

Session # 12

The Enemy of Spirituality -- The Work of Satan

Introduction

- A. For most believers the truths regarding Satan are nothing more than hazy and impractical theories. This is largely due to the work of the Devil himself.
- B. Satan seeks to hinder the Christian because he hates the Lord Jesus. Since he cannot attack the Savior directly, he does so indirectly, by keeping the believer from spiritual maturity and fruitfulness. Our failure to enjoy the Lord and live a fruitful life -- defiles the Savior's reputation.

I. The Believer's Need for Deliverance and Freedom.

A. The Basis of Satan's Work -- The Fall of Man.

In the Fall we accepted the lies of Satan and put his suggestions into practice. By choosing to disobey God the relationship with Him, one of freedom, was broken; and by obeying Satan a relationship with him, one of slavery, was established. John 8:44

The seriousness of this act cannot be overemphasized. Through that event dimensions of sin, lust, depravity, slavery, ignorance, death and every form of evil was introduced into the human race. Satan now has a hold on us through error and sin.

B. The Description of Satanic Control.

1. The titles given to Satan indicate his activity . He is called Tempter (Matt. 4:3), Deceiver (Rev. 12:9), Accuser (Rev. 12:10), Adversary (I Peter 5:8), Murderer (John 8:44), the God of this world (II Cor. 4:4), and the Prince of the Power of the Air (Eph. 2:2).
2. The Bible indicates that the Christian can give a "place" (foothold) to the Devil (Eph. 4:27). Satan can fill the heart of the believer (Acts 5:3), he can be physically, spiritually, and materially attacked by Satan (Job 1,2; II Cor. 12:7), he can be hindered (I Thess. 2:18), deceived (Rev. 12:9,10; II Cor. 11:3), tempted (I Cor. 7:5; I Thess. 3:5), ensnared (II Tim. 2:25,26), devoured (I Peter 5:8,9), "sifted as wheat" (Luke 22:31), made proud (I Tim. 3:6), brought into condemnation (I Tim. 3:6) and under reproach (I Tim. 3:7), corrupted in mind (II Cor. 11:3), accused (Rev. 12:10), made hypocritical (Acts 5:1-11), led into religious fanaticism (II Cor. 2:1-11), and be made the objects of fiery darts (Eph. 6:6).
3. The endeavor of Satan is to keep the Christian from growing, from maturity in Christ and from developing the Fruit of the Spirit. All Christians are under the attack of Satan and wicked spirits in some manner. The clear evidence is not only the verses of the Bible -- but even more so -- our lethargy and weakness in spiritual matters. Satan has worked slowly and subtly and indirectly on each of us, through his demons, not only to keep us from spiritual growth but to weaken us in the areas of our strength so that joyful and powerful participation in prayer, worship, obedience, and witnessing are nearly impossible.

II. The Divine Provision for Deliverance and Freedom.

A. In the Crucifixion and Resurrection Jesus Christ Defeated Satan.

And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it (His atonement). Col. 2:15

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. I John 3:8

B. In the Ascension the Lord Jesus was Seated in Triumph over Satan.

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principalities and power and might Eph. 1:19-21

Comment: This victory over Satan and wicked spirits has been given to every believer. We too are seated in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:5,6), we have been given the use of the name of the Lord Jesus (Luke 10:17-20), given an armor (Eph. 6:11-18), and a weapon of great power in the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). We must learn to use God's provision.

III. The Biblical Instruction for Deliverance and Freedom.

A. We Must Honestly Confess and Repudiate our Past and Present sins.

Neither give place to the Devil. Eph. 4:27

B. We Must Honestly Practice Truth in Faith and Love.

Stand therefore ... with truth ... righteousness ... love ... faith ... salvation ... the Word of God ... and prayer. Eph. 6:10-18

C. We Must Honestly and Aggressively Resist the Work of Satan.

Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the Devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist stedfast in the faith I Peter 5:8,9

D. We Must Honestly Wear the Armor and Live Accordingly.

Put on the whole armor of God Eph. 6:11

Conclusion: How do we know we are under unusual Satanic attack? We must start out with the clear Biblical truth that Christianity works and then make a practical application. If one is honest, knows how to live for God and seeks to do so in daily obedience, has taken care of past hurts and emotional relationships, is physically up to par, and is still unable to live the way the Bible teaches -- then look around for the enemy!

Resist him in the area of his attack. Use of the Warfare Prayer and the Daily Affirmation may be of great help.

Victor M. Matthews