

FEB 25, 2018– 2nd Sunday in Lent – **Color is Purple**

Gen 17:1-7, 15-16; Ps 22:23-31; Rom 4:13-25; St Mark 8:31-38

Title: "Satan Behind, God Ahead!"

Grace and peace to you through God our Father, the Lord Jesus Christ, and His Holy Spirit. Amen!

Do you know that God wants you to live a victorious life and have top of mind awareness in you? God wants us to occupy our place in His kingdom, which this is a place of awareness, blessing, service and victory! This is a world class event and **God is the point man of our spiritual warfare and journey!**
(PAUSE)

Years ago, during my early days in the military as an Infantry Soldier, when the enemy situation seemed unclear or when contact with the enemy might occur, we would quickly use the wedge formation with wing-men on the right and left. But the most critical position was **the point man**.

The **Point Man** had to be vigilant because, more than likely, he would be the first person to see the enemy and was required to alert the other Soldiers and take appropriate action.

So here's the point: When we make a spiritual application to this **TACTICAL MOVEMENT**, it is plain to see the Jesus is our **Point Man – who alerts us imminant danger when we have "top of mind awareness!"**

You see, it is Jesus who knows all things before they occur and can help **divert** our entrapment - if we follow his lead and are attentive to His Word!

Let us be reminded that God is in us – and **NOT just while** we are at church on Sundays! I say this because "spiritual warfare" is very real and **God is our defense!**

So when is the last time you went on the DEFENSIVE... and **ambushed Satan with God's Word and Power**? When is the last time you told him to get lost, or to take a hike, **or** get behind

you? I ask this because this is what Jesus is teaching us today. You see, there are times when Jesus wants us to be PROACTIVE and not just RE-ACTIVE.

While at the Wartburg Castle in the 1521, Martin Luther had begun translating the Bible into German. During one of his many long hours of translation, Satan came to Luther with negative thoughts and had harassed him to the point that Luther picked up his **inkwell** and threw it what he believed to be the devil!

In essence, Luther was telling Satan to take a hike and get lost! This is exactly what Jesus did in our Gospel lesson today. He ambushed Satan with God's power before negative thoughts could "take hold" and become a reality. And while his words were directed to Peter, Jesus was actually "**rebuking**" Satan as he said: "**Get hind me, Satan.**"

(PAUSE)

Jesus already knew what Peter was "thinking" – and it was **NOT** so good. Jesus knew Peter was operating "under the influence" of thoughts coming from Satan. And so he said: "You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

So what was Jesus alluding to as he spoke these words? Surely it was the understanding that Peter would end up denying him - three **times** - before the **rooster crowed!**

Jesus knew this would happen and so he used a pre-emptive strike against the enemy by saying: "**Get hind me, Satan.**"

(PAUSE)

Jesus was confident that God was **his** point man and thus, His means of victory **for** overcoming the temptations of life.

So Jesus modeled this for us. And if you are tired of being tempted to do what you **do not want your** wife, or husband, or children, or fellow church members, or **God** to see and witness - - use this **pre-emptive strike method** before the ugly stuff happens. LET YOUR TOP OF MIND AWARENESS BE JESUS.

God never planned for us to be spiritually a-ne-mic! And this is why we **do not** have to live with **fear** and **doubt** and **apathy** **and have a mind set on human things**. You see, with God as our "point man:"

- nothing will keep us from taking up our cross and following Jesus as YOU and **St Johannes blossoms to glorify the living God!**
- Nothing will overtake us, **only the power of God and his saving grace;**
- Nothing will keep us from losing our lives for **the sake of Christ** and the Gospel;
- Nothing will cause us to be ashamed of Jesus Christ and His glorious kingdom – where we will **one day** live eternally!

So say it with me: "**Satan Behind, God Ahead.**" (PAUSE) This could almost be our mission statement! Because God will always lead us in the right direction if we follow His lead and take up our cross.

So this begs the question: **Do we have in mind the concerns of God?** It is a reasonable question since it is in the Gospel lesson!

Peter missed this point - as Jesus shared this **spiritual principle** about **having in mind the concerns of God**. So the question is **NOT** "what's in your wallet?" – but rather, "What's in your mind?"

So right **thinking**, right **statements** and right **actions** (TSA) begin with God, & **NEVER WITH SATAN!** Don't let Satan tell you anything – because it will **almost always** be negative and **not** of God! Tell Satan to take a hike!

The thoughts we entertain **and** words we say to ourselves are just as important as the words **Jesus spoke to himself**. **And just why would we think it would be any different?**

Every thought we **think** creates a reality for us. **Well Pastor,** you say, **That's not me!** I just cannot do what you're asking. **I am so weak!** I am too **set in my ways!** I am to... **whatever!**

Let me give you a **theological word** to help you: **HOGWASH!**
You see, if God did **not** believe we could change and be saved,
then why did He send Jesus Christ to seek and save those who
are lost?"

And in John 10:10, why did he say: "I came that you may have
life, and may have it abundantly?" So, Live in God's victory and
power! Resist the devil and he will flee; let us remember that
Satan is the one who is feeding us with negative thoughts, and
division, and **feelings of inadequacy!**

So say it with me: "Satan Behind, God ahead."

So, if **we** want more of God in **our** lives, talk with him more
often; if **we** want a greater understanding of Scripture, read and
study the **B-I-B-L-E** more often; if we want St. Johannes
Lutheran Church **to grow**, share and talk about what God is
doing **NOW!**

Get top of mind awareness of Jesus Christ in your head and heart
- and **hear it**, **see it**, consume it, **think about it**, and speak it.
(PAUSE)

And when Satan comes knocking, tell him to get behind you
because your mind is on **the concerns of God** – and Jesus
Christ is your "**point man!**"

Amen and Amen!