

“Fighting the battle within”

Sermon Series: At the Movies – Star Wars

Nathaniel Brodish

Good morning Church family. I just wanted to welcome all of you joining us in person and online. I wanted to give a special welcome to those that are joining us for the first time. We want you to know that you belong before you believe. Meaning that the moment you walk through those doors you are family. If everyone could please stand up (if you're able) and give a fist bump to 3 people around you. Once you're done with that please remain standing for me. Let me pray for us this morning. You may be seated.

We are so excited to continue our At the Movies series. This is the final week of this series. We are not here to preach movies to you but we are using movies to illustrate biblical truths. I have the honor to talk about the movie series Star Wars. This series started just about 50 years ago. It is in these movies that we see a battle—light versus darkness. If you have your bibles we will be in [Matthew 5:14-16](#).

By a show of hands how many of you have ever owned a lightsaber? Held a lightsaber? Or seen a lightsaber. Perfect I am glad that you all are familiar with what that is. When I was a kid our house always had lightsabers. They were the plastic ones that you had to flick out. If you know you know. If you don't know this video should give you a good idea of what they look like:

That was a little what it was like growing up having the entire Star Wars Series on VHS. Did I ever get past Episode 3—No. That's the episode where Anakin turns into Darth Vader and it scared the life out of me...up until just last year when I watched Episode 1-6 and then the others we just don't talk about.

The thing that I find most fascinating about the Star Wars series is that there is this constant theme of light vs darkness. And when it comes to Anakin's life he is fighting the battle within himself of light vs darkness. But it doesn't start out that way. We get introduced to this character in episode 1 and along his journey through episode 2 and into 3 we see this gradual increase of anger, hatred, and jealousy. We see this character named Palpatine whispering in his ear all the things that entice one to join the dark side. As I watch this character journey through his life I cannot help but see our walk as Christians.

Anakin is us. Just like Anakin we get angry, jealous, and we grow hatred in our hearts. But most of the time it is not just through one moment, it is a constant choice to be jealous seeing what others have. It is a constant choice of hating that co-worker that 3 years ago started parking in

your spot. And it's a constant choice to be angry with someone who wronged you all those years ago. Jealousy, hatred, and anger didn't consume Anakin's life over just the course of one movie and they're not consuming your life over the course of just one day. It is when we choose to live in them that they start to find their home in our hearts.

We are the Jedi of the Gospel, spreading light to all the world and fighting back darkness. Then there is the darkness. Satan is Palpatine. He whispers lies into our ears and entices us to stay angry, to stay jealous, and tells us that growing hatred in our hearts is okay. Christ points us to something different. He calls us to Himself—Christ is the light. In John chapter 8 Jesus says:

John 8:12 NIV

¹² When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

But as we walk through our lives as Christians scripture calls us to something different it calls us out of the darkness and into the light:

Ephesians 5:8–13 NIV

⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light.

Scripture also says

Passages:

1 John 1:5–7 NIV

⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

As Christians we have to remember that (1) there is indeed a battle between light and darkness and (2) that we are in the light and the light always wins.

If you've never seen Star Wars there are two groups the Sith and the Jedi. The Jedi (Light) are supposed to fight back the Sith (Darkness). This character named Anakin is considered the chosen one and his duty is to bring balance to the Force, to overcome darkness and to squash it, to destroy it. Through some challenges with keeping in step with the light he finds himself turned by anger to the dark side. This turn of events gives birth to a villain we all know the name of, Darth Vader. But that's not the end of Anakin's story. In the end he defeats the Sith at the risk of his own life. A sacrifice that was well worth it.

Anakin (Darth Vader) in the last moments of his life decided to be the light again. He said, “I will no longer let me light be hidden but I will show it to the world.” That is what we see right here in [Matthew 5](#) says:

Matthew 5:14–16 NIV

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Lighting the candle

What people are supposed to look like (*The candle shining for everyone to see*) [WHO ARE WE CALLED TO BE—Who was Anakin called to be?]

Both in Star Wars and in real life we are called to be someone. We have been given a calling and scripture lays out for us what we ought to do. That is what this scripture tells us. This candle being lit is a representation of what it looks like to be light Christ. Our light is to be on a stand, and give light to our surroundings. “Let your light shine before others.” We in reference to Christ should let our light shine to all the world.

But since we live in a world that lifts up darkness it isn’t easy to live in and by the light. Just like through his journey Anakin struggled to stay in the light.

What people actually look like (*They are hidden and tossed by the winds of this world*) [HOW WE ACTUALLY ACT—Who Anakin became]

In Matthew it says,

Matthew 5:15 NIV

¹⁵ Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house.

In this world I see 2 common patterns by Christians.

First people hide their light. It’s lit but you hide it. You understand that you are free in Christ but you are paralyzed by the shame of your past, fearful of what others may think, or frankly are just enjoying your time living in the world—the world has a lot to offer and Satan is crafty. He knows how to attract humans away from the light.

(*Blows out candle*). Then there are some of you that extinguish their light because you would rather know sin than your Savior. I’m going to repeat: “You would rather know sin than your Savior.”

The craziest part is that it doesn't start that way. It starts with a choice. It starts when we first get the taste of sin. For some of us that taste is when we get angry with a co-worker for something small. Then time after time, day after day, the anger begins to build up. Not by one choice but by many. We then label ourselves or walk around unaware of how angry we are. For others of you it started as a child. You didn't grow up with much but you grew up with sharing a lot. You'd then go over to friend's houses and they would have the latest things and the coolest toys. You were a little jealous. This has carried into being an adult and the stuff you have is never enough and the stuff others have is just what you want.

A truth that we have to understand in order to let our light shine is that you are free in Christ even though sometimes we are paralyzed by the shame of our past. Whether we are aware of our past mistakes or we are unaware of just how impacted we are by them. We have to let them go. When we live in the light we shouldn't withhold our past from those around us, we should share freely. In other words, as citizens of heaven we are let go of the grip of shame and have entered the embrace of the Father. We ought to be a light in the darkness but we end up being a dim reflection of what we ought to be (*or even just a picture of a lit candle—to represent what people look like when they put on a mask*)

What we can do to become more Christ (*Standing with and near others like us. Our light is brighter but when one comes in that has no light they ought to catch fire*) [Who we are in Christ—Who Anakin was in the end]

What it looks like when we are the light in the darkness: When I was in college my roommate was a huge Star Wars fan, still is a huge fan, had actual battle lightsabers. Meaning they were probably 5 feet long and made of really hard plastic. They were made for battle. For one to hit the other. It was May 4th of that school year. For those that don't know May 4th is a huge date because it's when fans say "May the 4th be with you." I remember it was finals week and Markie, our friend Joe, and I were walking back to the main dorms after studying and in the distance we see two people fighting, battling, and chasing one another with lightsabers. The closer we got the more familiar those individuals looked. It was my roommate and my one friend. As we are walking by all of a sudden my friend starts to charge us with his lightsaber. He comes over lifts up his lightsaber and slices me in half. And in dramatic fashion I fall to my knees and then face down into the grass. After a beat or two my friend helps me up hands me the lightsaber and says, "It's your turn." Without hesitation I grabbed the lightsaber and started to fight my roommate.

My point here is that even from far away their light was still visible and as I approached in the darkness without a light I was handed one and told, "It's your turn." That is my challenge for you today. It is your turn to fight back darkness—to strive to live in the light. This battle is not against flesh and blood but against principalities and demons. It's your turn to stand up and fight the battle within, and in the end light always wins.

John 1:5 NIV

⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.