

The connection between Mission and Spiritual Warfare

(A timely topic for a church on mission)

Covering a range of related issues:

April - July

1. Mission breakthrough & spiritual warfare
2. How Christ's death disarms the Enemy
3. The spiritual battle for young hearts & minds
4. Jesus cast out demons
5. Resting and retreating as spiritual warfare
6. What are Principalities & Powers? (6pm)
7. Our battle with The World, The Flesh and The Devil (6pm)

Palm Sunday

Why a donkey, not a war horse?

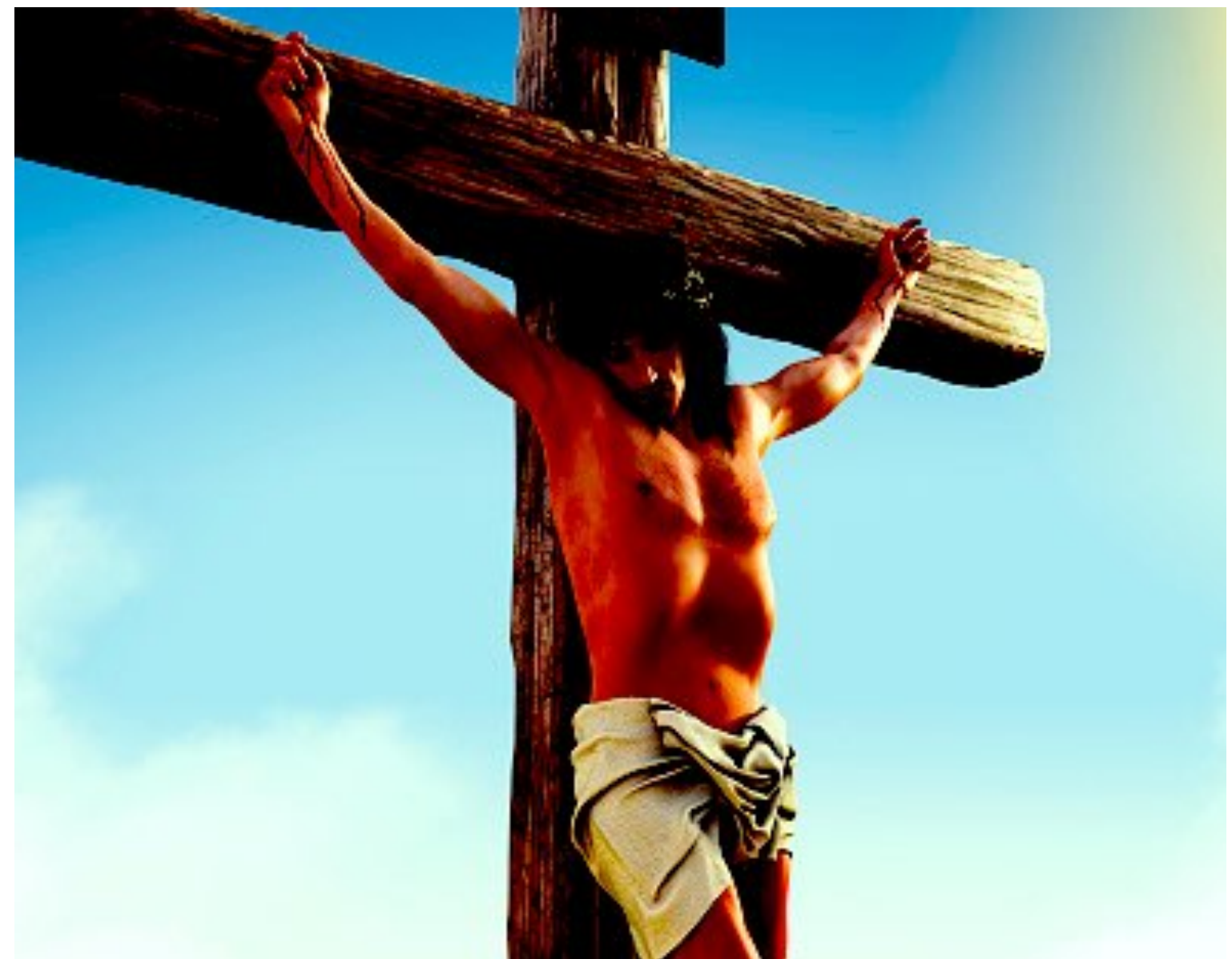
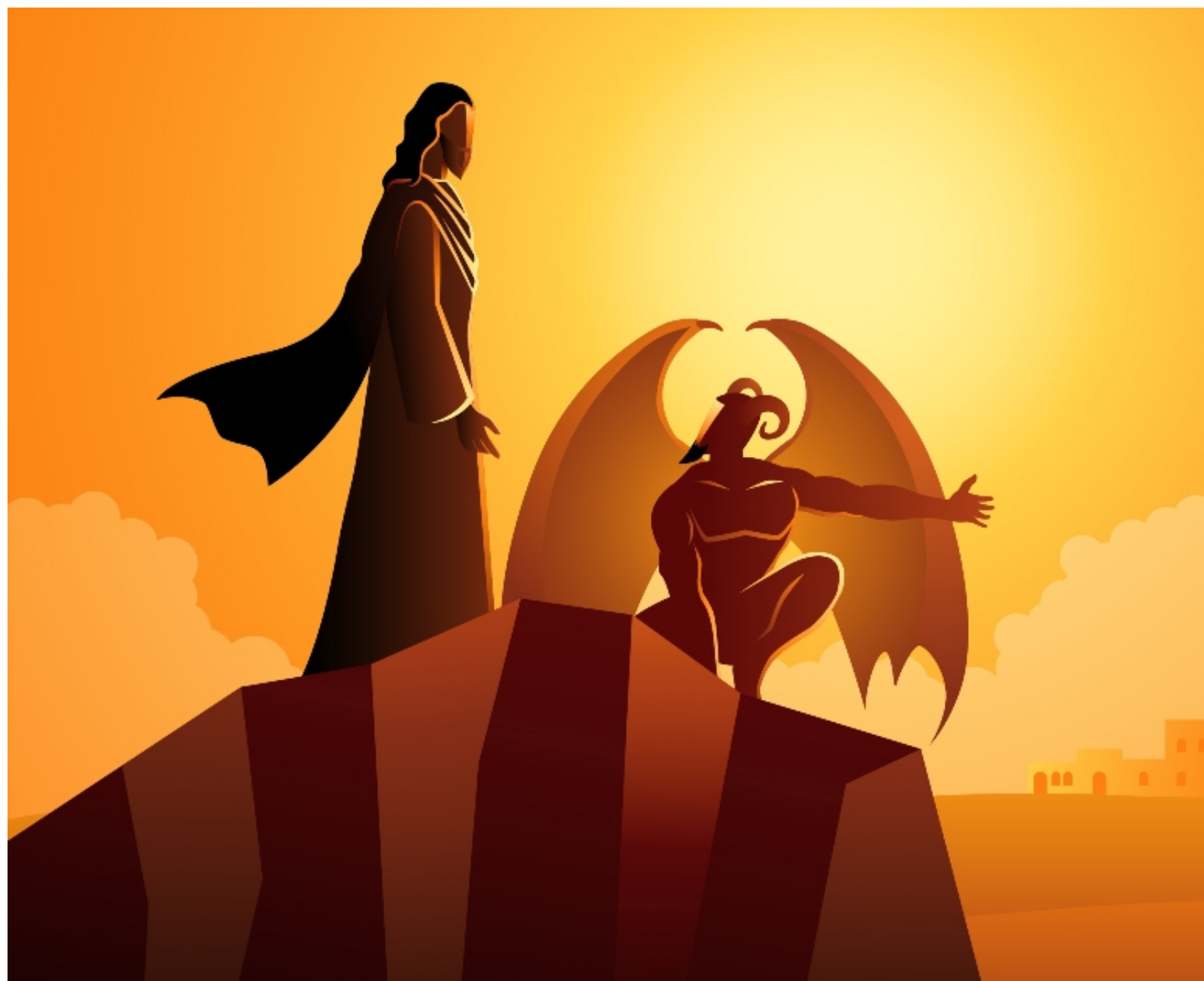


Why is mission so hard?

1. Humans are fallen and some won't listen
2. Western Christians are out of practice
3. But is there any other reason?

The purpose of Jesus Christ's coming:

“...The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.” 1 John 3:8



Jesus encountered evil throughout his ministry

Tempted in the wilderness

Luke 4:1-13

Seven specific deliverances

1. Man in a synagogue **Mark 1:21-28**

2. A blind and mute demoniac

3. The Gadarene demoniac

4. A mute demoniac

5. Daughter of a Syrophenician mother

6. A boy at the base of Mt. Hermon

7. Woman in a synagogue

Satanic opposition in a follower!

Matt. 16:23

Conflict with religious leaders

Matt. 23:13-36

Jesus believed in a personal devil and his demonic forces

“You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” John 8:44

“How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house without first tying him up. Then he can plunder the strong man’s house.” Mk.3:23-27

The limitations of modern understanding

Psychology

Psychiatry

Sociology

Medicine

Medical intervention & Education
is only a partial help to the problem of evil

Jesus regarded the mission of his disciples as spiritual warfare

“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



So Jesus and his followers faced
spiritual opposition while involved in
God's mission to share the Good
News

Jesus regarded his coming death as spiritual warfare:

“ Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name!””

John 12:27-28

“...Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”

John 12:31-32



What did Jesus achieve by dying?

“And having **disarmed** the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” Col. 2:15

What will he do at his return?

“Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has **destroyed** all dominion, authority and power. 1 Cor.15:24

Principalities & Powers

Early church belief

Put on the full armour of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

Eph. 6:11-12

So meanwhile in **what ways** are these disarmed Powers still fighting us?

Accusation,

Deception,

Temptation,

Distraction,

Limited wicked influence (e.g. some sickness),

Manipulation of un-believing people

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”
John 10:10

The background of the image is a large, intense fire with bright orange and yellow flames. In the lower-left foreground, there is a dark silhouette of a person standing with their back to the camera, looking towards the fire. The overall scene is dramatic and fiery.

**And *why* are these disarmed Powers
still fighting us?**

**Because they know their end will come
when the Great Commission is complete.**

So what will we do?

- 1. If we back off from the Great Commission, we become blind and deaf captives to the deceptive powers of the Enemy (POWs)**
- 2. If we commit to the Great Commission, we will join a battle, but can learn how to overcome the Enemy together**

A way forward

“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.”
2 Cor. 10:3-5

Believing what Christ believed, doing what Jesus did