

# Spiritual Adultery

by Billy Strachan

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*Billy Strachan's sermon emphasizes the importance of prioritizing one's relationship with God over worldly desires to avoid spiritual adultery.*

**Duration:** 42:59

**Scripture:** James 4:4-5, James 4:7

**Topics:** "Spiritual Adultery"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of God's grace in the lives of believers. He encourages the audience to prioritize their relationship with Christ over materialism and worldly desires. The preacher also emphasizes the need for submission to God's will and resisting the temptations of the devil. He reminds the audience that the devil is the god of this world, but as believers, they have the power to resist him through their faith in Jesus Christ. The sermon draws on biblical references to support these teachings.

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## Transcript

Now then, in your notes, put down B, the condemnation. The condemnation. James 4 verse 4. A was the need, and verse 4, the condemnation.

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. People that try to get the best out of both worlds, who are trying to sort of honour God and worship mammon as it were. People who want to be spiritual, but get the world.

As far as the word of God is concerned, it's like committing adultery. You're a man, a person, trying to have two wives, and one of them you're not entitled to. One of them you are entitled to.

And it's adultery for any Christian to think along the lines of how near to the bone can I go without losing my spirituality. I mean, when people come and sort of say to you in meetings and in summer conferences and such like, Mr. Strachan, can I still do this and be a Christian? Is it still okay to do that and be a Christian? Can I smoke and be a Christian? Can I drink and be a Christian? Can I dance and be a Christian? Can I wear makeup and be a Christian? Can I wear modern clothes and be a Christian? Can I do this? You see, what they're really trying to say to me is this. How much of the world can I have without upsetting God and still lay claim to being a child of God? If they were to come in and say, how much of all

this can I let grow to please the Lord, that would be a different attitude.

How much of the world should I really fling away in order to be more committed to Christ and to enjoy God? That's not what they say. They come in and say, how much of that can I keep without upsetting them? How much can I still do of the world's things without making God angry? And it just shows you the kind of condition of their own heart. They're adulterers.

They want the best of both worlds. Now that doesn't mean to say you abandon the world. You need the things of the world.

But their priorities should be in the right position. When Queen Esther was told that she would have to go in before the king and plead for her nation, she said, you know perfectly well that nobody ever walks into the king while he's in the business of the court without invitation. Anybody that went through that door without an invite, unless he holds out the golden scepter, is immediately put to death.

Even a queen. It's written in the law. An unalterable law.

The law of the Medes and the Persians was unalterable. So let it be written and it couldn't be altered. And Mordecai's answer came back to her, who knows but that you're born for just such a time as this.

And if you won't go in and plead for your people before the king in your race, why? Don't think you're going to get away with it. Because God will have to raise deliverance from another end. But if there ever is this mass destruction and a pogrom perpetrated against the Jewish nation, don't think you'll escape.

If Haman's going to carry out the edict that he's got the king's signature on to destroy every Jew in the realm, he'll pick you up, dearie, and he'll kill you and all. Well, when Esther realized that she was about to take a step to death, she didn't sell her dresses. She didn't turn around and say to the Medes, I'm going in to the king this morning, you have this, you take the carriage, you take the horses, you have the palace, you have my bathtub, you know, and you have all the goodies because I'm going in before the king.

No, it tells you that for three days and three nights she fasted and prayed before the Lord. In other words, she died to those things, they were still hers. But suddenly they became, as it were, non-existent in her experience.

Unimportant in her experience. And she went straight in before the king and he held out the scepter and gave her back her life. And she came out and all that stuff was still hers.

But it was no longer the primary thing in her life. It was no longer the main thing. She didn't care whether she had it or didn't.

She didn't care whether she lost it or she didn't. And I'm having to teach my children this at home, that the materialistic things of life aren't the important thing. Sandra cried her heart out because she discovered down in the garden my iron sweater that we'd lost for weeks.

We couldn't find the thing. And she saw it peeping out below a bunch of burnt newspapers and stuff in the garden. And she went running down and pulled it out and somehow or other, whether the baby had done it, it got flung into the box with all the rubbish that gets burned at the bottom of the garden.

And it took my wife ever so long to knit the thing, over a year or something, you know. And here was the thing just gone up in lumps. There was just little bits of it left.

And when I came home from work, she opened the door and ran out to me crying. I said, what are you crying for? And she said, well, we found your sweater and it's all burned. I said, so what? We'll get a new one.

If I need a sweater, we'll get another. And she couldn't understand why I wouldn't sit down and cry about some wool. I mean, people do that.

They hold on so tightly to everything they've got that they lose everything. They want the best of both worlds. There was one occasion when there was a plane during the war and there was a British evangelist on it.

It was one of the air crew. And it crashed into the sea. And the way that the plane was under the water, they were sort of locked in an air pocket.

But they knew that there was no hope of getting out up and that this air wouldn't last for long. And so they had no alternative but to go into the place of death. They had to take a good belly full of air, as it were, hold their breath, and go down into the water.

Through the air, into the water, and through the sort of open bomb door at the bottom of the plane and bob up on the outside to the fresh air. And one by one they did it. And they were out there looking in and there was one person that just didn't want to do it.

They wanted to hold on to the air that they had in there. And they were breathing themselves to death. And he died because he wouldn't give up.

He wouldn't let go of what air he had left. And outside there was an atmosphere all waiting for him. But he held on to what he had in his own little world and lost everything.

Look at the people that are in crashes and in disasters and shipping. Why? Because she went back for her handbag. She went back for her handbag.

You get it in burnt buildings. They ran back into the building to save Grandma's picture. You know, this is it, a frame and a piece of cardboard with an image on it.

And it cost their life. Because materialism was so much dearer. And it's things that seem to be so much more important.

Well that way if you do get your materialism taken from you, you will sit down and cry. But if God is the one that's primary in your life, in your relationship to him, in your realization that you're moving on into things eternal that will not perish, then you begin to see the materialism in the world in its right perspective. My home's there for my benefit.

It's a sort of bonus. It's an added extra. It's there to enjoy, to keep me warm at night, to cover me, a place to relax.

And the carpet on it to keep your feet from being cold. But you don't care. What you really need to do is travel.

Because you see every time you pack your bag in this place and leave for a few weeks, when you say goodbye at the door, you say goodbye. You never know if you'll come back again. You die to your family

and you die to your home and you die to the garden.

But that doesn't mean when you're home you say, oh well I'm leaving in a few months time, why bother with the wretched thing. I'll work in my garden and paint and decorate in the house and things right up until I have to fall on a train. But the minute I step on the train, I knew that I was a responsible husband up until the last minute.

And if I die on that trip, my wife cannot sit down and say, well of course, lazy beggar never did do a thing around here. Kind of glad he's gone. You know.

And so we must act as normal human beings. We must look after the security of the family, tidying up the garden and all the rest of it. You don't just leave it as a jungle and say spiritually, well we are having our mind on things above.

We are looking towards a better world. Yes, but people are going to go down the street, look at that jungle and say, that's a Christian preacher lives in that jungle. I went to one church and the things wanted to know why.

Why are we making no impact in this neighborhood? Oh brother, if you could just share with us how to become more spiritual to get this place off the ground and affect this housing scheme. We bought this house and this housing estate 15, 16 years ago to set up a church and we came in from another church to set this church up and we've never gone anywhere. What can we do to be more spiritual? And I looked at them and said, do you really want to know? And they all got ready for a Keswick message.

And on they said, yes, anything. I said, good. Go out and put glass back in the broken windows and cut the glass and paint the fence.

The place was derelict. You came down the road and windows were just boarded up with bits of board because the glass had been knocked out. There hadn't been paint on the outside of the house for years.

The fence was all to bits. And I'm sure you could have had an elephant in the yard and you wouldn't have seen it behind the glass. Well, if I moved into that neighborhood and saw people going in there on Sunday with Bibles, I would treat that place with suspicion.

What kind of bunch of freaks are in there? Can't even clean the place up. Well, I'm not too impressed about their God living in that hole. You know, it was hard for them, but they took it.

They went and built a new church. Cared for the grounds, painted the windows, made everything clean, and now the place is booming. Of course we need materialism.

But don't cry if the church burns down. Just say, praise the Lord. We had a fire here some years ago.

Wrecked the kitchen. These things never happen, really. It needed redone.

Insurance paid for it. These things, you don't cry. Of course it's inconvenient.

Of course you didn't want it to happen, but you say, oh well. It's done, it's done. Let's go on and clean up the mess.

Make it better so it won't happen again. Always remember, you cannot have adultery in Christianity. You cannot be married to the Lord and married to the world.

That way you are going to burst up because God opposes it. God opposes the man that holds on too tightly to the things of the material world. But I think he'll oppose just as much the person that's too spiritually minded that they see no value in the things of materialism.

In any day and age, they use the best. I remember on one occasion, one friend was being asked to go all the way from Los Angeles to Chicago to start a new campaign. He finished in Los Angeles on a Sunday night and he had to start Chicago Monday night.

You know, the Americans know the distance between Chicago and Los Angeles. Halfway across the continent. Of course, he flew into O'Hare Field in Chicago and was picked up.

And the minister looked rather disgruntled about the whole thing. He said, well, what's the problem? Oh, just this business of Christians flying in the jet age by jets from one meeting to another. Whether or not it's right in the sight of God, especially taking into consideration economy.

And the answer was given, if you think I'm going all the way from Los Angeles to Chicago overnight in the back of a donkey, you've had it. You already knew that the meetings were finishing in Los Angeles last night. Is there any alternative way of getting from Los Angeles to Chicago overnight? There isn't.

And when Jesus Christ walked the earth and they wanted to give him transport, on foot was the mode of transport. They gave him a luxury. They bought him a donkey.

They gave him the best there was. A personal donkey to carry him to Jerusalem. And I am not in the slightest bit upset at the use of microphones.

I'm not in the slightest bit upset at the use of all modern technology to aid me to get the gospel out. Why? Because man never invented it. All knowledge is from God.

He's just bit by bit in this generation been taking his control off our minds to show what capacities we do have mentally that we've never used. In fact, if people only realized that they've never really used their brain to the fullest extent that they could use it, the world wouldn't have lasted so long. We are unaware of the capability of this if God took his control off it.

And he said one of the signs of the last age will be that there will be a vast increase in knowledge. Because he's going to lift the controls off and let you see what your brain is capable of doing. You see, we were meant to be in the image of God.

But sin has created a fallen. God had to step in and make sure that we didn't misuse that brain of ours. And yet we've misused as much as we can what we know.

The surgeon's knife can save a life. You can also stab a guy in the back with it and kill him. The knowledge is good, but the use of it is another thing.

And so all of this business in life, your job, if people would stop being so insecure about my job, what would I do if I didn't have my job? What would the family do? Where is God? Your job is the thing that occupies you as you work and move amongst people with your mandate to present Christ to people at every possible opportunity you can. If you lose your job, God will lift something else for you. You just say

hallelujah, a change.

Saves boredom. But if you get so tied down to the world and occupy yourself with earthly security, you're in for a fright. Even in a place like Caponry, you have to repeatedly come to the place where you say, God, you can take it away from me if you want.

Won't shed one tear if you say out. Be a relief. Something new.

And you're ready for anything. So remember, don't be an adulterer. God opposes it.

God considers it adultery. If you're a friend of the world, you're the enemy of God. You're acknowledging the other prince, Prince Satan.

Somebody once said to me, oh, decisions, decisions. What would you do in my position, Mr. Strachan? I said, what's your problem? Oh, this year's budget for our family. Oh, just how to use it.

You see, we're arguing back and forward in the home about whether it's going to be to our advantage to build a swimming pool or a fallout shelter in case of atomic warfare. So what would you do? And I said, well, I said, I, for one thing, I don't have the money to even consider building a bathtub, never mind a swimming pool, or a fallout shelter. He said, yeah, but you're hedging.

If you had the money and you were back in Britain, what would you build? Oh, I said, I'd plumb for the swimming pool. He said, why? I said, if we ever dropped a bomb on our island, we would, the fallout shelter would be no use. We'd need a diving bell.

So I'd rather get used to the water before it happened. No. I just tried as much.

I mean, the thing is so unimportant. This is the big issue in life. You know, people all around, and the big spiritual problem was whether to build a pool or a fallout shelter.

And I thought, why don't you just go out and talk to somebody about Jesus and let this stuff accumulate interest for a wee bit. Oh, dear, dear, Christians and their world. Put down C in your outline.

The resources for victory. The resources for victory. And there are seven of these that I'm going to give you.

Number one, the spirit that dwelleth in us. The spirit that dwelleth in us. Verse five.

Do you think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy. There's no real reason for a Christian to be worldly. There's no real reason for a Christian to be looking for the best of both worlds and don't ever come up with the excuse that because it's around you and it's being pushed at you from every angle on the TV box, through adverts and through everything that there is in life and the pressure to keep up and be modern and be like other people, don't use that as a means of it's so powerful I cannot overcome.

Because here the word is telling us, do you know that you have in you the Holy Spirit and he's in you lusting jealously to get you onto the right relationship with God and the world. You're not facing these pressures alone. Remember that.

You never face these pressures alone. The Holy Spirit's in you lusting, jealously trying to get you onto the right balance in these things where God can use you and he knows that you're not all wrapped up in the materialistic things of life and you're walking around facing every advert with the Holy Spirit living in you. You face every pressure with the Holy Spirit in you.

Every time you look down at your checkbook and sign your signature on a check, the Holy Spirit's in you. Every time you go in a shop and see the value of the goods that you want to buy and look at the range and the choice, the Holy Spirit's looking at the range and the choice with you. Is he ever allowed into the supermarket with you? Is he ever consciously allowed to pick out the choice of the item you're purchasing? Or doesn't it matter? And for lots of people today it doesn't matter.

You want it? Get it. You should see it in the beehive here in the summer. And even in the winter.

When I was in Bible school here, so it was about years ago as a student, they opened the cupboard under the stairs. You know that cupboard that's got lots of papers in it? That was the beehive. That was the beehive.

And they had the biggest school they'd ever had that year. Thirty-four of us. And every Friday, for one hour after lunch, they opened that cupboard in case anybody wanted to buy a bit of chocolate.

Just in case. Very few did. Now we open the beehive daily.

And in the summer, here, you get a teenager coming in, they'll just stick a five pound note across the counter and say, And they're talking away to their friends and you can put anything in their hands. It could be a piece of folded paper. And they top off a bottle and say, that should change and they just stick it in their pocket and they wouldn't even look at it.

You can always tell the difference between guests and staff when you go in the beehive. The staff count their money. See they're not being cheated.

Guests just take what you give them as change and stick it in their pocket. Oh, for my unconverted days, I could make a mint in that beehive. I tell you.

You could rob guests left, right and centre. They wouldn't care. Kids, they just shove money across and say, I want it.

Give me it. And walk away with it. I don't care what change you got.

I'll spend what you give me back. There's no need for that. There's no need for that.

Everything from shopping, to everything you look at, all these pressures that you think are making you worldly, it's unnecessary. Because the presence of Christ through the Holy Spirit is in your life every time you look at a shelf. Every time you look at the choice of goods.

Every time you look at the choice of suits. Every time you look at these things. And boy, if you economise, it's amazing how little you can live on.

And we really love going round the shops, my wife and I, to see everything we don't need. It staggers us to watch the people milling around, buying, buying, buying, buying. And we say, you know, when we come out and say, aren't this stuff lovely? Isn't it amazing what you don't need? And you can still go through life

without it.

And yet we feel very comfortable with what we've got. But it's there, the Holy Spirit's there in you. That's a resource to keep you from worldliness.

Number two. The grace that is given. Verse six.

The grace that is given. But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

You have the grace of God on your side. God's riches at Christ's expense. That's the usual cliché for it.

But grace is getting more than you've ever needed from God. And I know that that's true. Hold on to what you've got and you get nothing.

Be a cheerful giver and you find that God gives more. Press down. It staggers me.

My wife and I have just had to laugh our way right through our married life. The way God looks after things. And we have been so insistent that we will not be money grabbers.

So much so that there have been a couple of sources in the United States that sent us about \$20 a month or something. I think one of them sent them about three times a year. Whenever the fellowship ever gave us a wage rise, the very first thing we did that day was write to those two sources to say we've been given more money.

Because we don't want to just sit here getting it and making them think that we're still on the wage we got six or seven years ago just to get the dollar. And we've immediately written and said, we're getting more money and if you feel now that we're getting adequately provided without your assistance, feel free to take this money and give it to somebody else. And both those sources have said thank you.

They didn't the first two or three times we wrote those kinds of letters, but this last time they said that because of the economy situation in the world, this time we're going to do it. We're going to stop sending you the money and use it for some of our own missionaries that we feel would need the help. And I said fine, because I never solicited the gift in the first place.

One church they just happened to hear a set of tapes and from there on they sent something. I've never been there, I've never seen them. And promised them nothing.

Never sent them a report. Been as awkward as I could. Did what I could to tell them not to give us it.

And now they're giving it to somebody else. And the funny thing is the exact amount that was dropped through that, God raised up a source in Britain. You know, it's amazing.

And God just simply said that's okay, I've got it anyway. I can tap the sausage when I need it. And it's a great thing to learn.

God's great. I remember when we got married, I had about \$18 a week. That was for the wage when we were married, for the two of us to live on.

And we paid about \$6 a week rent, \$6 a week on transportation to and from home in the next village to here. Didn't leave very much to live on, did it? And I remember once the night before us going off to the

States and Grace was expecting the first baby and she was feeling a bit rough and insecure. Because here I was leaving for three months and there was a baby coming and so many things to get and we'd spent what we had because we never do get anything on credit.

We've always bought everything we've gotten so that if anything ever happened to me on a trip nobody can come in and say, stand up dear, we're taking the chair out because your husband didn't finish paying for it. Everything in our home is ours. And if there's something we want, we wait till we have the money and then we get it, then it is ours.

And it was hard in those days because Grace had always been brought up in the security of a home where I didn't. And I was very much living on a shoestring for years since becoming a Christian and just seeing the Lord miraculously provide one way or another, day in, day out, week in, week out. And, you know, I said, well, do you need the cot tomorrow? Is the baby due tomorrow? No.

When's it due? Well, after you get back. So why the tears now? And I went to the States. I know it was hard because you always meet other people that have great securities and money in the bank and we had nothing.

We had to learn to trust the Lord. And Grace said, quite rightly, I'm sure other people don't live like us. And I said, great, we're not other people.

We are us. And she felt that at least a good 300 pounds in the bank might be some sort of security with nothing. And I went to the States on that trip and while I was there, she wrote and said that she'd seen some sort of tub for boiling nappies and diapers and, you know, some zinc thing that you put on the gas stove.

But that very day I got it, I was in the home of a man that I'd stayed with on several trips to the States and I'd never known that he was a multi-billionaire. I didn't know it. And I had lots of fellowship with him and on that occasion he shared it with me, what he was and that all the time I'd been coming he'd kept waiting for me to ask for something because everybody did.

And, in fact, his biggest problem was Christians approaching him daily saying that the Lord told them to contact him that he would donate so many thousands of dollars to their project. And he said, you've never asked for anything so now I'm going to give you something. I said, that's your business.

Actually, I was quite surprised to find that he was. I was glad I didn't know. But he said, I never gave you a wedding present either, did I? And I said, no, you didn't.

He said, well, let me take you downtown and buy you a washing machine. I said, look, don't do that. The time I shipped a washing machine across the Atlantic it would cost three times the amount plus customs duty to get it in the country.

He said, well, we'll price one and give you the same price in dollars provided you go home and buy a machine with it. And I said, fair enough. Well, by the time we'd changed the dollars into English currency we'd not only got the washing machine, we'd got the washing machine and spin dryer combined, see? But, of course, I wrote back and said to Grace, don't buy the zinc tub.

Of course, I forgot to explain why in my letter. And, of course, it was, you know, rather amusing, the reaction. All right, just sit in a big flashy hotel in America and say, don't get this and don't get that, you

know.

So, of course, when I came home, on that occasion for the first time there was an excess of, you know, income over expenditure. It was exactly about three or four hundred pounds. And so I gave her that and said, put it in the bank.

There's the security and there's the washing machine. But it was just amazing. One day a person came to the door, two huge cartons, some church that didn't know my wife.

I'd only been there a week, knew there was a baby coming and they held a sort of shower for our baby and up turned two huge boxes of clothes that would fit them for a couple of years, you know, kind of thing. And, I mean, it just makes you sit up in the bed and cry. Because God does look after us by His grace.

Because He knows that you're in a job like this, not because it pays, because you want to be in the job. Because you know it's where God wants you to be. And you never take the monetary situation into consideration.

You just simply say, well, that's it. And if it's a pig pen we live in, we live in a pig pen. If you want us with nothing, we live with nothing.

It's your business. I'm where you want me to be. And remember what you've said in your words.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and I'll fling the rest at you. Paraphrased, of course. And I can assure you, God has flung the rest at us.

Always. And we're never wanted for anything. And yet we're not wealthy.

And that is something that is always a tremendous joy to our hearts to see how we manage to get through year by year. Because everybody thinks we're wealthy. I mean, you go down to some graduate's fellowship to speak and the headmasters stand alongside you and talk to you and think you're on the same standard as they are, you know, and all the rest of it, and talk to you about a pupil and say, of course, he comes from one of the lower working classes and they don't have much as far as the things of this world is concerned.

And I say, oh, really? And we're just the same. But God's grace is there. You don't have to say, well, God, if I follow you, we don't get enough materialism.

You stick to your mandate to be married solely to Christ and fulfill his will and what he said in the word is true. Through his grace, he will fling enough at you to supply you, to keep you, maintain you for as long as he's a program ready for you and that you're in that program. The grace that's given.

Number three, submission. Submission. Verse seven.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Submit yourselves therefore to God. One of the greatest resources for overcoming worldliness in the Christian experience is a positive attitude of submission to Jesus Christ.

Letting him be the master. Now that's one of the names that's so often lost for Jesus Christ. We want him as savior.

We want him as Lord. We want him as forgiver. We want him as the prince of peace.

We want him as the almighty God. We want him as the counselor. But the one thing we don't want him as is the master.

I used to start letters. I don't know why I don't do it so much today. But maybe it's because of the result that I had and I'm just afraid of trying to force the issue on people.

But there's one letter I used to write to regularly, and I always open up my letter by saying, Greetings in the name of our dear Lord and Master Jesus Christ. And he wrote once to say that that was the one thing he hated more than anything in all of my letters was the reference to Jesus Christ as my Lord and Master. Because every time he read that word master, he knew that he glibly said, Jesus, you're my Lord.

But he knew in his own life he was never the master. You see, mastership means you're completely debased. You're the slave.

And he is the boss. And that's the trouble. We don't want a boss.

We keep thinking in terms of becoming Christians with a coalition government in our heart. A throne, a presidential chair big enough for two of us. With me getting the lion's share of the chair.

And Jesus Christ sitting on the edge, teetering. But we are the ones that do the legislating. And it's only in the times of disaster, it's only in the times of real difficulty in our life that we suddenly move over a bit and say, Come on, we need your help.

But as soon as the wave of disaster, as soon as the problem passes over, we give him a bit of a nudge and say, Back room, boy. Less sleep for you. I'm in charge again.

Listen, Jesus Christ never came into your heart to set up a coalition government. He came in to have dominion. And they have the increase of the government, which is upon his shoulders.

There shall be no end. He not only came in to be the boss, he came in to increase his authoritarianism in your life. But always bear this in mind.

The increase of his government in your life is always a positive contribution to your well-being. Never a detrimental contribution. You always gain from being under his mastership.

Remember the statement of the Queen of Sheba when she came to see Solomon. The thing that hit her more than all his wealth was, Happy are thy slaves. Happy are thy slaves.

They were secure in slavery. They were content in slavery. Their eyes watched the king every second of the day to turn and serve him gladly.

They were happy being slaves. Why? Because their master, master catered for them. Looked after every sense of their needs and gave them all the security.

They were living in a palace. A slave living in a palace. With a master.

But boy, it was better than living in some of the hovels that the free people were living in. Outside the palace. They were always well looked after.

Always. And she says, happy are your slaves. And of course, Solomon is a tremendous picture at times of Christ.

And it's the same, there is real happiness in the born slave ship of Jesus Christ. By acknowledging him as your master, he gives you every security and you enjoy working for him. Submission.

Number four. Resisting. Resisting.

Verse 7b. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. But why suddenly bring the devil in on this? Because he is the god of this world.

He is the prince of the power of the air. He is the master of this world. And you don't belong to that master anymore.

But he is the god of this world. And as the god of this world, he has the right to say to you as he said to Jesus Christ, bow down before me and all these things I will give unto thee. All the temporary stuff that will eventually be burned up.

Materialism. Physical security. That which satisfies the eye.

I would advocate that every Christian ought to read First Circle by Alexander Solzhenitsyn. And there towards the end of the book you have a man and his wife. And he's a diplomat.

He has his epaulets with his stars. People in the street would step back to let him pass. He had his fine clothing.

The best silk underwear that he could buy. She had the loveliest of dresses. And what he didn't know was that he'd been found out as being an informer on somebody they were going to trap giving information to the West.

He'd had a telephone call overheard. And the phone rings in the flat and she picks it up. And it's his boss.

And he says, would you please come over? I know it's late at night. Would you please come over because we're just promoting you to being our diplomat, our ambassador to Paris. And you and your wife leave next week and we just want some papers finalized.

We'll send a car round. And she was swung round in his arms in her room and she was saying, this time next week, Paris. And he steps into the car.

And within half an hour he's nothing. Within half an hour he was standing in a shoebox cell where he was so small he couldn't bend. Just stand erect.

And he'd had all his hair shaved off, all of it. And all he was left standing in, holding them up, was his pair of trousers. Gone.

Every piece of materialistic security that he once thought was so big and important and made him look like somebody. Even Khrushchev went for a weekend's holiday and came back to a pension. And that is their world.

And Solzhenitsyn says in the book, our system teaches us how to live. They've never prepared us to die. They've never prepared us for the moment when we're stripped of all these benefits that we think makes for happiness and security.

The God of this world contains those. And very often we assume that materialism in itself is an evidence of God's blessing. Not necessarily so.

And here we're told that if you positively submit yourself to God, let Jesus Christ be your master, you are then equipped by his presence and power and care and grace and spirit to resist the God of this world. Now get it right. You do not resist the God of this world to try and submit to Jesus Christ.

Nowhere in the Bible are you taught to go out and oppose Satan. Nowhere in the Bible are you taught to go out and fight Satan. Nowhere in the Bible are you told to go out and have a battle with him to overcome so that you can then hand yourself as dedicated over to Jesus Christ.

Nowhere. The word of the scripture is that you first positively submit yourself to God. Then you are equipped under that submission to resist the devil.

You don't fight the king of this world. You resist him because you are a stranger dwelling on his territory waiting for the king to come. When the king comes, he'll take you home to your better kingdom.

So while you're here, you don't fight him because it's his territory. You resist him having first submitted to God. Well, we'll leave it there for the moment.

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