WARM-UP (10-15 minutes)

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another. No right or wrong answers.

- Have you ever gotten into a conflict but couldn’t rationally understand why?
- Did you grow up believing in a supernatural world?
- Have you ever felt an unseen evil presence?

WORD (10-15 minutes)

Sermons can be heard online at bethelbrentwood.org/media.

Introduction

- War conjures awful images.
- War is usually avoided at all costs.
- But we are already in a spiritual war whether we desire it or not.
- Even peacemakers must engage in this battle.
- It is a conflict, a battle that cannot be avoided.

Revelation 12:7-12  War in Heaven

- Satan is forced from heaven to earth.
- God did not directly engage in this warfare.
- Satan is not his equal.
- God delegated the battle to the rest of the angels.
- Satan was a guardian angel until iniquity was found in him.
- Iniquity is a disposition in opposition to God, his will and his word.
- Isaiah 14:12-14 records how Satan became proud and self-willed.
- When we are proud and self-willed, we are like Satan, enemies of God.
- Satan is highly active in the earth today.
- He was a force to be reckoned with in heaven.
- He is a force to be reckoned with on earth.

Overcoming Satan

- Satan is a formidable foe.
- The Bible records many of his activities: deception, accusation, lies, illnesses, resistance, torment, violence, murder, oppression, disasters, treachery, etc.
- We cannot overcome him in our own strength due to our sin.
- But Jesus triumphed over him.
- 1 John 3:8 Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.
- In Christ we too can triumph over him.
- Luke 10:17-20 Jesus gives us authority to overcome all the power of the enemy.
- Revelation 12:11 We overcome by:
  - Trusting in the blood of Jesus
  - Speaking our testimony
  - Not fearing death
- Angels are ministering spirits sent to serve us, the heirs of salvation.
- They are sent by God to help us in our spiritual battle.
- Our battle is ultimately not against other people, but against demonic powers.

- Too often we live as though the war is a game and not real until something bad happens.
- We need to approach spiritual warfare seriously and train ourselves to win.

- Winning in spiritual warfare requires three things:
  - Physical discipline
  - Mental determination
  - Spiritual devotion

**Physical Discipline**
- 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 Paul disciplined his body so as to win God's prize.
- Romans 6:12-13 Our bodies are to be offered to God as instruments of righteousness.
- We must discipline our bodies through habitual use to honor God.

**Mental Determination**
- "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7
- We must make deep decisions of conviction that we will do God's will.
- This will guard us in the course of life, lessening the power of temptation.

**Spiritual Devotion**
- We must be devoted to Christ.
- We must be devoted to prayer and to the Word of God.
- Three key spiritual weapons are:
  - Prayer: Matthew 26:36-45 Jesus overcame the weakness of his humanity through prayer
  - Praise: 2 Chronicles 20:1-30 Jehoshaphat triumphs over enemies through praise
  - Proclamation: Matthew 4:1-11 Jesus overcomes the enemy through the Word of God

**PERSONAL APPLICATION (10-15 minutes)**

Choose a question below to answer, or ask another.

- Have you ever overcome a spiritual enemy by any of the means described by Ps James above? If so, which one(s)?
- Are you typically alert to the fact that we are in a spiritual war? Why, or why not?
- Is there someone God wants you to help win a spiritual battle? How can you help them?

**PRAYER (10-15 minutes)**

Pray for any of the following, as well as any other requests you may have.

- That God would open our eyes to the reality of the spiritual warfare in which we are engaged.
- That God would remind us to use our spiritual weapons against our spiritual enemies.
- That God would lead us to people who we can help set free from the enemy's grip.