

# Doctrines of Demons

by Anton Bosch

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*Anton Bosch's sermon warns against the distractions of studying demons and emphasizes the importance of focusing on Christ as the central message of the Bible.*

**Scripture:** Philippians 3:8

**Topics:** "Satan And Demons", "Christian Worship"

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## Description

Anton Bosch emphasizes the importance of not being ignorant of the devil's schemes, which often involve diverting believers from focusing on Christ. While the Bible provides limited information about Satan and demons, it warns against delving into speculative teachings and doctrines of demons. Bosch cautions against becoming fascinated with the enemy, as true worship involves giving God the attention and devotion He deserves, rather than being distracted by the darkness. The ultimate goal is to know and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

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## Transcript

Paul writes about the devil that "we are not ignorant of his devices" 2 Corinthians 2:11, yet it seems that many of us are ignorant of the tricks and devices the evil one uses in his attempts to thwart the plan of God. Satan knows that many cannot be persuaded or intimidated to give up the good fight, so he uses schemes that serve his purpose just as well. One of those is diversion from the central issue.

Some people speak of "chasing rabbits" when we lose sight of the real goal and begin to follow red herrings and other things that are designed to get us off course.

Our ultimate goal should be to know, glorify, and be conformed to the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul said: "Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead." (Philippians 3:8-11).

Anything else is a minor issue. Satan knows if he can get us to focus on anything other than Christ, he has us majoring on a minor and we are diverted from God's purpose for our lives. He therefore uses many things, even spiritual, biblical, and good things to get us to waste our time on futile pursuits that rob time

and devotion that belongs to God alone.

One of these areas that is trapping more and more Christians and leaders is the study of Satan and demons. I have heard preachers say that we must know the enemy if we are going to do effective spiritual warfare. Really? So the Bible is a handbook that, amongst other things, tells us all about the devil and demons, where they come from and how they operate? Actually, no. The Bible tells us very little about Satan, his origins, the origin of demons, how they function etc. It simply accepts his existence as the enemy of God and His people.

Here is what the Bible does tell us about Satan: He occupied a powerful place in heaven but was cast out because of his pride and ambition (Isaiah 14, 1Timothy 3:6). He tempted Eve, Adam (Genesis 3) and Jesus (Matthew 4:1). In Job, he had access to God and power to afflict Job (under God's authority). He has many schemes, opposes the work of God in people (Luke 8:12), tempts and deceives people (Revelation 12:9), and unbelievers are his children (1John 3:8,10). Satan was defeated at the cross but still attacks Christians (Ephesians 6), will empower the Antichrist and False Prophet, and will eventually be cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10).

That's all. We do not know when he fell and was cast out of heaven, where he is "resident" at the moment or what he looks like. There is a very little we know and a lot we do not know.

Here is what we know about demons: They work under the direction of Satan (Matthew 12:24), some are chained in the Abyss and others are "free" (Luke 8:31; 2Peter 2:4). They were likewise defeated at the cross (Ephesians 1:21 Colossians 2:15). Demons can, and do, possess people but can be cast out in the name of Jesus (Matthew 10:8, Mark 16:17). Idols represent demons (1Corinthians 10:20,21). Demons are the source of false doctrines (1Timothy 4:1, James 3:15). They will be cast into everlasting fire with Satan (Matthew 25:41). They occupy "heavenly places" (Ephesians 3:10, 6:12).

Once again, that is about all we know: The sum total of what God revealed in His Word about Satan and demons can be contained in two paragraphs! We do not even know where demons come from, what they look like and when they will be cast into the lake of fire. It is important to note that we cannot even be certain that demons are the same as fallen angels - the Bible simply does not say.

Yes, I know you maybe think we know a lot more, but we don't. Here's the thing. Most of what fills the many books and sermons on the subject are pure conjecture and speculation. We cannot build any doctrine on conjecture, analogy or oblique references. In spite of this, a significant portion of what is held as doctrine by Christians and published in books is pure speculation. Yes, we can speculate and guess, but this can never be doctrine and we should rather use our time obeying what we do know than being fascinated with what we do not know.

But even worse, our knowledge base on demonology (the study of demons) is rapidly being expanded by means of extra-biblical sources, over-active imaginations, science-fiction books and even Hollywood. All these weird ideas are rapidly being added to Scripture to form a picture never revealed by God. Some of the ideas that authors and preachers are propagating seem remarkably similar to the monsters that shamans, witchdoctors and drug addicts "see" in their drug-induced delusions! These include vivid images of extra-terrestrials, hybrid super-humans, UFO creatures, chimera monsters, mythological gods, ghosts and apparitions of the dead, fairies and elves, Bigfoot and giants.

Contending with such individuals is an impossible task. How do you convince someone on a hallucinogen that the monster he sees is not real? The moment we forsake the safety and boundaries of Scripture, everything becomes relative. Once we leave the light of Scripture, we enter the confusion and darkness of earthly and demonic wisdom (James 3:15). Without the solid datum of Scripture, logical and sound reasoning flies out the window. Once the question "where is it written?" is discarded as irrelevant; and once extra-biblical sources are deemed just as authoritative as the Bible, any counter-argument based on the Bible becomes pointless.

But why does the Bible not give us more information on Satan, his demons and fallen angels? Should we look to other sources in the absence of sufficient Biblical data? No.

The Bible does not tell us more because it is a distraction from the central message - Christ. The Bible is not a handbook on demons but it is God's revelation of His Son: "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me." (John 5:39). Jesus said these words to the Jews who claimed to be Scripture-based yet rejected Him and replaced Him with an emphasis on other minor issues, such as endless debates on the meaning of words, technical details about laws and so on.

One of the things we do know is that demons concoct false doctrines. The process of developing a false doctrine takes many forms, but one of the most recognizable (at least, it should be) methods is to over-emphasize truths beyond their God intended priority. This is exactly what the modern emphasis on demons, fallen angels, Nephilim and Satan is all about. Even if what they are saying is correct, the very emphasis is erroneous in, and of, itself.

"But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons." (1 Timothy 4:1)

"They are energized by Satan. This is the only place where demons are mentioned in the Pastoral Epistles. Just as there is a "mystery of godliness" concerning Christ (1 Timothy 3:16), so there is a "mystery of iniquity" that surrounds Satan and his work (2 Thessalonians 2:7).

Satan is an imitator (2 Corinthians 11:13-15); he has his own ministers and doctrines, and seeks to deceive God's people and lead them astray (2 Corinthians 11:3). The first test of any religious doctrine is what it says about Jesus Christ (1 John 4:1-6)."

The Bible states these things are "mysteries," and we should not delve into sources outside of Scripture to try to understand them. Especially we should not read occult writings, mythology, and any other ancient and modern extra-biblical "spiritual" writings.

"Spiritual error is seldom due to innocent mistakes. It is more often due to the conscious strategies of God's spiritual enemies (cf. Eph. 6:12). The teachings (didaskaliais) of demons are false doctrines taught by errorists whose views are instigated by demons."

What then should we say about authors and preachers who are "specialists" on demons? Anyone who writes a book on Satan and demons must be avoided, even if what they have written seems entirely Biblical. This is because just the process of researching and writing such a book is anti-Christ, by definition. Writing books, and theorizing, about the Devil is exactly what he wants - Jesus is no longer in the spotlight. Publishing and selling such books serve the purposes of Satan since believers are seduced

to take their eyes off the Lord Jesus Christ and to focus them on the kingdom of darkness. There is little difference between the consumption of such material and the modern fascination with monsters, witchcraft, death and the macabre.

Satan and demons are hardly mentioned in the Old Testament and they receive no more than a few cursory references in the New Testament, except for Revelation which shows their final defeat. While Satan was behind the fall of man which resulted in Christ having to die, they are really a side issue in the glorious scheme of God's grace and of Salvation History.

It may come as a shock to some people that Satan uses professed Christians in the church to do his work. But Satan once used Peter to try to lead Jesus on a wrong path (Matthew 16:21-23). Paul warned that false teachers would arise from within the church (Acts 20:30)

Involvement in this kind of material does not glorify Christ, which should be our ultimate goal, but it glorifies the kingdom of darkness. Technically there is no difference between the Goth who is fascinated by everything dark and the "Christian" who actually pays money to buy a book about demons, extra-terrestrials and Satan.

True worship of God is done by giving Him the sacrifices of our time, attention, money, thought, and energy that He deserves. When devoting anything (including just 5 minutes of our time) to Satan, we have robbed the Lord of what is His and given it to His enemy. We have in reality begun to worship Satan.

While we acknowledge that Satan is powerful and that he causes great damage to Christians and the Church, he is a defeated enemy over whom Christ will finally triumph in the end. We ought then not waste our time by being fascinated with a defeated enemy but give our undivided attention to the Conquering King, the Lord of Lords, the Great "I Am"!

Every Christian needs to devote more time to knowing the Lord Jesus better, yet thousands have been deceived into studying fiction, the hallucinations of perverted minds and the doctrines of Devils, rather than having eyes for Jesus only.

Revelation reveals Christ as the Alpha and Omega - the beginning and the end. By saying He is the beginning and the end, the Spirit is therefore saying He also is everything in between.

"For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. " (Colossians 1:16-20)

"I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images." (Isaiah 42:8)

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Los Angeles September 6, 2013

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