

LESSON 5

THE ENEMIES: SATAN (THE POWERS OF DARKNESS)

First, who is Satan and what are demons?

1. Demons were originally angels
We know NOTHING about the creation of angels
Col. 1:16 lists them as created
2. They rebelled against God, led by Lucifer
Ez. 28:11-19 re: Tyre; Is. 14:3-23 re: Babylon
3. They became cast out rebels in God's creation
4. And so they oppose God and everything connected with God
1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:9, 12
5. Satan is called "the god of this age"; i.e. his influence in the "world" in this age is more than God's
1 Jn. 5:19; Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2 Cor. 4:4
6. This means that there are spiritual, personal, crafty, and powerful evil beings at work in this world among us. We deny, ignore or neglect this truth to our peril on this daily battlefield of life!

Second, let's look at what Satan is called in the Bible

1. Satan (Hebrew) & Devil (Greek) = the Accuser
2. Revelation 12:10
3. John 8:44
4. Matthew 4:3
5. Matthew 13:38
6. John 12:31
7. 2 Corinthians 4:4
8. Ephesians 2:2

Third, let's survey the works of the powers of darkness

1. 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 They can appear as an angel of light
2. Matthew 24:24-25 They can do amazing miracles
3. 1 John 5:19 The whole earth is their field of work
4. Ephesians 2:2 They are at work in and through unbelievers
5. 1 Peter 5:8 They seek prey/people to devour

6. 1 Timothy 4:1-3 They not only move people to irresponsible passionate living, but to asceticism and religious self-denial!
7. 1 Timothy 3:7 & 2 Timothy 2:25-26 They trap people to capture them and have them do their will
8. John 13:2 They can place thoughts into our hearts
9. John 13:27 They can enter into a person
10. Mark 4:15 They seek to make the Word ineffective in people's lives
11. Matthew 13:39 They infiltrate their people into/among the true people of God
12. 1 Thessalonians 2:18 They can hinder the purposes and plans of God's people
13. Revelation 2:10 They move people to persecute believers
14. Ephesians 4:27 They will take advantage of every opportunity we afford them
15. Revelation 12:10 They accuse us before God
16. 2 Corinthians 4:4 They blind the eyes of the heart of unbelievers

Let's add these truths that are nowhere explicitly stated in the Bible, but which are true:

17. They know the human heart, your heart, extremely well.
18. They know God better than you do.
19. They know the Bible better than you do.

What extreme effects can demons have on people: a case of demon "possession"

Mark 5:2-13.

This is not just ancient weird stuff!

Demons and mental health

What are some key points we need to understand today?

Satan and demons are real.

We should expect demon influence to be pervasive.

The Bible only knows of 3 categories of spiritual beings.

So any spiritual force or manifestation that is not of God is of demons.

We are told to “test everything”

1 Thessalonians 5:19-22

Do not quench the Spirit. (20) Do not despise prophecies, (21) but test everything; hold fast what is good. (22) Abstain from every form of evil.

1 John 4:1

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Matthew 24:24

For false christs and false prophets will arise and perform great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.

Matthew 7:22-23

On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ (23) And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

2 Corinthians 11:14-15

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. (14) And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (15) So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness..

APPLICATION

The earlier church had a good practice that we no longer observe, but might be good to revive. Before baptism the new Christians would “renounce the devil and all his works and all his ways.” They would do this in specific terms, naming and renouncing any attachment to, affiliation with, dabbling in, playing with anything to do with the powers of darkness.

This is important for us today as many practices that may involve dark power (power not of God) are in use today, and we may have availed ourselves of them. It would be good to survey your life and renounce specifically things like:

- spirit guides
- companion angels
- Quija boards
- fortune telling (giving or receiving this)
(tarot card, palm reading, etc.)
- seances
- communication with the dead
- astrology
- telepathy
- mind-reading
- power objects like:
 - good luck charms
 - power crystals
 - guardian statues

I would get rid of any “art” objects that were traditionally used in pagan religions or rituals. For example, many African masks were used by witchdoctors; the kokopelli that are so popular in southwestern art are representations of evil fertility spirits in American Indian religion.

I would renounce any previous association with non-Christian cults or religions.

A simple heartfelt renunciation of each of these previous associations with objects, practices and ideas that had to do with the powers of darkness is a good spiritual exercise. Renounce them verbally, naming them, and then commit your life to God and his truth, authority, power and spiritual influence alone.