRST MENTION OF THE CHURCH

*“When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”*

*“They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:13-19)*

As the church we are part of a loving family, but we are called to be an invasive force in our communities. It is our birth right, our assignment as the church in a world full of bondage, addictions and prisoners. We are part of an army to take down gates that hold people captive.

- We can never be content and get in a maintenance mode...we have to get aggressive and make it very difficult to go to hell from Beaverton, Oregon. Our motto should be, if you want to go to hell from Beaverton, Oregon, you'll have to move.

We are not going to quit, give up or slow down. All things are either static, growing or stopped. We want our local church to be in a dynamic state, we'll never be satisfied as long as there are people in our community who need Jesus.

- Do we want people more than the devil does?

Satan can't attack God so he attacks what means the most to him...people. It's no different for us, think about the attack on our kids, or the kids of our community. He attacks the weakest and most vulnerable. Whoever wants them more will win them.

- Assume that we are the only church in town.

This is not a sectarian statement, but we can't assume others are doing this. When the church pulls back there is a vacuum.

### 3. THE FIRST MISSION OF THE CHURCH

*"The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven." (Luke 10:17-20)*

We don't know who these 72 were, but when they reported what had happened, he said "I saw Satan fall like lightning". Yes, because Jesus is God, he saw Lucifer fall from heaven, but there is more to this statement. As the 72 went out and invaded the darkness, Jesus is saying, I saw Satan losing his place, being dislodged. When we take ground and gates, Satan loses ground.

### 4. THE FIRST MANDATE OF THE CHURCH

*"Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish.' "Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Won't he first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand? If he is not able, he will send a delegation while the other is still a long way off and will ask for terms of peace. In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples." (Luke 14:25-33)*

First this statement from Jesus is a "comparative statement", he doesn't want us to hate our family. But he is telling them I must be first and that this will cost you something...everything! He is calling us to battle, to war against the kingdom of Satan.

#### THREE THINGS NEEDED:

- HATRED FOR THE ENEMY

*"The one who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work." (1 John 3:8)*

- **GREAT COMPASSION FOR LOST AND HURTING PEOPLE**

*“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:18-19)*

We need to be a local church that is accepting and not judgmental. People will be coming to the church that are very broken, and we must be willing to have things get messy without passing any judgment.

- **ACTIVE POWER AND AUTHORITY TO OVERCOME THE ENEMY**

*“I give you authority (exousia - the divine right to rule) over serpents and scorpions and over all the power (dunamis - explosive power) of the enemy.”*

### HE CALLS US TO BE PART OF HIS MISSION:

“If the church is removed, God’s restraining power is gone”

“These are spiritual matters that require spiritual answers”

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When terrible situations like the Las Vegas shooting occur, what are some things that go through your thinking? It can be another event, but what are your thoughts about God, the devil and evil in general? Do you see God’s hand in the aftermath working out things for the good?
2. On page 1 of your notes, Pastor Randy talked about “the first man mentioned in the church age”. What role does John the Baptist play entering the church age? Also after reading the Matthew 11 passage, what does the language of battle and conflict that Jesus uses say to you?
3. When we look at the “first mention of the church”, what does this scripture mean to you; “I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it”? What is the Church called to be and do? Also when you read what Pastor Randy wrote about our local fellowship in Beaverton, how does this challenge you personally?
4. As we consider the first mission of the church, what did he give them authority over? Also what do you see in Jesus’ response to the 72 about Satan falling like lightning?
5. Take another peek at our Luke 14 passage, what is the first mandate to the Church?
6. Lastly, on page 2 please discuss the “three things needed”.