



## THE FORCE OF THE GOOD SIDE

The conflict between good and evil has been the theme of many books and movies. The story lines usually depict the struggles of the protagonists to stay on the side of good, which, in the end, wins over evil. One of the most interesting movie blockbusters is "Star Wars," a favorite of both the young and old because of its space-age technology special effects, especially in the battle scenes (fought with ray guns and laser swords). This movie is really the classic war between the forces of good and the forces of evil, set within the science fiction genre.

George Lucas, the creator of Star Wars, tells the story of an elite group of fighters – the Jedi Knights – who receive supernatural powers from a supernatural source called "the Force." These warriors are empowered and trained to fight for justice and for freedom – the good side of the Force. But there is also a dark side of the Force. Those who choose to go to this dark side are also empowered supernaturally to fight for the dark side. Mostly throughout the series, the dark side seems to be stronger and smarter than the good side. They overpower and oppress the Jedi Knights and their friends until the very end, when Darth Vader (a former Jedi Knight who went over to the dark side and became its most powerful warrior and fearsome commander) turns against the emperor of the dark side in order to save his long-separated son (Luke Skywalker, the last Jedi Knight) from the power of the dark side.

The real Star Wars took place long, long ago, when Lucifer, the archangel, chose to live outside of God's plan for him and rebelled against God's rule in heaven (**Rev. 12:4-9**). Though one-third of heaven's angels went over to the dark side of Satan, they did not prevail against God's kingdom. But the war did not end there. God intended the war to be finally won on earth through created human beings – His surrogate rulers.

In their first encounter, Satan deceived Adam and Eve into believing that they were not like God (even though they were created in God's image), that they were like Satan (who wanted to be like God). He took over the earth kingdom when they believed him, instead of trusting God's word, and became disqualified from earth's rulership. And consequently – contrary to God's plan for man to be free and have dominion authority over earth – Satan enslaved the spiritually-dead human race.

Since then, humankind has been dominated and oppressed by the force of the dark empire through Satan's lies and deceit. But he knows that outright evil could not propagate his false kingdom. So, he uses sincere and well-meaning people who practice "do-good" religions (both Christian and non-Christian) that do not know and teach the true God. Any distortion of God's character and purpose by "do-good" people gives Satan more opportunities to prolong his illegal rule over earth's inhabitants.

Humanity was deceived into believing Satan's lies because of unbelief in God's word. By sinning, man chose to be separated from God, to live independent of His love and life-giving power (the Force of the Good Side). This separation disqualifies humankind from earth rulership. Apart from God, man can only live in opposition to God's original plan for him. Every human being has inherited this condition from Adam ("Original Sin" or the "sinful nature") and it controls what he thinks, feels and does. Without God's intervention, we are powerless to change our course.

That is why the pure, sinless, perfect Son of God, the only man who never sinned, gave His life as payment for the full penalty for our sins. And in the process, He revealed to the entire universe the deadliness and destructiveness of sin – the force of the dark side. But most important of all, Jesus lived and demonstrated the Force of the Good Side – the power of God's gracious love.

God did something for man, something that man didn't deserve. As far as man was concerned, there was no reason for God to do this. Not on the basis of what man has done. Not on the basis of justice. The reason lies within the nature of God. He is love. And love has reasons that reason does not understand.

The Good News of Christ's ministry on earth is that the Kingdom of Heaven has arrived. Jesus Christ – the Second Adam – conquered God's enemy at Calvary, once and for all. And now we are free to know the true God and His unchanging will and destiny for humanity.

Jesus Christ came to set us free from slavery to the dark side! When we receive Him as Redeemer and king, the Holy Spirit births in us a new spirit that is meant to live only in liberty.