

## **I. Recap of Day One Presentation on Spiritual Battle**

### **A. Context**

1) Spiritual battle is real

Ephesians 6:11

2) Spiritual battle is personal: “The field of battle between good and evil is the human soul. It is in the soul that this battle rages every moment of life” (Padre Pio of Pietrelcina)

3) Spiritual battle is a normal part of our Christian journey and God allows it for our growth in holiness and maturity.

4) Jesus, the incarnate Son of God came destroy the work of the devil.

1 John 3:8

Galatians 5:1

John 8:36

Luke 4:18

We have nothing to fear from the enemy. Everything that happens is for our good and for God’s glory.

Genesis 50:20

### **B. We live in the age between the comings**

CCC 1038-1039

2 Peter 2-3

**C. The degree of our freedom and victory in this in-between era depends on the degree of our faith.**

“Everything that has being comes from God. Nothing, therefore, that happens to us—trouble or temptation or injury or torment or slander or anything else that could possibly happen to us—can or will disturb us. Rather, we are content and hold these things in reverence, reflecting that they come from God and are given to us as good favors, not out of hatred but out of love” (St. Catherine of Siena).

“And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28).

“If I were to meet the slave-traders who kidnapped me and even those who tortured me, I would kneel and kiss their hands, for if that did not happen, I would not be a Christian and religious today” (St. Josephine Bakhita of Sudan).

“We may not understand His Will for us in time, but in eternity the veil will be drawn and we shall see that He acted only for our happiness: (St. Rose Philippine Duchesne).

Proverbs 31:25

“She is clothed in strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.”

Psalms 23:5

“You prepare a banquet for me in the presence of my enemies.”

**D. The saints can teach us to have a proper attitude towards evil and towards the enemy.**

1. Take the devil seriously

"I have known people of a very high degree of spirituality who have reached this state [of union with God], and whom, notwithstanding, the devil, with great subtlety and craft, has won back to himself. For this purpose he will marshal all the powers of hell, for, as I have often said, if he wins a single soul in this way, he will win a whole multitude. The devil has much experience in this matter" (St. Teresa of Avila, *V Mansions*, iv; Peers, II, 265, as quoted in P. Marie Eugene, O.C.D., *I Want to See God*, 102).

2. Don't give him what he wants (attention)

"May what I have said help the true servant of God to make little account of these horrors, which the devils present us with in order to make us afraid. Let us realize that, every time we pay little heed to them, they lose much of their power and the soul gains much more control over them" (*Life*, xxxi; Peers, I, 207-208, as quoted in P. Marie Eugene, O.C.D., *I Want to See God*, 114).

3. Stand up to his attacks with confidence.

"Not a fig shall I care for all the devils in hell: it is they who will fear me. I do not understand these fears. 'Oh, the devil, the devil!' we say, when we might be saying 'God! God!' and making the devil tremble. Of course we might, for we know he cannot move a finger unless the Lord permits it. Whatever are we thinking of!" (St. Teresa of Avila, *Autobiography*, viii, 119, as quoted in P. Marie Eugene, O.C.D., *I Want to See God*, 121).

## 1, 2, 3, ∞ Lay It Down - Notes & Quotes

### II. Transition - 1, 2, 3, ∞

- A. Lay it down
- B. Let it go
- C. Make new choices: yes & no
- D. ∞ Ask the Spirit to make you whole!

Galatians 2:19-21

### III. Step 1 - Lay it Down

**A. Repent and Believe the Good News!** Notice how there are two parts to Jesus' message: Repent *and* Believe. But these two parts happen in one movement of surrender.

"You gotta' serve someone" (Bob Dylan)

Mark 1:15

#### **B. What do we surrender to God? What do we lay down?**

First, we lean into BELIEF. We respond to Jesus' call to believe the good news, not the bad news offered us by the devil.

We surrender

- 1) Our past
- 2) Our pain
- 3) Our problems

**This trusting surrender—or to use a Catholic word, this "abandonment" is key to ...**

1) Sanctity: "If the work of our sanctification presents, apparently, the most insurmountable difficulties, it is because we do not know how to form a just idea of it. In reality sanctity can be reduced to one single practice, fidelity to the duties appointed by God. Now this fidelity is equally within each one's power whether in its active practice, or passive exercise. The active practice of fidelity

## 1, 2, 3, ∞ Lay It Down - Notes & Quotes

consists in accomplishing the duties which devolve upon us whether imposed by the general laws of God and of the Church, or by the particular state that we may have embraced. Its passive exercise consists in the loving acceptance of all that God sends us at each moment" (*Abandonment to Divine Providence*, Jean-Pierre de Caussade))

2) Intimacy with God: "Abandonment alone brings me into your arms, O Jesus!" Therese of Lisieux

3) Peace: "My child, know that the greatest obstacles to holiness are discouragement and an exaggerated anxiety. These will deprive you of the ability to practice virtue. All temptations united together ought not disturb your interior peace, not even momentarily. Sensitiveness and discouragement are the fruits of self-love. Have confidence, My child. Do not lose heart in coming for pardon, for I am always ready to forgive you. As often as you beg for it, you glorify My mercy" (*Divine Mercy in My Soul*, St. Faustina, 1488).

4) Freedom: "The highest and most fruitful form of human freedom is found in accepting, even more than in dominating. We show the greatness of our freedom when we transform reality, but still more when we accept it trustingly as it is given to us day after day" (*Interior Freedom*, Jacques Philippe).

**C. Finally, we lay down our sin. We repent.** We lay down our pride, our "unholy self-reliance" (Schuchts). We acknowledge our inability to control our destiny, to find purpose in our lives, to comfort and satisfy ourselves truly, to provide for our deepest needs, to protect ourselves from pain and suffering and death.

## D. Broad and narrow ways

Modern people do not like to acknowledge sin as a reality. Actually, it's not really a modern problem:

Proverbs 14:12

Sirach 21:10

Matthew 7:13 IV. Step 2 - Let it Go

What do we let go of? We let go of our own guilt and shame and self-condemnation. And then we let go of the blame and shame and condemnation that we put on others.

## IV. Let It Go

### A. Receiving Mercy

1. Mercy is the answer.

Mercy has saved us.

Mercy is the free gift of God.

Ephesians 2:8

"There is no sin that God's mercy cannot reach and wipe away when it finds a repentant heart seeking to be reconciled with the Father"; "Once mercy has been truly experienced, it is impossible to turn back. It grows constantly and it changes our lives ... it brings about a new heart, capable of loving to the full" (*Misericordia et Misera* 12 & 16)

2. The enemy of our souls want to keep us from mercy

Self-justification and self-condemnation are Satan's 1-2 punch, keeping us from mercy in the middle. Don't fall for it! Accept the mercy offered by Jesus.

## 1, 2, 3, ∞ Lay It Down - Notes & Quotes

3. Don't elevate your status as a sinner!

Easter *Exultat*

2 Corinthians 12:9

"Misery attracts mercy" St. Therese of Lisieux

Micah 7:18

"If I had committed all possible crimes, I would still have the same confidence [in God's mercy]. This multitude of offenses would be alike a drop of water thrown into a flaming furnace. I would go, broken-hearted to repent and throw myself into the arms of Jesus, for I know how much he cherishes the prodigal child who returns to him . . . "

St. Therese of Lisieux

### **B. Giving Mercy**

1. Why Forgive? 5 great reasons:

#### For your own happiness and health

According to the Mayo Clinic and confirming other research on the topic of forgiveness, people who forgive have stronger social connections, better mental health, better sleep, better cardiovascular health, more energy, a stronger immune system, and they live longer than people who don't.

Unforgiveness is literally drinking poison and hoping that someone ELSE will die.

#### For gratitude's sake

Colossians 3:13

Ephesians 4:32

#### For love of God

John 14:21

John 13:14

## 1, 2, 3, ∞ Lay It Down - Notes & Quotes

John 13:34  
John 15:13  
Matthew 7:12  
1 John 4:20  
CCC 1849-50

### For fear of hell

Galatians 5:19-23  
Matthew 18  
Luke 11:4  
Luke 6:37  
Mark 4:24

### For your freedom!

Any time we stand in direct disobedience to God, we are aligning ourselves with the Evil One and giving him an open door into our lives.

## **2. Why we still don't forgive**

1. Pride
2. Judgment, and self-righteousness
3. Fear
4. Doubt
5. Deception
  - a. Forgiveness is not the same thing as reconciliation.
  - b. Forgiveness is not minimizing wrongdoing.
  - c. Forgiveness is not letting someone off the hook. It's not excusing.

"Forgiveness says, 'Yes, you have done this thing but ... I will never hold it against you, but excusing says, "yes, I see that you couldn't help it or didn't really mean it. You are not to blame." So, forgiveness and excusing are almost opposites" (CS Lewis)

- d. Forgiving is not blaming
- e. Forgiveness is not healing.
- f. Forgiveness is not a feeling.

## **V.. Victim Spirit**

A. The offspring of unforgiveness: self-pity, judgment, blame, grudges, jealousy, bitterness, resentment, the desire for revenge, anger, hatred, and maybe even murderous thoughts.

B. The fundamental lie behind a victim spirit is that Jesus' power is limited and his love is not always available. Freedom is only possible for some people. Getting free means rejecting these lies: "Jesus cannot redeem my life" or "Jesus will not help me."

C. Jesus himself was victimized. Yet he knew his own authority (John 10:18).

Jesus never forgot his identity, who he truly was, the Beloved Son of the Father. His very last words were, "Father, into your hands I commit my spirit" (Luke 23:46).

D. "To err is human, to forgive divine" (Alexander Pope). We can only forgive when we unite ourselves to Christ, to his perfect forgiveness and abandonment to the Father on the Cross. His power working in us accomplishes the impossible, the divine.

"With human beings it is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 9:16-30).

E. There is infinite freedom on the other side of forgiveness!