

Week 2: Two Realms

INTRODUCTION

There is more going on than we realise. - The story of Job (Job 1:1 – 2:10)

1. The Heavenly Realms

God existed before creation, He is the Creator – all other things are created by Him.

The word of God teaches that there are two realms that operate simultaneously in our lives.

- The **Heavenly** Realms
Ephesians 1:3; 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12. These realms are invisible to the natural eyes or senses.
- The **Natural** Realm
The physical world we see, hear, taste, touch and smell – the world we're familiar with.

2. The 'cast list' of the Heavenly Realms

God – The Creator

Angels and Archangels (e.g. Michael and Gabriel) – Spirit beings, servants of God

Satan – fallen Archangel (Lucifer)

Demons – servants/foot soldiers of Satan (fallen angels)

Angels

- ❑ Real – Luke 1:26
- ❑ Powerful – Daniel 10:2-13
- ❑ Having authority (given by God)
- ❑ Intelligence – Daniel 10:14
- ❑ Desire – Genesis 22:12
- ❑ Voice – 1 Corinthians 13:1

Demons

- ❑ Real – Luke 4:41
- ❑ Powerful – Revelation 16:14
- ❑ Having authority (given by man)
- ❑ Intelligence – Mark 1:24
- ❑ Desire – Mark 5:10
- ❑ Voice – Mark 5:7

Purpose

Always
good;
Always
to bring
God's
rule

- ❑ Protect – Luke 4:10
- ❑ Guide – Acts 12:8
- ❑ Prepare the way – Exodus 23:20, Daniel 10
- ❑ Fight the demonic realm
- ❑ Minister to believers – Hebrews 1:14
- ❑ Powerful – Daniel 10:2-13
- ❑ Having authority (given by God)

Always
evil and
destructive

Purpose

- ❑ To steal
- ❑ To kill
- ❑ To destroy
- ❑ Deceive – John 8:44

John 10:10

3. We have no need to be afraid

a. The Devil is defeated

"When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross."

Colossians 2:13-15

b. We have been rescued

"For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

Colossians 1:13-14

c. God lives in us

"You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."

1 John 4:4

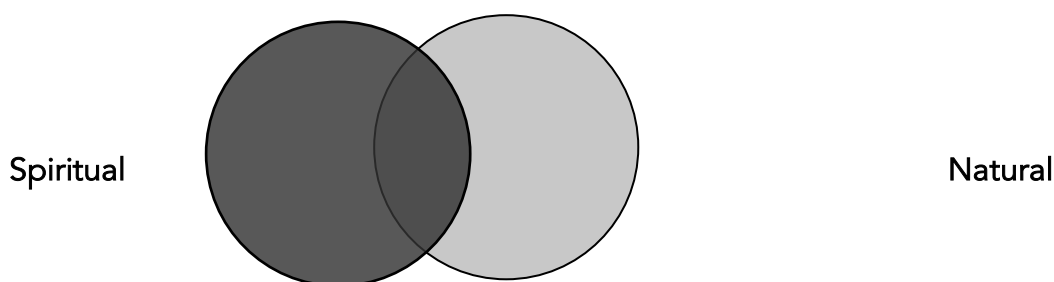
d. We have authority over evil

"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.'"

Luke 10:17-19

4. We Live in Two Realms at the same time

The Natural realm includes all that can be perceived by our natural senses in the physical world. The Heavenly realm includes all that is spiritual, invisible and not seen in the natural realm.



a. Example 1 - Elisha & his servant – 2 Kings 6:8-23

"The king of Aram was angry because all his plans were being discerned prophetically by Elisha. So he sent an army to capture Elisha, who was living in Dothan."

Then he [the King of Aram] sent horses and chariots and a strong force there. They went by night and surrounded the city. When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh, my lord, what shall we do?" the servant asked. "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them." And Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he may see." Then the LORD opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

2 Kings 6:14-17

The servant had only been able to see the natural realm.
God enabled him to see the heavenly realm and his perspective changed completely.

Example 2 – Daniel at Prayer - Daniel 10: 1 -14

"Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them. But the prince of the Persian kingdom resisted me twenty-one days. Then Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, because I was detained there with the king of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the future, for the vision concerns a time yet to come."

Daniel 10: 12 -14

"So he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Soon I will return to fight against the prince of Persia, and when I go, the prince of Greece will come; but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth."

Daniel 10: 20-21

b. We need to learn to ask the Lord to reveal what is going on in any given situation:

Judas betrays Jesus

"And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus. They were delighted and agreed to give him money."

Luke 22:4-5

The source of the betrayal

"Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve."

Luke 22:3

Events in the heavenly realms bear a direct impact on events in the natural realm

We must ask these questions:

“Is this just happening?” “What’s really going on here?”

- ❑ Is my bad mood “just happening?”
- ❑ Is my strained marriage “just happening?”
- ❑ Is the disintegrating relationship between parent and child “just happening?”
- ❑ Is the tension and division in a church “just happening?”
- ❑ Is oppressed corporate worship due merely to weather and the seasons?
- ❑ Why does a selfish and stingy spirit (or one of division, or rebellion, or fill in the blank) persist in the church from generation to generation?
- ❑ Is a persistent lack of joy and zeal due merely to personality?
- ❑ Is the disintegration of a society “just happening?”
- ❑ Are communities in disrepair and oppressed by crime, drugs, murder, suicide, and hopelessness merely because of socio-economic issues?
- ❑ Are civil tensions (Ireland) and wars (Middle East) “just happening?”
- ❑ Are bigotry, prejudice, and ethnic cleansings “just happening?”

This requires a significant change in world-view. To recognise that events in the spirit realm impact earth, that there isn’t merely a natural realm cause for every circumstance. E.g. Adam’s testimony.

c. Example 3 – Peter’s betrayal of Jesus.

Massive pressure on Peter creating fear and betrayal

“Then seizing him, they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. But when they had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, “This man was with him.” But he denied it. “Woman, I don’t know him,” he said. A little later someone else saw him and said, “You also are one of them.” “Man, I am not!” Peter replied. About an hour later another asserted, “Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean.” Peter replied, “Man, I don’t know what you’re talking about!” Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: “Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.” And he went outside and wept bitterly.”

Luke 22:54-62

Earlier in the chapter, we see that there has been a heavenly realms cause. The source of the pressure and fear is Satan

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

Luke 22:31-32

d. Example 3 - Political advisor opposing the gospel

“But Elymas the sorcerer (for that is what his name means) opposed them and tried to turn the proconsul from the faith.”

Acts 13:8

The source of this mindset and plans is Satan

"You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?"

Acts 13:10

Jesus has a 100% ministry success rate because He perfectly discerns the source of the problem – natural or supernatural.

"That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was."

Mark 1:32-34

Jesus' whole ministry is understood as a supernatural battle in which he proactively and aggressively confronts the destructive power of the enemy

"...how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him."

Acts 10:38

5. The Western mindset is resistant to the Biblical / Jesus' worldview

- Dismissal of demons as "primitive" – we are wise and enlightened.
- The Church and its leaders (especially mainline denominations) are hugely influenced by the academic and rational / man-centred worldview and mindset.
- This is a central reason for the weakness of the church today in the West which causes it to live in a worldly manner with natural realm thinking and strategy.

The Sadducees believed in God but denied the Spirit realm of angels and demons.

Jesus declared to the Sadducees: "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God"

Matthew 22:29

Homework

- a) Continue to pray through the armour of God and the Lord's prayer each day and ask God to fill you with his Holy Spirit.
- b) If something comes against you this week, stop and take time to pray for it, asking God to have authority over the situation and to bring his Kingdom to come.
- c) Once again, go to the scriptures (possibly using the birthrights cards) and seek one or two scriptures that personally speak into your own heart situation. Write them out in a journal inserting your name into the scripture, for example "Joe is seated in the heavenly realms" Continue to meditate and mull on the scripture, allowing it's meaning and its power to sink into your heart.

Groupwork

- a) After last week's talk, share with the group how you have got on and share one verse that has particularly spoken to you from the Christian Birthright cards.
- b) What struck you particularly from this talk? How much of this teaching is new and how much have you heard before/been reminded of.
- c) Looking at the list on page 4, are there any situations that have occurred in your life, that looking back at it now, there may have been another reason behind it, something else at work; rather than what you put it down to at the time?
- d) How good are you at trying to understand the spiritual dimension of what is going on around you? Are you currently stopping and asking God what is really going on, or taking everything at face value?
- e) Read Ephesians 6:10 – 20 (below) and turn this into a prayer time together.

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. 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. Therefore put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should."

Ephesians 6:10-20

Finish by praying the Lord's prayer together.

Our Father in heaven
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.