

The Tactics of War: Part IV

Sermon Title: **The Tactics of War**

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Speaker: **Nathaniel Bronner**

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Nathaniel Bronner: Whether you like it or not, you are in a war, and God wants you to win.

Female: You are listening to brothersoftheword.com. This is Part 4 of the series titled, "The Tactics of War subtitled," subtitled, "Strike First," by Nathaniel Bronner. This message is number 5828. That's 5828. Listen to over a thousand free messages on brothersoftheword.com

(Music Playing)

Female: And now for 5828, The Tactics of War, Part 4, Strike First.

Nathaniel Bronner: Welcome to Brothers of The Word because brother, you need the word.

And today, we're still in the midst of a series called, "The Tactics of War" and as we move into a season as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, war would appear to be the very last thing to talk about, but Jesus was a man of war. As a matter of fact, in Matthew 10:38, Jesus says, "Do not suppose that I came to bring peace into the earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword". You remember when He said that? And then He went on to say, "Because I will set son against father, mother against daughter, daughter-in-law against mother-in-law --" that ain't too hard to do these days --need to watch to do these days -- "and that a man's enemies will be within his own household." So, Jesus is not only not come to bring peace but a sword, I'm going to bring it to your house. That's what it says on a nutshells, and as a whole different series of what Jesus meant by that but it was clear. When Jesus came into the earth, it was in the midst of a whole lot of battle.

Do you all remember the story of Herod and what happened, and him seeking and he killed every child two years and under? It was more weeping than the earth had known since. He came in the middle of war and He left in the middle of war. So, Jesus was a warrior. Even though He is here to bring peace into our lives, He understood. Sometimes to get peace, you got to go to war. So, God has me dealing with the series simply called, "The Tactics of War" because whether you like it or not, you are in a war and God wants you to win. He wants you to be victorious in this war that we constantly fight and that we constantly face.

Now, in the first message, I asked you to go brothersoftheword.com and listen to a series I preached 12 years ago called, "The Case for War". Just go in, type in those words, Case for War, it will bring up four sermons. Listen to those four sermons. Now, as we deal with "The Tactics of War," there are basically five basic tactics, make peace, run or technically strategic retreat. What we're going to deal with today, defend and return, fight or surrender. Those are fundamental to the five tactics, and today, we deal with the third tactic, simply "Strike First".

Now, striking first might not seemed to be a very Christian or pacifistic way of doing things, but I'm going to explain that. Pastor James and I used to be in karate and Pastor James is a great karate master. And I remember once we are at a tournament and I was fighting in the tournament, and Pastor James had given me some advice that the instructor had given him. And the instructor gave Pastor James the advice. He said, "When you go out down there on the mat when you face on an opponent, the number one thing you need to do is you need to be first. You need to hit him before he hits you and you don't need to wait on him to hit you.

You need to come out and get, you need to hit him right away. So, I remember that wisdom that Pastor James had relayed to me that the instructor had relayed to him. And when we were at this tournament, and there was this fellow, and you kind of randomly get pick who you're going to fight, and there was this fellow and he was just in a jet. Do you remember that fellow? I mean, this is what he was doing -- I mean that was like the whole thing. We had about 30 to 45 minutes before the matches begin. This fellow was just bouncing around -- and he wouldn't stop. So, "Pastor James, look at this fellow. He just won't stop. And Pastor James, I sure hope I don't have to fight that fellow."

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When it came around to when they were pairing people up, the first fight they paired me with this fellow. And I said, "My goodness, of all the folk, they paired me with this fellow who won't stop moving," but I remember the advice that Pastor James had given me that came from the master instructor, and this was a world class fighter. He actually retired from fighting

because there was no one else left for him to beat. He was just that good.

So, I remember that advice. And when I squared off against him, he would just bounce. I remember the advice. When the thing went down, I just tow and do it. He just wasn't expecting, I just tow in to the fellow. I remember that advice, so the minute -- pow! And I just tow and do it. The matches were three-point matches, I hit him twice. I got the first two points and then I backed off. After I had the first two points, I said, "I'll take it easy now," well, the fellow hit me two more times. The last point, both of us clash together, and I thought I had won the match because I felt I suddenly hit him, but somehow, he had hit me. I don't even feel it but he had hit me, and he had hit me first. He won the match.

Sometimes, you have to strike first, and not only do you strike first, you get to keep on -- I let off. So, because I let off, I didn't win and that fellow kept striking. There are going to be situation in your world where you need to strike first.

There is an old proverb that goes, "Strike while the iron is hot." The basic meaning of that, and this is back in the days when blacksmiths, they would have a red-hot piece of iron, and they had to take a hammer to mold the iron into whatever instrument or shape it needed be. If they let it cool off, they couldn't bend it, they couldn't shape it. So, you had to strike while the iron was red hot while you could still mold it. You heard another proverb that has a similar meaning, "You better make hay while the sun still shines." Do you all have heard that?

What it meant in the old days -- not the old days, it is still true now. When farmers would cut hay and they had to bale hay. They had to bale the hay while the hay was dry. If you wait until the sun goes down and the dew came or where it rains, you couldn't bale the hay. So, you had to bale the hay while the sun was still out while the hay was still dry.

There are some instances where you have to move and you have to move fast. We are all familiar with this verse, dealing with the pool at Bethesda. John 5:3 where it talks about sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water for an angel went down at a certain time until the pool and stir up

the water, then whoever step in first after the stirring of the water was made well of whatever disease he had. They had to strike first. I never understood this verse. I never understood it. Why would there be five porches(ph) of sick people and the angel come down and just -- he really the person who had the gumption, the strength and the foresight to jump in the pool first. It never made sense to me, still didn't make sense to me.

Some of the things in the world may not make sense to me, but it's the way they are. There are some things if you don't move on the opportunity, you lose the opportunity. Now, you may not think it's fair because I don't think that was fair. I mean if anything the man who was in the best shape would have best ability to get into the pool -- the sick folks would have at least a chance. That's why when Jesus went to the man who had been there for 38 years, he said, "Every time I cannot get in the pool somebody else beat me. They don't wait and nobody is there to say, "Hold up, hold up, hold up. Hold up, I know you are sick. I know you all got problems but this man over here has been here for 38 years and we are not going to put our little concern -- I see your broken leg, but we're not going to put our concerns over this man who has been here for 38 years. You all clear a path. Nobody gets in the water. Clear a path and let's bring this man here and put him in the water while the water is stirred and troubled, so he can get in." No, that's not what happened. When that water stirred, folk moved and the one who struck first got healed.

So, there are simply instances where you need to move and you need to strike. Now, most of us first of all have never been in or never will be in what's called a real fight, where you just fight into the death.

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Some of us had gotten in sibling little turmoil, and this kind, but I mean you've never gotten into a real fight where you know somebody carried off to the hospital, or somebody carried off to the grave. Most of us never have and never will get in what's called a real, real, real fight. So, what I'm talking about here is not dealing with street fighting, it's not dealing with military, it's dealing with life. And in life, there are just things that you've got to move and you've got strike while the iron is hot.

And too often, in Christendom, we're waiting, and we won't move when the opportunity presents itself, and as a result, we never get our situation healed because of the war is trouble, and we won't be the first one to hop in. And I couldn't wonder, "God, why, why!", because sometimes God simply say, "I'm going to give it to the one who's got the guts and who's the gumption to go, and to move, and to get up, and go." Turn to your neighbor and just tell them, "Get up and go." And some of us just need to get up and go. We're sitting down too much. We won't get up and go. So, this thing is about striking first. It's a military tactic, but it is a principle, and it is a way of living life.

Those who sit around waiting on God, often die waiting on God. I am not talking about when you're not waiting on God to move or do something in particular, I am talking about when you're not doing all you can do. That's what I'm talking about. And too often, those who claim to be waiting on God, they're using that as an excuse because they don't want to get up and move. They don't want to get up and go. They want to sit down there all comfortably and expecting God to just drop something in their hand.

Now, generally, you got to get up and bust this all up, you have dirt under your nails, calluses on your hand and feet, you are going to have to get up and go and move to make this thing happen. You are going to have to strike first, or the world will beat you to pieces. So, there are things in life where we just have to move and go. And in the battles of life, you've got three major advisories. You've got Satan, you've got the world, and you've got your flesh.

Satan is a tough boy, and you've got to be able to often time strike first. Now, this is a verse that I've never really heard is preached before. It's moving into resurrection season, and we're going to talk about in many churches, all over the world, they talk about Judas and how he betrayed Jesus, but I've never heard this verse. Maybe somebody said, "I just never heard about it, before." Being priest, and it's Luke 22:3, and this is what it says, "Then entered Satan into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the Twelve."

Most of the time, we just put that all on Judas, but it's that one little verse that we missed, "Then entered Satan into Judas." Do you know that's a battle to keep Satan out of you? Satan is

trying to get into you right now. He got into some of you. "Then entered Satan into Judas." So we've talked about the 12 pieces of silver, and all that -- but that one little verse, somehow gets overlooked, "Then entered Satan into Judas," and it caused Judas to do something that he definitely should not have done, but Satan caused a whole lot of people to do some stuff they should not do. And you got to learn -- when you're fighting Satan -- see, the strike first principle, it applies when you definitively know you've got a fight coming.

So, that's why the first thing is make peace. So that's the first tactic of war, avoid battling at all cost. It's just like when I faced that fellow. That was no question in that tournament. I had a battle coming. The only way I didn't have a battle coming was that I quit and just walked away. But as long as I was going to be in that tournament and face that fellow, I had a battle coming.

When you deal with Satan, you got a battle coming. You cannot make peace with Satan. You got a battle coming. So, if you got a battle coming, you sometimes need to just strike first. And see, there was some things that Judas could have done that could have kept Satan out of him just like there are some things you can do to keep Satan out of you.

And if you don't do those things, then Satan, just as he entered into Judas, will enter into you. See, God is the same yesterday, today and forevermore, Satan may not be the same, forevermore, because he will be eventually destroyed, but he the same as he was yesterday, he might be just a little smarter than what he was yesterday. So, one thing we do know his nature has not changed, and his purpose is to steal, kill and destroy everything in your world.

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So, we faced Satan, then we faced the world, and the Bible says there's nothing in the world but the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of lie, and then we face our flesh, and I'm not sure that's not just as rough dealing with the flesh as it is with Satan. The flesh just got some stuff. It's just a battle. And if you sit around passively waiting and your flesh takes control, you got to do some proactive stuff to keep your flesh from taking over you, you just do.

So, as we deal with some of this stuff, how do we keep the world, and Satan and our flesh from destroying our relationship with God, our relationship with people, our money, our health, our spirit, our faith and ultimately our salvation. How do we keep all of those forces that come against us in the battle of life? How do we keep it that from destroying and overcoming us?

Now I just want to take a couple of them, because I only have time enough left to deal with all of them, but let me start with the least of these. The least of these is your money. Some of you today, “No least to me, pastor. There are no least to me.”

Jesus says this over Luke, “He who is faithful and what is least is faithful also in much, and he who is unjust in what is least, and is unjust also in much. Therefore, if you have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, how will you be faithful in the true riches?”

Now let me give you a different angle on this, just in dealing with money, because Satan entered into Judas, but he attacked Judas because Judas was the treasurer. He attacked Judas in the area of money. Judas would not have betrayed Jesus if it wasn't for the 12 pieces of silver. He had a door open because he was handling all that money and my guess his greed had opened a door within Judas. And Satan went in through the door of greed. See, there are doors that you have. It's kind of like in the movies. You know, a vampire can't come in unless under certain conditions. I think I preached a sermon a years ago called, “Gospel of Dracula.” Dracula has certain principles. He can't come into your house unless certain conditions are met. Satan can't come into you unless certain conditions are met. Judas had opened a door.

So, it was through mammon or through money that Satan entered in and got Judas. But this verse, it is an interesting verse, because in the church world we have it backwards. See, we think if we are faithful with spiritual things and God will grant us money. That's the way we think. If we are faithful with spiritual things, God will grant us money. That's not what Jesus said. He said, “If you're faithful with the least, if you are faithful with unrighteous mammon, then you can be trusted with the true riches,” which are spiritual things. God said, “If you are faithful with your money, then you can be trusted with

spiritual things,” he said, “Lord, I want to be spiritual so I can get money.” We have it backwards.

So, one of the first things you can do is just be faithful with your money. Do you know a person is highly unlikely to steal if you're giving heavy? They are just contrary spirits. You just not going to find a (00:18:15) stealing, they're just contrary spirits. Because the first person, the easiest one to steal from, is God himself. So, you just won't find a true (00:18:26) who's stealing, the spirits just don't even go together.

So, Jesus said, “Look, if you are unfaithful with money, I can't trust you with the truly valuable things.” So, when you become faithful, first of all with that area, it allows God to entrust you with the true riches of things. So when we think on these things, it changes some things, and just in those areas, and our relationships, if we are at the point where -- for those of you who are single in particular, often, we're just waiting on God to bring us somebody, we sit at home waiting on God to just have them coming. That's some fun -- even the heavens are echoing there. We're sitting at home because this message is for someone, we're sitting at home, waiting on God to just have the man or woman or a woman coming knock on the door and says, “I had a dream, it showed me this house number, I don't know why, but -- now I see.” That's what we're waiting on.

Now, I'm not saying that does not happen, that's a miracle, and miracles do happen, but they are rare. They are rare. You need to strike first. So, you need to get up -- that's for those of you who are single, and you want somebody. You got to be single, not married, got to be single, and you got to want somebody. So, you got to be both single and got to want somebody. Because sometimes you're just happy by yourself, and you ain't want to fool with that. So, in that case that's fine. But if you're single and you want somebody, you need to get on both. And let me give my advice where you need to go, you need to go eharmony.com. “Say, what?”

00:20:02

Yeah, you need to go, “I don't like no date.” You need to go to eharmony.com. Let me tell you why, and some of you need to do it fast, you need to strike fast. Yeah, you really do.

Do you know the divorce rate of people who meet and marry on eharmony.com? It is 3.86%. It's less than 4%. Do you know the divorce rate of people who meet in church? I'm serious. The divorce rate of people who meet in church and those who are silent Christian is just as high as the divorce rate of the world. It is in the matter of fact, it is a little higher when we look at the actual statistics. The divorce rate of pastors is 50% plus. Most pastors have been divorced or getting in divorce right now.

So, eharmony has a divorce rate of less than one-twelfth of the church and pastors. They said, "Pastor, why is that? Why is that?" Because they go through a lot of heavy duty psychological matching. That's why I'm telling you to go to eharmony, not Tinder because some of the dating sites, are hook-up sites. You all know when you want -- you do the swipe left and the swipe right, you can't swipe and find a right one, it ain't right with the swipe. It's just ain't right with just swipe.

So, when you go to eharmony, you fill out this psychological profile and the site was created by psychologist. They wrote the book that even Pastor James pulled a lot of the material for the marriage, (00:21:40) and it matches you psychologically. That's why it's 3.8% versus 50%.

Some of you, I know you got hang ups, so I'm just saying doing everything else online. So you need to do what works and is nothing that is anti-biblical or anti-god about it. Most of it is just in our personal hang ups. So, you need to strike first. Don't just sit at home, wishing and waiting or even coming to the art and looking around to see who went in.

Some of us even going to church for the wrong reason. We all go to different churches looking around to see -- Listen because somebody in church does not mean they go match with you. That's why the divorce rate among church folk is 50%. That's why the divorce rate among pastors is 50%. That's why the divorce rate among people who we meet on eharmony is 3.86%.

So, it's a huge difference in results. A huge difference. So, you need to use wisdom. Don't let old tradition block you from doing what you need to do to move to a different -- and see, I was counting somebody in business even yesterday, and they had a website. The website was 10 years old, and the thing still weren't working, your contacts weren't there. I said, "Why is

your website not -- do you know how much money and business you're missing? This person didn't do right, and I got another expert coming in, as soon as I get the money. I said, "Look, you can go to wix.com, w-i-x.com and the site is designed, you can do a free website." I said, "You spend three hours, you'll have your website up at A quality. You're a smart person, if you spend three hours focus on it instead of waiting on somebody else."

That's why oftentimes we're in a situation we're waiting on somebody else or we're waiting on God to do something. God has put the power in our hands to do something.

This is one of the major tactics of war, if you just stand there you're going to get beat up. You've got to do what you need to do to get done, what you need to get done. I named seven different areas. That was just two of them and those are the based two that you can understand. I don't even have time to go, but it's the same thing.

If you want a relationship with God, start reading your words, starts spinning dedicated prayer, starts striking first, get your armor solid before Satan tries to get to you. So, when you get your armor, when you strike first, when you're prepared, then you are ready for battle. And it just makes even a difference. You see that fellow beat me, I'm not sure he just didn't beat me because he had me psyched out, that he just was going to beat me. Sometimes, the whole thing makes a difference when you -- Pastor James, sometime before he would go into a fight, he would just growl at the fellow. He would be like -- He would just growl at the fellow. And the fellow is like, "What kind of fool is this?"

So, sometimes you strike first, not just physically, but you strike first into the spirit. You make a point and you make a declaration. I'm going to do something. I'm going to move. I'm not going to sit here and just let life pass me by, beat me up, everybody else determined my destiny, blaming everything else.

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I want you to standup. I want you to give a high five to three people, and I want to repeat these, "Act or you will be acted upon." (00:25:23) blink on that. So, God sending in some signs in here. Act or you will be acted upon.

Act -- and see we had on both of those two points. One was thunder and other was lightning. So, God even sent sign when he was confirming something in your world, get up, start moving, act or you will be acted upon. You start today. And whatever you got some issues, He'll be proactive with your help. Don't just wait, "I'm going to the doctor and see what they say." Well, start doing something, you know this stuff to start doing.

So, there are some things that you know you need to start doing. If you got into an arena, don't just sit there, don't just be looking at your opponent, looking at your situation, get on in there and pow. You know move, get on in there, pow. Handle this thing, do this thing, put some fight in you, don't just be sitting there. God has given you energy. He has given you insight, he has given you the inspiration and he'll give you the tactic, but you got to get up and move. When you get up and move the whole universe will start to move with you, and you will conquer the enemy that Satan has sent to beset you.

Now, we'll let Pastor James come on up and give you a karate lesson.

Pastor James:

Amen. Amen. We thank pastor for that awesome message. Amen. I can tell you Brother Leigh(ph) like my growling strategy. And sometimes you have to do some of that for your own confidence. You have to toughen yourself sometimes. That particular strategy came. I was fighting -- he's about 6'5"-6'6". He worked as a bouncer, so he's about 275 pounds. He was kicking me, and as I would block, he was actually lifting me off the ground, and my instructor say, "Keep your feet on the ground," I said, "I'm trying. This fellow --"

I had to really transform, but not going by what I was seeing and feeling and go by what I knew what's on the inside. I had to unleash the beast, and I end up beating him, but I had to growl and plough through the air and then hit him in the head.

And so sometimes you got to toughen yourself and build up your own faith. You can't go by what you're seeing, what it looks like on the outside. And my wife was over there and prayed, "Lord, I hope he don't need to fight that fellow." Amen. But he is greater on the inside than outside. Amen. So, at least serve the greater one. I read the book that he was talking about from the

author of eharmony, and I know it didn't sound very spiritual but, I want to let you know that even this part of his analysis, that spiritual alignment was one of the portions of it. So, he had not to get married if you're not spiritually align. So, he does measure your prayer life and all of that, and he partners you up, still with the compatible, spiritual life.

So that is part of the formula as well with it, not just church attendant. So, he lines up your belief systems and your spiritual practices as well as part of that. Amen.

Well, as heads are bowed, eyes are closed. Does anybody in this place, you want to make sure that you're align with God and you don't want to wait until the Devil has beat up on you to come to God. But you want to strike first and get an alignment with God. We invite you right now to just come to the altar, allow us to pray with you. Even in warfare, it's not all the matter of your abilities, but is who are fighting with you as well. Do you all remember wrestling and how to use to tag a partner in?

And in light there are some battles that you can't do by yourself, that you need a partner that's stronger than you. You need a partner that you can tag in that has more skill, and more wisdom, more experience than you. And I can tell you right now, there's nobody in this life that you'll come across that's greater than the friend of Jesus. When you get down, get on a tricky situation when you don't know how to get out of it, there's nobody that has the wisdom, the know-how to lead and guide you, like having a friend in Jesus.

So, if you've been fighting this battle today with your own strength, with your own skill knowledge, and you recognize today that I need to tag in a partner. I need to make sure I'm aligned with the Son of God. The one who has already defeated the enemy on the cross. Amen. Amen.

Representing the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. You all would just repeat after me.

Heavenly Father, I come right now and I ask for forgiveness for all of my wrong doing, I declare with my mouth, I believe in my heart that Jesus is Lord. I thank you for loving me. Thank you for having grace upon me. Thank you for guiding me and I just declare that I love you right now, and I want to live for you as

you lived in me. Thank you for being my partner. Thank you for helping me to fight the battles of life. Thank you for giving me every resource that I need to have the victory. In Jesus name, Amen.

Just stretch your hands toward this, as I just say a prayer. (00:31:29) what they've already declared before the Lord. Lord, we just thank you right now, O Father, for your daughter, O Lord. We thank you for the recommitment, O Father, onto you, O Lord. We thank you, O Lord, that when she's weak, O Lord, when she doesn't know what to do, O Lord, that she can tag in a savior, O Lord. We thank you Father for the greater one that lives on the inside, O Lord. We thank you, O Lord, for just being everything that we need, O Father. For being our strength, O Lord, when we're weak, O Father. For being our wisdom, O Farther, when we don't know which way to go, O Father. We thank you, O Lord, for meeting every need, O Father. We just thank you, O Lord, for the one boldness of them striking first, O Lord, with them taking the first step, O Lord. And we pray that you alone are at this day, O Father. Thank you, O Lord.

Thank you, O Lord, for meeting every need, O Lord. Thank you, Lord, for just solidifying us, O Father, in times when we may sway back and forth, O Lord. We thank you for being that rock, O Lord, that we can build our lives upon, O Father. Thank you, O Lord, that you're the one that will never leave, never forsake us, O Lord, even when mankind, O Lord, has not been there when they say they would, O Father. We thank you, O Lord, for being our savior, O Father, that call so then our brother, O Father. Thank you, O Lord. The name of Jesus, we pray all of this. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Nathaniel Bronner: I thank you for joining us today at Brothers of the Word. You can go to brothersoftheword.com. Listen to the entire series, "The Tactics of War." Thank you for joining us today at Brothers of the Word because brother, you need the word.

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