

# Three Battlefronts: The Devil

by Scott Moreau

---

*Scott Moreau's sermon explores the nature of Satan as a defeated foe and emphasizes the importance of focusing on God's sovereignty in spiritual warfare.*

**Duration:** 49:56

**Scripture:** Job 1:6

**Topics:** "Devil"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of living our lives in a way that glorifies God and reflects His image. He explains that Christians who manifest God's image more fully are more likely to face attacks from Satan, who is jealous of their righteousness. The speaker also mentions that Satan uses various methods to attack believers, such as trying to break apart relationships and distort truth. The foundations of spiritual warfare are identified as the mind, feelings, and spiritual experience. The speaker emphasizes the need to put the power of darkness in its place and not to focus solely on believing in Satan, but rather on believing in God and living righteously.

---

## Transcript

Father, as we seek for this brief time to focus on the enemy, I pray that we will maintain our focus founded on the lens of your sovereignty, and that as we look at the enemy, we will not take off the glasses of God's sovereignty in the process, but we will see Satan for what he is, a defeated foe who seeks to wreak havoc and who is successful to a limited extent, but always operates under the umbrella of your sovereignty. And it's to your sovereignty that we joyfully and gratefully submit and ask that as all that is done and said here today would bring glory to you as we submit ourselves to you. In Jesus' name, amen.

Alright, for the next two hours, and don't worry, I am aware of the adage that the mind can only take in what the seat can endure, so we will have a ten-minute break at the appropriate time. We're going to look at the enemy. I want to set the record straight in terms of putting the power of darkness in its place, and that is by noting this.

Our job in onesis is not to believe in Satan. Now, that might sound like a startling statement, and I'm not meaning by that to imply that Satan doesn't exist. Certainly he does.

Our job, rather, is to believe against Satan, to recognize who we are in the sense of disbelieving in him, not denying his existence, but disbelieving in his power to control us. And at the same time, to use Michael

Green's title, to believe in his downfall. And not just as a future event, but if you've studied kingdom theology, you recognize that the kingdom of God is not just something that's coming in the future, it's something that's already here, that we have the privilege of participating in at this point in time.

And I would say in the same way, Satan's downfall is not just something in the future, it's already here. And as we are privileged to participate in the kingdom, we are also privileged to participate in his downfall, wrought by Jesus, but put into effect in the life of the church. And so as we spend some time looking at the foundations of what might be called basic Satanology, we will approach it with that in mind, that we are not seeking to believe in him, but to believe against him.

And not to inappropriately believe against him. Nigel Wright, in his book *The Satan Syndrome*, makes a fascinating, and I think an important point, the more we focus on Satan, the more he is energized. We're to focus on God.

Now, I don't want to get to the stage where we fall into a materialism, and again, we deny Satan's existence. No. We need to recognize him where he is, to deal with him appropriately, but we don't waste our energy on him.

We spend our energy on God instead, and keep that as our focus. At the same time, I'll put it the way Josh McDowell would, I major on God and I minor on Satan. It's good academic language, but it carries the idea that we don't need to major on Satan, and all too often people who get involved in spiritual warfare fall into this trap.

Satan is a master at Judo. You might call it spiritual Judo. In using our energy, if possible, against us.

If we focus exclusively on him, it gives him more ability to do that. He's energized by our sin. He's energized by our inappropriate focus.

In one sense, if we learn to scorn him, and I'll talk about what I mean by using kingdom ethics to fight kingdom enemy, if we scorn him appropriately, his power is broken. Scorning is living in light of the fact that I believe in Satan's downfall. I want to use that carefully, because I'm not meaning scorning as in hating, or as in reviling, but scorning as in downplaying the significance of.

And again, as I mentioned at the end of the last hour, sometimes the trap we can fall into is looking for Satanist behind every bush. A term that can be used to describe that is demonophilia, love of demons. And I hope none of you are demonophiliacs, and that we can keep our attention properly focused on the creator.

And that's what we're going to start with, because of who he is. Just as of the world, he's got the patent, we owe him the royalties. That's the nature of the beast.

And all of us, as part of the created order, always glorify something. The question is not whether we glorify, the question is who do we glorify. And as we become aware of this, then we also become aware, and I'll use Anderson's framework here, that we have the choice to decide who we will glorify.

Are we living our life on unconscious choices below the level of awareness to glorify the rebel, the enemy, the liar, the murderer? Or are we building, in a sense, our internal programming on kingdom ethics, kingdom frameworks, found in the Word of God, and using that as the framework for consciously glorifying God? What does it mean to glorify in this sense? It's not just worship or praise, though that certainly is part

of glorification, but it's living a life in line with the created order. To glorify is to acknowledge something as Lord. And it doesn't matter to me whether it's the kitchen sink, the dollar bill, sex, or education, or God, we all acknowledge something as Lord in our lives.

And this ties into Jesus' statement, you cannot serve two gods. And so when we're looking at Satan, the foundation on which we look at him is this, to God be the glory. We want to become aware, become conscientized in our own lives as to when we are inappropriately glorifying the rebel, and also as those working in cross-cultural contexts, where a culture that we are working with is inappropriately glorifying the rebel as well.

So some basic concepts. First, what would Satan have us believe? This view of spiritual warfare sees God and Satan as the two elephants, maybe Satan just a little bit lower than God, and you and I as the grass who gets trampled on a regular basis. This is not reality.

This is what Satan would have us believe. But this is not the scriptural picture. The scriptural picture is, as I have noted on your handouts, is that not only is the world in the hands of God, but Satan as a creature is in God's hand as well too.

And even this picture is inappropriate because you compare the finite with the infinite, and really Satan, as C.S. Lewis's *The Great Divorce* points out, hell is no bigger than a molecule in the larger scale of the universe. In terms of importance, whether or not I agree with him theologically, he had it right. The scale framework is you can never compare the finite with the infinite.

And we happen to be also in God's hands, and as we choose to operate out of that framework, then we will have the possibility of living a life to the level that he calls us as children of the King of Kings. So that's, in a sense, the bottom line. Satan is a creature.

He is by nature limited to the created order, even though he would have us believe otherwise. He is subject to God's universal sovereignty, and as such is an unwitting and sometimes, dare I say always, unwilling tool subject to God's control. I have this image of Satan, and it's not a visualization technique, so I'm not going New Age on you, but the idea of him getting ticked off at God.

Can you imagine how Satan felt when the cross was turned against him? But God, that's not fair! It's just. It's how I have chosen to work this. God is sovereignly in control, and that's why I said instead of focusing an inappropriate energy, I'm not saying ignore it, but instead of focusing an inappropriate energy on Satanist infiltrating the church, rather we should focus on the fact that they can be one to Christ.

And God can be seen to be sovereign in our attitude of recognizing that even the hardcore Satanist is still a human being and needs our love. Appropriately biblical love, I want to be careful with that, but needs our love and can be one to Christ. It is an interesting thing at times to hear testimonies of people who were Satanist infiltrators who later share their experience, and one of the elements that comes up is they tried to cause fights, and it just didn't work.

And in spite of the threats of Satan, they were willing to cross the line and come to Christ. Satan is defeated. He is overcome.

His works were destroyed on the cross, and he is destined. His destiny is hell. I have been lately tied into the internet framework.

Now, this is not the beast. It doesn't have a number 666 associated with it, but our college received a grant to be able to tie into the internet framework, and one of the fascinating things on the internet framework is there are news groups where people will post thoughts and ideas and have others react to them along interest lines. And in the last week, I have been reading a bunch of articles posted to the alt-Satanism group, people who are willing to discuss issues related to Satanism, to talk about it, ranging from people I've never heard of, to university professors, to even Michael Aquino, the founder of the Temple of Set, coming online.

If you want to see what people are thinking, this is a framework to look at, but one of the things I have to recognize as I'm reading their issues, these are people who are trapped up in someone whose destiny is hell, and yet they still tend to say, better hell where I enjoy myself than heaven sitting on a cloud playing a harp. What a truncated view of worship of God, isn't it? But Satan's destiny is hell. Secondly, and here's where we're going to look at how Satan operates.

In effect, he operates in accordance with his nature, but he is involved in something that I'm calling a parasitic discretion. Satan is a parasite in that he obtains his energy to work in the lives of those who give themselves over to him. Now, I'm not talking just Satanists there.

Even we, when we sin, allow his parasitic activity to take place. Don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying when you sin, a demon comes in, but when you sin, in one respect, you're glorifying the enemy, and his parasitic, discreative abilities are energized through your sin.

And discreative in this sense, Satan cannot create ex nihilo as God did. Evil, I want you to understand this, good is dependent on how God made the created order. It was declared good.

It is there, good, independent of whether evil exists. And sometimes when you start to try to find good and evil, they're opposites of each other, right? And the idea is if one disappears, well, how can the opposite? Well, wait a second. That's not what the scriptures declare.

They declare that the created order was called good by God prior to the fall. Good has an independent existence granted to it by God. Evil, however, is what is called a contingent existence.

If it were not for good, evil could not exist. What that means is at the time of the new heavens and the new earth, evil can be wiped away, and there is no threat to the existence of good. On the other side, evil cannot exist independently of good.

So when I say a discreative force, Satan wants to take the good that God has intended and twist it or warp it or change it. So when you see sin, often sin is the expression, inappropriate expression, of genuine human needs and desires. It's taking, for example, I'll take the one we think of first in our culture, sexual sin.

It's taking the sexuality that God has built into us as part of the created order as man and woman made together in the image of God and twisted it in such a way that it becomes a perversion of what God has intended. Satan did not invent sex. He does, however, dare I use this term, contextualize his approaches to sin so that in every culture you will find new and different ways of perverting good that are not always unique but certainly to be found within the culture that are tied into the cultural constraints that are there.

And that's why understanding worldview is an important issue in looking at the cross-cultural element. When we look at this spectrum that I have put together, I want to note on one side, in a positive sense, he

is a sifter. He sifts the wheat from the chaff.

And this is his question that Jesus relayed in Luke 22, 31, Simon, Simon, Satan has demanded to sift you, the you there is plural, as wheat. He wants to take the winnowing fork and throw them up and let the wheat fall down to the pan and the chaff blow away so that he can take the chaff and accomplish his ends with it. And this is what he does with Judas.

But he is a sifter. Again, let's not lose track of the sovereignty of God. God allows his people to be tested.

And he allows Satan to do some testing. That's why one of the things I teach when I teach in spiritual warfare is a righteous life is not going to eliminate satanic attacks. It focuses them like a lightning rod.

You don't have to look any further than Job to see a good biblical example of that. So Satan is a sifter. I see a couple of different ways in which this is done.

Revelation 12, 10, the accuser. How many missionaries fall under the accusations of Satan? Twelve years and you've seen nothing. You're no good.

How can you call yourself a missionary? You ever sense those accusations? Or a secret sin hidden somewhere in the closet of your memories that hasn't been effectively dealt with that he will bring to mind over and over and over again. You'll want a wonderful illustration of the boring, repetitive nature of Satan's temptations. Get the book, Paralandra.

It's the second book out of C.S. Lewis' space trilogy. And it's a reenactment of the Garden of Eden, but it takes place on the planet Venus. And you've got one human who is demonized who takes the role of Satan trying to lead the eve of Venus into the fall.

But the same arguments over and over and over again. You know any missionaries who are feeling accusations? You know missionaries tend to complain, and I'm one of them as well too, tend to complain, don't put me up on a pedestal. But sometimes we allow ourselves to be put up on pedestals.

And we know when we look at our lives the pedestals are false. There are a lot of hurting missionaries who don't know how to communicate their pain with other people because they're the missionaries. They're the To me, one of the most wonderful things that I have seen recently within the missionary framework is the fact that more and more mission agencies are bringing on trained psychologists to help their people understand what some of their basic problems are and deal with them.

They don't always deal in the spiritual warfare arena, which I think needs to be a foundational framework, but they do know that they've got some hurting people. And we're seeing this more and more in our culture. More and more of our students at the college where I teach coming out of broken homes.

I don't want to use the word dysfunctional because it's such a faddish word, but living broken lives who are in a sense eggshells glued back together again just waiting to break at the first crisis. And these are the people we're sending out into a more complex and complicated world to minister. Satan as the accuser.

Satan is also the tester. Job again, Job 1 and 2 is where we see Satan in one sense trying to test God and in another sense it's really Satan who's on trial and he's found guilty of false accusations and inappropriate strategies. And Job also is on trial.

Job's faith. Somewhere in between there as we move certainly in the negative, and I'm not saying his accusations are not negative. They certainly are as some of the illustrations I've given here.

But accusations can also help us see what we should do is right. The story is told of Martin Luther and on a regular basis the devil would visit him. But one day the devil visited him and said, I've got a list of all your sins, Luther.

And Luther looked at the list and he said, Is this all? And the devil said, No, I've got another page. And so he pulled out another page. Is that all? No, another page.

And this went on through several pages and finally Satan got to the stage where he said, Yes, that's all. And Luther said, Look at all the things God's forgiven me of. How wonderful is his grace.

Luther had the right attitude. He could take that accusation of Satan and turn it upside down. I had a student once who came up to me and said, Dr. Moreau, I've got 39 things I hate about myself.

And I've written them down on a list. You might not like the way I handled this, but I said, Be glad you don't see God's list. I wonder how many things you haven't found out yet.

But with this in mind, he took his list to the cross. And the effects of that list are wiped out. You want to live in light of that reality or you want to dwell on a disguised form of self-love, which you are labeling as self-hatred and proclaiming as these things I don't like about myself.

Even the list itself gives him a chance to focus on him and draw attention to himself. Satan is the tempter. 1 Thessalonians 3.5, Paul wrote, I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you.

We're all familiar with this, certainly, as one who wants to tempt us. The statement, Satan is not a gentleman, while it is completely true, just doesn't display adequately the depths to which he will go. And for those who are familiar with satanic ritual abuse, you know exactly what I'm talking about there.

Satan is not a gentleman is inappropriate terminology to use there. He wants to wait till we're down. We see the example portrayed in the temptation of Jesus.

It is reported that Satan left him and waited for a more opportune time. What was one of those opportune times? Why Peter, one of Jesus' closest associates, at a time when Jesus is facing the fact of his death, and Peter has just declared, Jesus, you're the Messiah, in response to Jesus' question. And then, of course, Jesus says, okay, now that you know that, Peter, I need to die.

And what does Peter do? Takes him aside and rebukes him. Lord, let's get the story straight. You're Messiah.

You know what that means, don't you? What a temptation. Does that sound like bow down before me and I'll give you all these kingdoms? Sure it does. A shortcut to the cross.

Satan waited for an opportune time. He defines opportunity by his understanding, by the way. He doesn't wait until we say, okay, Satan, I'm ready, tempt me.

He wants to wait until he feels the timing is right from his perspective. I realized it. After you've been up every night, or the last night, on the hour, every hour, with one of your kids over something, that the big thing comes.

It never seems to come purely in isolation when you're standing there strong and ready for whatever takes your place. That's when I find Satan tends to leave me a little bit more alone. It's more when I'm in the downside of the daily phases of life that he wants to come and give me opportunity.

When I'm insecure, wondering, as I did the first year I was at my college, because I was on a one-year contract and was told you're welcome to apply at the end of one year, but you won't have an inside track. What did I find myself focusing on? Well, just having been back from overseas into the land of the lottery, I found my thoughts dwelling in that direction. And, of course, it's always in a pietistic way.

Lord, what would happen if I won the lottery? Just think how much money I could give to you. How in need I could be. Now, I know I can't buy a ticket, but somebody could lose the winning ticket, and I could find it on the street.

But, see, the focus there was not even as much on purchasing the ticket as it was on putting my hopes on the horizontal level and thinking that if I won the lottery, my needs would be taken care of. That's a lie. That's a lie.

And what I eventually had to do, by the way, Dan, you'll be happy to hear this, it was in listening to one of the panel discussions of the last ICBC conference, that the lottery was talked about and living on the horizontal level. It was listening to that where the Lord clicked in with me. Yeah, Moreau, you're living on the horizontal.

You're focusing on the wrong thing. And I was able to take that before the Lord, and now when the thoughts start coming in, I take those thoughts captive and say, look, I don't have to pay attention to those. I can choose to focus on them, or I can choose to say, wait a second, my security is in Christ, not in the lottery, or whatever it happens to be.

Satan is also the liar and the murderer, John 8, 44. He wants to move us towards death. We have to look at murderer in the broad sense of the word, not just the narrow sense of taking a life, but in the broad sense of separation.

Satan is in the separation game, and I see this on two levels. He wants to separate us from God through false thinking, false understanding about God. He also wants to separate us from each other.

Look at what happened in the Garden of Eden, if you want the paradigm for this. As soon as they hear God coming, what do they do? They didn't got to get behind the bushes, don't they, because they know that they're naked. Well, not only the fact that they know they're naked means they've got to hide from God, but they've also got to hide from each other.

The fact that they have to cover themselves up indicates a break in their relationship. And thirdly, if we can put it this way without being multiple about it, breaking us from ourselves. Not splitting into dual personalities, but splitting our understanding of who we are and who God has made us to be.

In the North American context, the idea is, who are you? I'm a teacher. And even in the morning, we don't ask, how are you? We typically say, how are you doing? That doing, giving an emphasis on action, and the action is the framework for how I define myself. And if I say, I am doing well, it means I am performing okay.

Is that my identity in Christ? Next time somebody asks, who are you? Startle them. I'm a child of the king. That's who I am.

What do you mean by that? Well, that's who I am. What I do is not unrelated to who I am, because what I do is in service to God for who I am, but it's not the foundation on which I find my identity. Satan is a liar along these lines, and one of the things that he does, if I can use a computer term, is he morphs truth.

All too often, however, we're born into families, or we're born into cultures where the ultimate lie is the foundation on which people are operating. Sorry, this diagram, you can just draw this quickly in your notes, can't you? This is the idea of just taking the truth and twisting it into a lie. If he were to present us with a lie to begin with, it would be so obvious we would deny it, but it's always taking truth and making a little distortion in it.

Let me ask you a question. What are ways Satan has morphed truth in the cultures where you're seeking to minister? If you seek to understand that, you have an important key to unlocking a means to better spiritual ministry there. How has Satan morphed truth? And as I had mentioned, he is a... How does Satan murder here? And taking time to learn that can give us an idea of his strategies in the culture.

But again, as I said at the outset, we don't want to view Satan's strategies as isolated because they can become overwhelming. We need to view his strategies in light of the sovereignty of God. How has God sovereignly superintended Satan's strategies such that they can be turned upside down for God's glory? In Africa, people live in fear of the spirit realm.

Are they interested in freedom that Christ offers? You bet. That's taking Satan's strategy and turning it upside down. So when we're looking at a cultural setting, and we're going to unpack this the rest of the time we have together, what does it mean to find out where Satan is a murderer in the framework of a culture? And what does it mean to find out where Satan is lying in the context of a culture? And how can these be seen in light of God's sovereignty to be turned upside down for his glory so that we can use them appropriately? Now, one of the things we need to see is that his goal is to live out the fact of his nature.

As I had mentioned earlier, we glorify. The question is not whether we glorify, the question is who we glorify. And so as we seek to glorify God, we have to realize that that's one of the things Satan wants to shut down.

Every time I give in to sin, I am glorifying the rebel. That sobers me pretty quickly towards sin. Now, of course, in our culture, we all know what's the worst sin in the world.

It's adultery, isn't it? There's a cultural parameter that defines what the worst sin is in the culture. In some cultures, a display of anger is far worse than adultery. And the American missionary working over there who tends to have temper tantrums will have far more damage to the cause of Christ than a missionary who has an affair, if you can believe that.

Now, I'm not meaning to belittle sexual sin. I'm trying to get you to see how, in the sense of the whole dynamics of glorifying God in every way, we have to be willing to look at all sin as an act that's patterned after the rebel. And we don't want to be little rebels.

He wants to stop people from coming to Christ, and he wants to stop Christians from living the level of lives to which they are called in Christ any way he can. In imitation of God, and Tim Warner deals with this more thoroughly in his book, *Spiritual Warfare*, Satan has established a temporary counterfeit kingdom.

He launches guerrilla attacks from his kingdom.

Don't think of it as a physical place, but he launches guerrilla attacks in this counterfeit kingdom. And as I said, as a perverted discreator, you will find amazing parallels between the dominion of darkness and the kingdom of God. And when you see these parallels, simply recognize them as a discreative attempt on the part of Satan to take something good God has given and pervert it for his own needs and purposes.

Why did Satan pick on us as people? Well, most people writing in this area, I think, have the basic handle on it. Satan knows, he might lie enough to himself to lose track of it from time to time, but he knows that he can't defeat God. So if he knows he can't defeat God, what's the best way to get at God? Well, interestingly enough, get at those things which are made in the image of God.

That's you and I. By the way, this is a foundation for understanding that Satan doesn't just hate Christians. He hates every human being. Because every human being we know from Genesis 9 still is made in the image of God.

That's why murder is prohibited after the fall. Granted, there is a distortion of that image, and I'm not going to get into the theology of what that image means, but the main dynamic I see of that image for us as Christians is the ability to choose. To choose rightly or to choose wrongly.

That's not unpacking all of the image, but that's unpacking the dynamic for spiritual warfare. He also wants to stop Christians... I'm sorry. Dan, as he left, made a face at me, and it threw me off as to where I was in the notes here.

Must be the devil in him. You'll see this video later, and I'm going to get in trouble. He wants us to live our lives below what it means to be made in God's image.

And to live in such a way that God is not being glorified by what we do. And we stamped with this image are always his targets. Christians who manifest that image more fully stand to face the attack more directly.

And this is one of the reasons I say the more righteously you live, the more you live out the fact that you are created in the image of God, and the more it reminds Satan that he has lost, and his destiny is hell. That's where his jealousy comes in. And he vents his jealousy on us under the sovereignty of God.

What are some of his methods? This in bondage. He operates on all three levels. One of the things we have to be careful with is not focusing so much on Satan that we forget that the world offers temptations in and of itself for us as fallen creatures.

As in effect those who have chosen the path of rebellion because of our nature, who have been given a new nature, but who still occasionally lapse in the direction of the world or the flesh. But Satan will seek to work through these as well too. To confuse us.

To lead us inappropriately. These are backdoor attacks. Interestingly enough, I would suggest that until the 1980s, by and large the conservative evangelical wing of the North American church tend to focus almost exclusively on worldview and on flesh and kind of ignored the direct attacks of Satan because those are a little bit too scary for us to deal with because we were still tied into a materialistic framework.

What I see these days is a tendency to shift in the other direction where all attacks are direct attacks of Satan on me. There can be an egoism involved here. Satan is not omnipotent.

And while in a general sense he wants all Christians to fall, he himself is not attacking all Christians simultaneously. He's got his agents, demons, who do that side of the dirty work for him. While he focuses on whatever he considers to be important or whoever he considers to be important.

Let's recognize that in the lives of many people it doesn't take an actual satanic attack as much as a demon simply implanting a thought of insecurity in the life of a person to lead them down the wrong path. A key question that we have to look at is how is a thief coming to steal, kill, and destroy in our context? And for each culture, what are the types of bondages that Satan uses? I want to note two primary strategies with a common theme and I've talked about them both, relationships and truth. He wants to break apart relationships, he's a murderer.

And he wants to distort truth, he's a liar. Now, the foundations of spiritual warfare are threefold. At least as I understand it, no other battle do you find all three of these things.

And as Anderson says, I agree, 99% of spiritual warfare takes place in between the years. And that's where the mind comes in and that's the primary theater of spiritual conflict. I take about five hours to unpack this in a class setting at the college where I teach, but I simply want you to note this.

Too much of one or the other in relationship to feelings. Either feelings are left behind in the hopes that like the caboose they will follow along eventually, or feelings become the main purpose behind which I seek spiritual experience. We don't want to deny the reality that God has given us feelings.

They're part of who we are. But neither do we want to use those feelings to become the engine of how we live our Christian lives. Always going from one new experience to the other and seeking experiences because Satan loves to put in counterfeit experiences where he can.

To get people to be looking in the wrong direction. But on the choosing side, I had a young woman come to me and she shared her story of sexual abuse in the family setting. And I said, one of the things you're going to have to learn how to do is to forgive.

That was hard for her to think through. As a matter of fact, we talked for about an hour and I walked through some of the basic theology, some of the basic issues of being able to forgive the offenders who had perpetrated this abuse against her. And she left saying, I can't forgive right now.

And I left saying, Lord, I'm grateful that she understands what's involved. She knew that. And she was not making a false choice or looking at it in a surface fashion or in a glib way.

But also, Lord, give her the opportunity to find forgiveness. To find that she has the ability to choose forgiveness. She said, you don't have enough days to walk through the pain that I have to deal with.

You mean I have to relive that pain as part of the forgiving process? And we talked about that and the need to be able to honestly face the pain that's there and come to grips with it. And she said, I can't handle that. Well, I saw her about six months later and she said, in the meantime, she had been on a short-term mission project and stayed with some missionaries in another country.

And the missionary husband of the family she was staying with had started writing on the same thing. You need to learn how to forgive. She said before she had finished her short-term project, she sat down for several hours with him and walked through the issues of forgiveness.

She needed to be aware that she had a choice. There are an awful lot of Christians walking around not knowing that they can choose to forgive. If there's one area I see in this culture, forgiveness is certainly one of the biggest areas that people need to deal with.

I see it on a regular basis with the students I work with at the college as well as people in the community that I have the opportunity to be with. But a lot of them are not aware, number one, even of the need to forgive, and number two, they bought into certain myths of forgiveness that pervade our evangelical world, forgive and forget, the idea that if I haven't forgotten it, I really haven't forgiven them. That's a false idea.

So sometimes we need to deal with the false ideas, but the basic framework is she needed to see that she could choose to forgive and that God would empower her to be able to walk through that process. And it took several months on the Lord's part. Like I said, I didn't see her again until about six months later.

And in the meantime, God had brought her to the stage and enabled her to walk through that process. So that's the side of the mind where spiritual battle is fought or where spiritual conflict is played out. The second theater is the theater of holiness.

Satan's goal here is to render us personally ineffective and remove us from fellowship with God. He also wants to use holiness as a means of later accusations on our part. How can you call yourself a Christian? How do you think you can be a missionary if you've got this in your closet? What happens if somebody finds out about it? He wants us to be paralyzed because of lapses that we have had.

Anybody here not sinned in the last year and a half? We all walk through this. The main point here is to recognize that God calls me to holiness. He has declared me as holy.

I am to be moving in the direction of holiness. But I am to recognize as well too that it is His declaration that matters, not Satan's accusation. Focus on God's declaration rather than Satan's accusation in the arena of holiness.

And I tell you, we have seen this on a regular basis. How many of you know a lot of Americans who have a real good image of television evangelism right now? Why? This is one of these areas, isn't it? And they build their whole case on the negative examples and they exist that they have seen. Thirdly, in the theaters of spiritual conflict is that of service.

Satan's goal is to render us either neutral or harmful in serving others. You know any Christians who are living bitter, painful lives that turn people off to the gospel by that? Any Christians who feel that they can never be used of God, therefore they don't even try and minister and as a result of that they're neutral in regard to service? Any Christians who have such gross lifestyles that they turn people off to the gospel? The area that I think is most important, what I see on a regular basis is the area of people who are bitter and living painful lives. I've been asking God over the last couple of years and slowly He's beginning the process of doing it but to give me His eyes to see people who are bitter and to stop seeing them as ugly, hard to get along with people but to see them as people in pain who are leaking their pain out and don't know how to deal with it, don't know how to control it.

It gives me more compassion for them. It makes me want to say, Lord, how can I be used to set them free? How can I minister to them in their pain? Instead of being turned off by them, I can bleed with God over them. Not in the sense of going to the cross, Christ has done that all for me, but I can participate in being used in their lives to enable them to come to the stage where they can stop living out of pain.

We have a lot of students that come to our college because their parents want them to or because it's got a good name and they want a degree with the name of our college attached to it who have no real foundation for spiritual commitment who come to a school where they're living under the light of a pledge that governs their actions, where there is retribution for inappropriate action and where they not only want to see how close to the edge they can be, but they want to cross the edge and see how far they can go before they're called back for it. That's not the majority of the student body, but there are enough of them to have a significant impact on the spiritual health of the campus. And it's something that cuts me to the heart when I see because they could be so joyful and so free if they weren't there because they had to be or if there weren't this grinding pain that's driving everything that they do and they become self-fulfilling prophets.

Nobody likes me. Well, I can point to a lot of reasons why people don't like you. But at the bottom line, you're living out your pain and inflicting your pain on other people.

If you want to be free from that, there are some things we can do. So all three of these areas are theaters of spiritual conflict, but they're tying into a particular level of spiritual conflict, what I am calling the inter- and the intra-personal. Intra means within yourself.

Inter means person to person. There are five levels of spiritual conflict I think we need to be aware of that we see scripturally. You don't see this in your notes.

I'm ad-libbing here, so don't look for it. I'm not ad-libbing, but I think this is an important thing to bring in. The intra-personal is what goes on between the ears.

That's how we think about ourselves, how we respond to inappropriate thoughts as they come our way. The inter-personal arena of spiritual conflict or level of spiritual conflict is me with another person, maybe one or two, but not much more than that. When you get beyond that, you start moving towards what I'm calling the corporate level, up to, say, the size of a local church or a local congregation or maybe even a small collection of churches in a given municipality.

But that's what I'm calling the corporate level of spiritual warfare or spiritual conflict. The fourth level is what can be called the systemic level, at the level of society, when society enacts laws that are dehumanizing and when functional bureaucrats don't allow people to have human faces and demean them. Have you ever thought what it's like to be on welfare where you have to prove to the government that you need to be on welfare? In other words, prove to us that you're worthless and then we'll give you some money and make you feel better about yourself.

No, that doesn't quite work that way, does it? But that's the fourth level, the systemic level, and I really think I don't see much in evangelical circles addressing that level of spiritual warfare. I see an awful lot on intra-personal, almost too much on inter-personal. You're starting to see more on the corporate side, but the systemic you see very little.

The last level, the fifth level, is what I call the cosmic. That's the level that remains more or less hidden from us. That's angels and demons engaged, and this is where some people are coming from in the arena of territorial spirits, and I don't know about you, but I'm looking very much forward to Clinton Arnold's address on that issue because I think there are some tremendous biblical concerns I have with where people are coming from in some of the literature on territorial spirits, especially when they start coming up with, you know, I almost said denominational organizational charts, but demon organization charts and naming all the demons over a city or a country and telling who's in charge of who.

Where do they get that information? It's not from here. You know, it's either prayer in the spirit realm, which is very objective, isn't it? Or it's, you know, people who have been involved in Satanism or studying the folk religions of a context. Now, I'm not afraid of getting to know a context.

I think you've seen that in what I've been portraying here, but I am extremely worried about the direction that focuses all of our attention on territorial spirits and forgets the sovereignty of God and loses sight of the fact that we move in a direction of Christian animism when we give too much attention, inappropriate attention, to spirits. You look like I need a break, so let's break for about 10 minutes.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/25/SID25954.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/scott-moreau/three-battlefronts-the-devil/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**