

Our Adversary: 'That Ancient Serpent Called the Devil'

by Greg Herrick

The sermon explores the nature of Satan, his strategies against believers, and how Christians can effectively resist him through holiness, scripture, prayer, and community support.

Scripture: Job 1:6

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Satanic Opposition"

Description

Greg Herrick delves into the topic of spiritual warfare, exploring the origins and characteristics of Satan and his demons as depicted in the Bible. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the strategies of the enemy, the victorious work of Christ over Satan's authority, and the ways in which Christian believers can effectively fight against spiritual forces of evil. The sermon concludes with a meditation on the practical implications for believers' lives, highlighting the need for holiness, the Word of God, prayer, fellowship, and advancing the Kingdom of God in the face of Satanic opposition.

Transcript

I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven (Jesus in Luke 10:18)

Meditation: The God Who Calls Me To Battle Who Is The Devil 1. Read Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:12-15. In each case, to whom is the prophet primarily speaking (Isa 14:4; Ezek 28:1-12)? How does the language used to refer to these kings seem to go well beyond them to refer perhaps to Satan? (NOTE: There is debate among Bible believing Christians as to whether these passages actually refer to Satan, but many seem to agree that at least Isaiah goes in this direction.) 2. What are some of the ways in which the Bible refers to Satan?

What do these names reveal about his character? a. Job 1:6; 2:1 b. Matthew 13:39 c. Luke 11:18-19 d. John 10:10 e. John 12:31 f. 1 John 2:13 g. Revelation 12:9 h. Revelation 12:17 Who Are Demons? 1. Read 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6. Who are demons and what has happened to them? 2. Does their (i.e., the demons) "confinement in gloomy dungeons" mean that they are unable to affect people on earth? See 2 Peter 2:9 and Peter's comparison of the fate of the fallen angels with that of unrighteous men who are still active in the world.

We may conclude from Peter's analogy that since unrighteous people are being held for judgment and yet are still active in the world, so also are fallen angels. Besides all this, the gospels give ample testimony to the activity of demons who promote evil in the world (cf. Eph 6:10-20). 3. Read Romans 8:38-39; 1 Corinthians 15:24-25; Ephesians 1:20-21 and 1 Peter 3:22. What are some other names used to refer to demons and what do you think each signifies? To whom will these demons someday pay homage (Phil 2:10)?

What Are the Strategies of Satan and His Demons 1. Read Genesis 3:1-6. What does Satan do with respect to the word of God? How does this relate to Paul's admonition in Ephesians 6:17? See also 1 Thess 2:13. 2. Read 1 John 5:19 and 2 Corinthians 4:4; 11:3. What is Satan's chief priority? Why do you think he does this? See also Revelation 12:9 3. Read 1 Peter 5:8. What does Satan desire to do to people and especially Christians? 4. What are some of the ways in which Satan and his demons attempt to hinder, oppress, and "devour" people? a.

Mark 2:21-28 b. Mark 5:1-20 c. Luke 9:37-42 d. Luke 11:24-26 e. 2 Corinthians 11:3, 13-14 f. 1 Tim 4:1-4 g. 1 Peter 5:5-10 h. Revelation 12:10 How Does the Work of Christ Relate to Satan's Authority and Power 1. The coming of Christ, and his death and resurrection, accomplished many things under the one heading of saving the elect and establishing the kingdom of God. In that process, what has Christ done with respect to the Devil? See John 12:31; Luke 11:21; Colossians 2:14-15 and 1 John 3:8. 2.

According to John 10:28-30; Romans 8:38-39 and 1 John 5:18, can the Devil ever separate us from the love of God? 3. According to Revelation 20:10, what is the final end of Satan and his demons? How Do We As Christian Believers Fight Against Satan and His Demons 1. What does James tell us to do when Satan attacks (James 4:7; cf. also 1 Peter 5:8-9)? What is the promise associated with that? What is the significance of the term "flee" as opposed to "depart" or "leave"? Read James 3:15, 16; 4:2, 4 and list some of the Devil's ways which James says must be resisted. 2.

What does Ephesians 6:10-18 tell us to do in preparation for Satanic attack? List each item. a. In whose power do we fight against Satan and his demons, v. 10? b. What is this armor to which Paul refers in v. 11 (see vv.12-18)? How much of it are we commanded to put on? c. What is the ultimate against which we struggle, according to v. 12? What would happen if we were ignorant of spiritual attack or denied that demons actively tempt and oppose us (cf. 2 Tim 2:26)? d. What is the emphasis in v. 13?

How does v. 14ff. explain what it means "to stand"? e. What is the "belt of truth" and the "breastplate of righteousness" in v. 14? What was the purpose of the belt and the breastplate in the Roman soldier's armor? f. How important do you think the shoes would have been to a Roman soldier who often traveled hundreds of miles on foot and did hand-to-hand combat on his feet as well? How does the analogy relate to the gospel of peace? g. What is the significance of faith as a "shield" in v. 16?

What's the difference between "Christ-centered faith," "gleeful optimism," and "stubborn denial"? h. What is the significance of a helmet and how does this relate to being saved, v. 17? i. What is the purpose of a sword and how does this relate to the word of God? Cf. Matthew 4:1-11. j. How is prayer part of the armor, v.18? What does "being alert" mean? How often are we to pray for the saints? 3. Can we actually have victory over Satan and his demons? Why? Read Luke 9:1; 10:19-20; Revelation 12:11 along with Romans 16:20; Ephesians 1:19-22; 2:6. 4.

What is the final end of the Devil and his demons? Read Revelation 20:10. Meditation: What Does This Mean for My Life? The Need for Holiness Satan and his demons operate in the kingdom of darkness and

sin. When we live in unconfessed sin we give the Devil a foothold and a place from which to further harden our hearts, hinder our walk with Christ, and all but extinguish our productive witness for the Lord. Is there unconfessed sin in your life? How does 1 John 1:9 and Hebrews 13:14 relate to this?

Satan is constantly accusing us of sin, but now, in light of the definitive break with sin which Christ inaugurated for his people, the Devil's accusations are powerless and completely unable to permanently separate us from God. The more we grow in sanctification and holiness, the more unable he is to successfully tempt us. What does it mean to you to grow in holiness, to put sin down, and to walk in victory (cf. Romans 6:12-14; 8:13; 2 Cor 7:1; Eph 4:22-24)?

The Need for the Word of God

Review Genesis 3:1-6; Ephesians 6:17, and 1 Thessalonians 2:13. How important is the Word of God in your life? The Devil can surely wreak greater havoc with ignorant and therefore unequipped Christians (please compare Eph 4:14). Do you read, study, memorize, and meditate on it? How does the example of Christ in Matthew 4:1-11 help you?

The Need for Prayer

Prayer is integral to resisting Satan. Do you pray that God will meet all your needs? Do you pray for things you really need? Want? Pray also that God would enable you to be alert in the battle against Satan and give you the strength to resist him where necessary. Do you pray for other Christians and the powerful furtherance of the gospel in your community and around the world? Such prayer is required of kingdom citizens. Pray also that God might give you an undivided heart and that obedience to his will would be your delight!

The Need for Fellowship

One of the best protections we have from Satan is the encouragement, wisdom, and friendship of our brothers and sisters in the Lord (Heb 3:12-13). Are you regularly encouraged by other Christians? We need this source of God's grace in our lives if we are to have victory over the Devil. Do you make it a practice to encourage and strengthen other Christians? This was Paul's practice (e.g., Rom 1:11-12).

The Need to Advance the Kingdom of God in the Face of Satanic Opposition

Not only are we to never give up ground won for the kingdom of light, we are never to stop advancing into the world, Satan's domain, "plucking people from the fire," as Jude says (Jude 22-23). We are to preach the gospel in all the world, calling on the Lord of the harvest to confirm his Word in spite of Satanic opposition. When we are confronted with a person who has a demon or is demonized, we should command the demon(s) to depart immediately in the name of Jesus and under his authority. But we must be very alert to the more subtle ways in which the Devil works, e.g., his ability to slip in destructive heresies and encourage people to violate their consciences through questionable practices. NOTE: Ideas are powerful things and lead to strongholds in people's lives, in the life of a community, a nation, and even an entire intellectual tradition (e.g., the Western tradition and its love affair with naked "reason" and human autonomy). In most respects we may be certain that the god of this world stands behind, in one form or another, the promulgation of doctrines which attempt to overthrow God's government and render vain the preaching of the gospel. We are able to combat this through obedience to the truth, prayerful preaching of the truth, and living holy lives while we lovingly reach out to our neighbors.

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