

Spiritual Warfare

Knowing & Understanding Our Enemy

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I. Introductory Remarks.

Colossians 1:13 *He has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love...*

Ephesians 6:12 *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

As people who have been born again of God's Spirit, we have been delivered from the power of darkness. There was a time when all of us were under the influence and the jurisdiction of Satan's kingdom and domain. Now that we have been born again and translated into the kingdom of God, we should not take lightly that we still have an enemy who wants to bring harm to us and render us ineffective as ambassadors of God's kingdom.

I believe it is important for us to understand the tactics and cunning devices of God's arch enemy. Therefore, in this message today I want to talk about Satan, who he is, his origin and fall and how he seeks to work in our lives. The Bible says we are not to be ignorant of his devices.

2 Corinthians 2:11 *...lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.*

I believe many Christians are walking around in defeat and even in backslidden conditions, simply because they have not been aware of the enemy's cunning devices in their lives. We need to understand that Satan is the arch enemy of God and the church. That means he is your arch enemy as well, if you belong to God. His intent is to destroy the work of God in your life by any means possible. Therefore we should understand just who this enemy is and how he works.

In warfare many victories are won by those who understand and know the moves of their enemy. In spiritual warfare it is much the same way, the more we know and understand the tactics of our enemy the more on guard we will be, as well as being able to thwart his attacks.

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

II. Satan's Origin And Fall.

Who is Satan and where did he come from? This is a question of great importance. The answer to this question gives us insight into his characteristics and how he tries to operate in our lives.

1. He Was One Of God's Created Beings – An Archangel.

Ezekiel 28:13-14 *You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes was prepared for you on the day you were created. "You were the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.*

Before his fall he was one of the most powerful angelic beings in the universe, being of great beauty. His name was Lucifer and he had a high position in heaven before he became Satan. Lucifer used his position and brought destruction upon himself. He was perfect in every way.

Ezekiel 28:15 *You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created, till iniquity was found in you.*

2. He Was Cast Out Of Heaven Because Of Sin.

Ezekiel 28:16 *"By the abundance of your trading you became filled with violence within, and you sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out of the mountain of God; and I destroyed you, O covering cherub, from the midst of the fiery stones.*

Ezekiel 28:17 *"Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, that they might gaze at you.*

3. Lucifer's Five "I Wills" Cause His Fall.

Pride enters into the heart of one of God's mightiest creatures and causes his destruction and made Lucifer into the devil.

Isaiah 14:13-14 *For you have said in your heart: `I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of*

the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will ascend into heaven... 2. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God... 3. I will sit upon the mount of the congregation... | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds... 5. I will be like the Most High... |
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Lucifer wanted to sit where God is and wanted his throne to be in heaven, not on earth. The name "Most High" in the Bible is the word "El Eloim" which not only means "most high," but also means "the possessor of heaven and earth." Imagine, that a creature, a created angel, wanted to be possessor of heaven and earth. This is why he failed and became the devil.

Lucifer did not want to get closer to God because of love. He wanted to get closer because of jealousy. He was not satisfied with just getting closer, he wanted to sit on the throne.

When Lucifer fell and was cast out of heaven, he was thrown out of the third heaven. The Lord Jesus saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning.

Luke 10:18 *And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.*

Jesus simply meant He saw Satan fall from the third heaven as lightning. Right now the devil is still in the heavenlies. His place today is in the second heaven. He dwells there as much as he dwells in the earth. He rules from his place of authority, the heavenlies. This is the place we wrestle against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Eventually Satan will be thrown out of this realm of heaven as well. This happens just prior to the great tribulation.

Revelation 12:7-8 *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.*

III. Who Is Satan Today.

1. He Is A Powerful Angelic Being With Power To Deceive.

Let's remember that he is still a powerful angelic being of great beauty and is still able to transform himself into an angel of light and to even transform his ministers into ministers of righteousness.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, trans-*

forming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.

Matthew 24:24 *"For false christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to deceive if possible, even the elect.*

2. He is the god or the Prince of this World.

John 14:30 *"I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.*

2 Corinthians 4:4 *...whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

1 John 5:19 *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the [sway] of the wicked one.*

IV. Satan's Major Tactics and Works.

1. He Works through Deception and Subtlety.

2 Corinthians 11:3 *But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

In writing about America's problems with our own national security, Jim Banford, author of "The Puzzle Palace", said, "Once you've sold one secret you're usually hooked. They don't start by asking to get a top secret document. They usually ask for something innocuous, like a telephone directory. Once a person starts, they're hooked at that point." Isn't that the way Satan operates? He tempts us to make little compromises that seem so insignificant and end up ensnaring us in sin.

His deception often times comes through the word of God itself. He will take God's word and either question it, take away or add to it. He will try to wrest the scriptures to our destruction as well as his. This is how he was able to deceive Eve.

- **He caused Eve to question God's Word.**

Genesis 3:1 *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field*

which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

- **He Quoted Half Truths to Jesus.**

Matthew 4:6 *...and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge concerning you,' and, 'In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.' "*

- **He twists or Wrests the Scriptures.**

2 Peter 3:16 *as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.*

John 8:44 *"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a [liar] and the father of it.*

Our victory over this kind of an attack is by knowing and understanding the Word of God, being like David who said, "I have hid the word in my heart that I might not sin against You."

- **He Transforms Himself into an Angel of Light**

His deception also comes about because of his ability to be transformed into an angel of light. This is one of the major ways in which Christians shall be deceived in the last days. The Bible says there is a strong delusion that is coming with false signs and wonders being done by Satan's own ministers.

2 Corinthians 11:14-15 *And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*

2. He Purposes to Stumble Us and Lay Snares In our Paths.

Psalms 140:4-5 *Keep me, O LORD, from the hands of the wicked; Preserve me from violent men, who have purposed to make my steps stumble. The proud have hidden a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set traps for me. Selah*

He waits for those vulnerable times in our lives when we are most susceptible to temptation and then springs the trap. This was exactly how he worked in the life of Jesus.

Luke 4:13 *Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.*

Our victory over this Satan in this area is to continually keep our eyes on Jesus, because when our eyes are on Jesus, He will steer us around the traps and help us to strengthen those areas of vulnerability. He will be our guard.

2 Thessalonians 3:3 *But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.*

3. He Opposes And Exalts Himself Above All That Is God.

The very thing that got Satan into trouble in the first place is still the major characteristic that he has imbedded into our society -- the antichrist spirit.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 *Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

V. Other Tactics and Devices.

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| 1. He afflicts the righteous. | 6. Instigates us to sin or tempts us. |
| 2. Claims authority over the world. | 7. Contends with us in heavenly realms. |
| 3. Blinds the minds of unbelievers. | 8. He places his people in the church to defraud it. |
| 4. Slanders and accuses saints. | 9. He steals, kills and destroys. |
| 5. He opposes the righteous - tries to keep us in our place. | |

It is important for us to understand that our enemy is already defeated in every sense of the word. Jesus defeated Him once and for all at the cross. All we have to do is call on Jesus and defeat him by the blood of His testimony.

1 John 4:4 *You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*