

The Dark Lord of This World

by Steve Gallagher

Steve Gallagher's sermon emphasizes the need for believers to recognize and rise above the deceptive influences of the world system orchestrated by the dark Lord.

Duration: 22:15

Scripture: Ephesians 2:1-3, Ephesians 6:12

Topics: "Satan"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by describing how people are often consumed by their daily lives and fail to see the bigger picture. He explains that the enemy, a dark lord, tries to keep people focused on the trivial things in life, such as sports, to distract them from the spiritual realm. The speaker then encourages the audience to rise above the mundane and see things from a different perspective. He references Ephesians 2 and mentions that there will be two half talks, one from himself and one from Jeff, both of whom are feeling somewhat disconnected.

Transcript

The following sermon was recorded during a Pure Life Ministries chapel service in Dry Ridge, Kentucky. Please feel free to make and distribute complimentary copies to your friends. Other resources are available by visiting our website at purelifeministries.org or by calling 1-888-PURE-LIFE.

I want to share some thoughts that were kind of coming to me Thursday night that I just didn't feel led to say anything about then, but just kind of hung with me out of Ephesians 2. And this morning we're going to have two half talks. In other words, I'm half out of it and Jeff's half out of it, so we're both going to each bring sort of a message this morning. He's just, he's jet lagging and I'm just out of it.

So I don't know what he's going to talk about, but I know that it's a half talk, so I'm going to give a half talk to open up with. And I'm going to ask you to bear with me because I am a little out of it, but I want to, sometimes we have a hard time seeing the forest for the trees. You've heard that expression before, you can't see the forest for the trees.

We tend to, you know, week after week that we do this Christian thing, we go to church, we hear sermons and stuff and we tend to stay down in the forest as we're doing all this and as we're looking at things. So if you can bear with me, I'm going to try, probably clumsily and awkwardly, to get out of the box a little bit for a few minutes this morning and kind of rise above the tree level and try to see things from a different

perspective. Is that okay with you or everyone's stuck in the box or can we get out for a few minutes? All right, so you don't mind.

Robert, go ahead and throw that up there. I have verses two and three from the amplified version and I'm only doing this because it just brings things out a little bit more. And then also Ephesians 6.12. What happens is Paul is making a point here in chapter two and I'm not connecting with him on the point that he's making.

The point he's making is the dramatic transference from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light, those who have truly been saved. There is a dramatic transfer that takes place and that's the point that Paul's making in Ephesians 2. But in the midst of that, he's also making some statements that kind of open up a little bit, gives us a glimpse into the forest from the overall spiritual perspective. And that's kind of what I want to touch on here for just a minute.

And then he kind of revisits it back in chapter six. He comes back to it and kind of expounds on it and everything. So let's just go over these verses real quick.

This is amplified. He's basically saying you were dead in your trespasses and sins before. And then verse two, in which at one time you walked habitually.

Okay, that was the manner of your life. You were following the course and fashion of this world. In other words, you were under the sway of the tendency of this present age, following the prince of the power of the air.

And let me just mention briefly this word power. There's two Greek words for power. There's *dunamis*, which is where we get dynamite.

That's like the power of the Holy Spirit, you know, and stuff like that. That's like a physical exertion, energy field or whatever. That's that's that kind of power.

And there's another kind of power. It's authority. It's *exousia*.

It's like when Jesus spoke, the people were amazed because he spoke as one having *exousia* authority, spoke with spiritual authority, you know, and it's a power of influence. Right? Isn't that what authority kind of is? The power of influence. So here we have this, this dark being, this dark Lord over this world system, and he has an authority of influence, a power of influence in the atmosphere.

Okay, so then he goes on, he says, you were obedient to and under the control of the demon spirit that still constantly works in the sense of disobedience. In other words, the careless, the rebellious and the unbelieving who go against the purposes of God. And among these as well as you once lived and conducted ourselves in the passions of our flesh, our behavior governed by our corrupt and sensual nature, obeying the impulses of the flesh and the thoughts of the mind, our cravings dictated by our senses and our dark imaginings.

We were then by nature, children of God's wrath and errors of his indignation, like the rest of mankind, and then skipping ahead to 6:12, for we are not wrestling with flesh and blood contending only with physical opponents, but against the deities, against the powers, there's that word again, authorities, against the master spirits who are the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly supernatural realm. Okay, now if I can bring some sense out of this, and I'm going to read

something here in a minute, I'm hoping to. I'm trying to paint a picture here.

Well, Paul does paint a picture here. Oh, could you turn that light down a little bit here, Robert? It shouldn't be that bright. Let's get out of the forest, right? We're getting above the tree line so we can look down and see the big picture.

And what's happening here is this earth with 6 billion people on it, clamoring around doing their thing like a bunch of ants, you know, all busy and active and stuff, totally immersed in their little world, each of them, and, you know, totally immersed in the forest. All they can see is the trees around them. Okay, that's what's happening.

And this whole realm is under the influence of this dark Lord, who is constantly exerting his influences on every human being. And there's what's called here the course of this world. And what I want to say is, it's the culture in which we live, the course of this world.

Now here's when we're talking about trees, right? In other words, the things that loom so large around us. So just think about our culture, our American life that we have grown up in. For instance, let me just, as an example, Mario grew up in Columbia.

And it's a different culture down there. And he got transplanted into the American culture, two different cultures, you know, similar but different. But anyway, we've grown up in this American culture.

And part of it, there are things that loom very large in American life, television, radio, internet, sports, you know, buying homes, the cars we drive, you know, just things that make up life as we know it, right? And all of that creates a mindset. And that's what the course of this world is. And what the enemy is doing this dark Lord, who's kind of controlling things on this earth, what he is ever trying to do.

If you don't hear anything else, listen to me now. What he's constantly trying to do is keep your minds focused on the trees around you. He's trying to keep them very huge in your life.

Now, just think of some things that are very innocuous, seemingly innocuous in themselves. Let's say sports. I noticed somewhere, I think the baseball playoffs are going on now.

And in American life for men, anyway, that is huge. It's enormous. We're headed towards the world series.

You know, it's going to be one of the most watched events in the world this next, this month, right? October. It's going to be just enormous in American culture, this huge Redwood tree in our forest, right? I want to tell you something. It's all part of the devil's system, the world system.

It's all part of this system. Listen, Satan doesn't mind if you have some religion, as long as you remain addicted to the system. He doesn't care if you go to church and listen to Chuck Swindoll on the radio, as long as the reality of your daily life is that you are addicted to this world system.

As long as you stay fixated and that the things of this world remain huge in your mind, in the daily life. Now, God's got a bigger purpose. I'm going to get to that in a minute, but I have to read this.

This, this is a, one of Annie's visions, which I won't get into describing now or talking about her visions, but she was taken. Let me just say it this way. She was taken out of the forest and was able to see things from a spiritual perspective.

God just gave her these, these sights of things. Well, let me just read this part of this. This is called workings of deceit.

Then he showed me a people given over to the inner workings of deceit who had been brought under the power of deceit in slow, small stages and little by little. This deceit was given to them in little packets, like small doses in order not to alarm them as larger doses would. These deceits, which were greatly desired.

Now, can I just mention, um, I say it in my book, Intoxicated with Babylon, that you're deceived when you're offered something you want and, and your desire for that thing becomes greater than your desire for truth. That's when you get deceived. All right.

So anyway, um, these deceits, which were greatly desired, fell like seed entering fertile ground and grew developed and flowered according to what was already within them. This deceit is exceedingly powerful. Its whole substance was evil as it sought to implant itself in human beings, desiring to permeate their whole inner structure and penetrate into every fiber of their spiritual being.

Because its workings were little by little, it had the power to immunize its host in such a manner that it could keep on growing and entering even more and more without the host realizing its growth. By working in this way could give ever increasing doses to its victim. This process of deceit continued until it had become very large and powerful in its victim and the victim became fully identified with it.

And what I want to say to you men is the greatest deceit is the world and all that the world offers. If Satan can keep you sucked up into that as the preeminent focus of your life, he's got you where he wants you. Call yourself a Christian all day long, but if you are, if the reality of your life primarily focuses on this world, you're deceived.

You're deceived. All right, now we were all there. That's what Paul's saying.

Now, Paul's writing not to pseudo Christians. He's writing to the people in Ephesus who had been tremendously saved under his ministry there earlier. So he's writing this letter and he's saying, this is what you were in.

You were in this whole deception that's the world. But something happened, but God rich in mercy, you know, and he goes on to express that powerful, awesome truth. Now, here's what I want to say is we've been under the cloud of deception look at the, what is this all about? It's, there's a purpose for all this.

Why didn't God just create us as perfect beings and, and, you know, live out our life in heaven. What's earth all about? Come on, get out of your box. What's it all about? It's a test, right? That's what the whole point of it is.

All right. So he puts us on this dark ball earth, and we have this, these inner cravings, this, the flesh desires, the urges, the compulsions of the flesh that desire things, certain things. Right there.

We have that in our fallen nature and that's, and he puts us in this dark earth where this demonic Lord has got this whole system that caters to our flesh. And he's trying to keep us there bound up in that system. Okay.

That's the picture, right? Am I theologically out of whack? All right. All right. That's the system.

Then here you are, you're, you're one out of 6 billion and this, I want to say cloud or bubble or something comes floating in to your life. Here you are full of yourself. And this, this, this being, this thing that's called the word, the logos, truth, pure truth comes and, and, you know, it hovers around you and tries to influence you in a different way.

It tries to pull you out of this lower region with your mind, tries to pull you up into another mindset, right? That's completely different than the mindset, you know, down here, the Yankees, you know, the Yankees and Dodgers are going to fight it out in the world series. I don't know, whoever, you know, all that, you know, the world. And there's this thing that comes in now, one degree or another, we've been influenced by this.

And he says, can I come into your being and inhabit your inner being, permeate your inner being with truth and displace all the deception you men, we have been hearing and listening to lies for years. You've been believing falsehoods for a year. I only heard one amen out of that.

I said, for years, you've been hearing and believing falsehoods. It's true. For years, you have been hearing and believing falsehoods, falsehoods that, you know, it's this other side that they cater to your flesh and cater to what you want to believe.

What you want to believe is that you can live your life for self. You can totally indulge yourself in this, in this world. You can be utterly selfish, give over to television and all this stuff that this is part of this evil system.

You know, what you want to believe is that you can live yourself life in that way. And then one day, somehow magically, you're going to just escape that and go to heaven and live happily ever after. Anyone here believe there's a little bit of deception in that? All right, so you're here on this earth and there's a test going on.

Will you be one of those soldiers who rises above the realm that everyone else is living in? Will you be one of those and everything hinges on what you do with this? You know, so God is trying to bring truth into you to pull you out of the lie, the big cosmic lie. He's trying to pull you out of it. And of course, you've got all these demons all over the place, lying to you, telling you what you want to hear.

Oh, you're a godly man. You're really walking with the Lord. You're you're you're just, you know, and you can have this.

I mean, you don't have to be hard on yourself. I mean, God wants to bless you and and just all this stuff, all these constant influences telling you that you can keep down here on this lower level and live out your life for yourself, selfish and so on. You can live out your life down here.

And don't worry, because you got your get out of the jail card, you know, in your hip pocket. You're covered. And it doesn't matter what you do, you're going to end up in heaven, because glory to God, I'm a Christian.

Well, I'm just telling you that the reality, the reality isn't what you say, the reality is seen in what you do. That's what you're going to be judged on. We don't get saved by our works.

But when we get saved, there are works meaning that you're you completely change. There's a radical transformation. And you know, it's but here's the point that I'm trying to get at here.

I'm trying to do it in a sense of getting away from getting out of the box. And what it's all about. What's the bigger picture? What is the big picture here? It's that it's a test.

It's a test. And there are very real spiritual beings in the atmosphere. Is that real to you? Do you believe that or not? Do you believe it? There are real spiritual beings that have been attacked, somehow attached to your life from the time you were a baby, constantly lying to you and deceiving you to keep you your focus down here in the forest, the floor of the forest.

But God in his mercy has brought truth to you to lift you out of that realm of senses and pleasure and flesh into a different life. And we have to decide, do we want that? Praise the Lord. Thank you, Lord, for helping me to express these things.

And I love you this morning, Lord. And I, for one, I don't want to live with my life focused on the things of our culture, this present evil age. Lord, I want my life to be different.

I want to be clearly seen that I'm a soldier of Jesus Christ. I want people when they see me that they see that there's something different, that I don't look like the world around me, like the unbelievers, like all the people out there, these poor people who are believing the lie. God, I want to my life to represent something that's radically different from all of that.

And Lord, I thank you that you came to this devil infested world and you lived a perfect life of purity and holiness. You showed us how to do it and you have empowered us to live above this evil present age. Thank you, Lord.

We love you this morning. We love you this morning. Hallelujah.

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