



Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

(James 4:7)

Inver Grove church of Christ

Lesson 1 -The Devil Is Real

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"

(1 Peter 5:8)

Is the Bible concept of the Devil simply the personification of evil, or is he a real spirit being? The Bible reveals very little about him. But, God's word answers our questions which God wants answered. Beyond that is speculation and not necessary to know. One thing is certain, the Devil is real...a real person.

I) Descriptive Names

Satan (adversary) - many passages

Devil "Diabolis" (slanderer) - many passages

Abaddon; Apollyon - Revelation 9:1 (king over the angels of the bottomless pit)

Accuser, Deceiver, Dragon - Revelation 12:3,9,10

Liar, Father of lies, Murderer - John 8:44

Serpent - II Corinthians 11:3 (His first Garden of Eden appearance)

Tempter - I Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:1

Evil one - I John 5:18

Beelzebub - Matthew 12:24 (lord of the flies, false god of the Philistines)

Belial - II Corinthians 6:15 (worthlessness or hopeless ruin; extreme wickedness)

Adversary - I Peter 5:8 (like a roaring lion)

Ruler of this world - John 12:31

God of this age - II Corinthians 4:4

Prince of the power of the air - Ephesians 2:2

The enemy - Matthew 13:28,39

II) Biblical Development

There is actually very little said of him in the Old Testament. We see him appearing with sons of God (good angels) before Jehovah - Job 1:6; Zechariah 3:1-2. In Jude, verse 9, we see him disputing with Michael over Moses' body. What about? We aren't told. We can speculate, but that is all we can do.

Compare II Samuel 24:1 w/ I Chronicles 21:1. This is interesting to say the least. My thought on it is that maybe as said a moment ago, Satan is in the realm of God for a time, and what can be attributed to one, can be to the other. — Everything seems to point to him being an angelic type being of some stature...powerful, but not omnipotent - II Peter 2:11...intelligent, but not omniscient - I Peter 1:12...superhuman, but not divine - a created being.

III) Originally Satan Must Have Been Good

Nothing is inherently evil - It is the absence of good, not vice versa. Satan had to choose evil - II Peter 2:4. He rebelled against God at some point called the beginning - I John 3:8; John 8:44. Why? Maybe it was pride? - I Timothy 3:6 says do not appoint a new convert to the eldership, lest he be lifted up with pride and fall into the condemnation, as the Devil. Was it the same condemnation? Jude 6 says the angels that departed God were unwilling to occupy the station intended for them by God. Maybe this is hinted in the first temptation of Eve - "You shall become like God." Angels are to be ministering servants (Hebrews 1:14)...Satan seems to have tired of that.

IV) New Testament

Here we see the Devil more clearly defined and being separated from God. He says of himself that he can give kingdoms of the earth to Jesus (Matthew 4:8-9). He is a prince of this world (John 12:31)...a ruler of demons (Luke 11:15). But, then we see Satan bound, imprisoned, condemned, reserved for judgment - Revelation 12:7-12; John 12:31; Matthew 12:29; Luke 10:18; Revelation 20:1-3, 10; John 14:30. This is tied to the mission accomplished by Jesus.

V) Satan Today

Sin is of the devil - I John 3:8. To practice sin is to become a child of the devil - I John 3:10; John 8:44. Satan has left his mark in the world (I John 5:19)...he is a master of disguise (II Corinthians 11:13-15)...he can influence people (Matthew 16:23; Acts 13:10)...he can hinder us (II Corinthians 12:7; I Thessalonians 2:18)...he can ensnare some (II Tim. 2:26)...he has (had) power of death until resurrection (Hebrews 2:14).

Hell is prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41). It is not a domain he built in the underworld for him to punish sinful men. But, a place for him, his angels, and sinful men to be punished eternally after judgment.

We can resist him (James 4:7). God will deliver us (Luke 11:4). But, we must not give him an opening (Ephesians 4:27). Let us familiarize ourselves with his tactics (II Corinthians 2:11), so that we can overcome him - I John 2:13; 4:4.

VI) Questions

Is Satan a divine being—something like the “dark side” of God? Read these passages and see. Is Satan omnipotent?

Job 1:12; 2:6—

Luke 4:6—

Luke 22:31—

John 10:28—

James 4:7—

Is Satan an eternal or a created being (Colossians 1:16)?

Is his power resident within and drawn from himself, or has it been given to him (John 12:31; cf. John 19:11)?

What did Satan choose to do with the authority given to him (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4,9)?

What was his possible motivation (1 John 3:8; 1 Timothy 3:6)?

How has he tried to thwart God's plans in the past (Genesis 3:15; John 13:1-2,27; 14:30)?

What was Jesus able to do to him though (Luke 10:17-20; John 16:11; Hebrews 2:14-15)?

What does Satan try to wrest away from God now (1 John 3:8-12; 5:19)?

What awaits this rebellious being (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10)?

Some passages are often misapplied when considering the origin of Satan. From the context of the texts, what do the following passages have reference to?

Isaiah 14:12 (cf. 14:1-17)—

Ezekiel 28:13-14 (cf. 28:11-19)—

Revelation 12:7-9 (cf. 12:1-17)—

"The commonest question is whether I really 'believe in the Devil'. Now, if by 'the Devil' you mean a power opposite to God and, like God, self-existent from all eternity, the answer is certain No. There is no uncreated being except God. God has no opposite. No being could attain a 'perfect badness' opposite to the perfect goodness of God..."The proper question is whether I believe in devils. I do. That

is to say, I believe in angels, and I believe that some of these, by the abuse of their free will, have become enemies to God and, as a corollary, to us... They do not differ in nature from good angels, but their nature is depraved... Satan, the leader or dictator of devils, is the opposite, not of God, but of Michael.” (C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters)

Lesson 2 - The Spiritual Battle Within

“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places”

(Ephesians 6:12)

I) The Reality Of The Spiritual Conflict

The nature of the battleground for our souls has Christians being lifted into the “*heavenly places*” now (Ephesians 1:3,20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12). But, that heavenly place is not without conflicts with the Devil who is in a spiritual realm, too.

Is this talking about something in the present or future (1:3,20; 2:6)?

Who else operates in this spiritual realm or domain (2:2; 3:10; 6:12)?

What is Satan fighting for (John 12:31; 1 John 5:19)?

If we resist the Devil, what takes place within us? (Galatians 5:17-18; Romans 7:22-23)?

Describe the battle that we wage (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

"The Devil's cleverest ruse is to make believe that he does not exist" (Donald Barnhouse, *The Invisible War*). Satan is a terrible adversary, but the one who is in us *"is greater than he who is in the world"* (1 John 4:4; Romans 8:35-39)

II) The Battle Raging Within

What is the battle raging within each of us like (Romans 8:5-9)?

How does one side or the other win (Romans 8:6; Galatians 5:24)?

What do we need to do with our mind to overcome (Romans 12:2)?

How can we obtain such a mind-set (1 Corinthians 2:14-16)?

How important is it to obtain that mind (Romans 8:9)?

Both God and Satan struggle for control of our minds and lives. The battle lingers until we yield to one or the other. Trying to operate by both minds is self-destructive (James 1:5-8). Liberation can only come when we give in to God (Ephesians 4:17-24).

The battle is being waged between God and Satan, between man and Satan (Ephesians 6:12), and the trophy is the soul of man. Do we want to serve the one who died for us, or the one who wants to kill us (Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13)?

Lesson 3 - The Devices Of Satan

*"Lest Satan should take advantage of us;
for we are not ignorant of his devices"*
(2 Corinthians 2:11)

I) The Power Of The Devil

Is his power boundless or does it have limitations (Job 1:12; 2:6; Luke 22:31)?

What happens if we resist him? (James 4:7). How is this possible? Are we stronger than him?

Can we defeat him by our own power, or do we need help (Ephesians 6:10-18)?
Why?

Whose power is greater than his (John 10:28; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Colossians 2:15)?

How does the Bible describe his approach in I Peter 5:8?

How is he depicted in I Timothy 3:7?

What must we be careful not to do? (Romans 13:14)

II) Satan's Devices

Satan is real...Satan is active...like a roaring lion, he is on the prowl for opportunities to destroy our souls...he does not simply WISH to devour us, but is militaristic in his efforts. And so, if we are to stand a chance, we must resist him, be vigilant and on guard, not make it easy for him, or as it is stated in Eph. 4:27, *give no place to the devil*. Don't give the him any breaks. Make his task as difficult as pos-

sible. — Speaking of his militaristic efforts, we must fight fire with fire, be equally at war with him as he is with us...or as Ephesians 6:11 puts it, *put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* -- One way for us to better defend ourselves against his onslaughts is to know his devices...or as it is popularly paraphrased from the **Art Of War**, *to Know Your Enemy.* II Cor. 2:11 reads...*we are not ignorant of his devices.* God has not left us ignorant of our enemy's devices, so then it is up to us to come to know them.

We must see the Devil as a **real** person. And I mean more than just believe he exists, but have a "Satan consciousness"...Our enemy is not God...it is the Devil. We Christians sometimes seem to act as if God is the enemy...HE is the one against us...HE is the one preventing me having any fun...that HE is my opponent. WRONG! HE (God) is for us, not against us. (Romans 8:31). There is one spiritual being who is against us and that is Satan. -- Read Matthew 16:21-23. Peter, certainly meant well...did not at all sense he was a puppet of the Evil One, but take note of how Jesus saw this...GET BEHIND ME SATAN! This is what we must do. Any deterrence from doing God's will...any distraction, no matter how innocent looking, no matter how well meaning, is SATAN at work! Here are some, not all, of the Devil's devices...

1. Discouragement - II Cor. 2:6-11

The refusal to forgive and re-fellowship a fellow Christian after he has repented is bad enough, but a major point of emphasis here and maybe the one Paul most associates with being a device of the Devil is the man being swallowed up with too much sorrow...having others not reaffirm their love for him. As he says in verse 10, sometimes forgiving is done for other's sake. The device of Satan? Discouragement. -- Weak Christians, erring Christians, negative Christians...all Christians really, are both subject TO discouragement and can at the same time BE a wearisome discouragement to those trying to do well. The point is this: Encouragement

is of God; discouragement of the evil one. See it that way. -- This is so well worded in Hebrews 12:12-13...*Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather healed.* -- We must try every way we can to hold up the hands of those who are heavy-hearted and lacking in confidence...to make sure we do everything in our power to not discourage others, knowingly or inadvertently...and say loudly when we ourselves become down...GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

Your comments:

2. Disguise - II Cor. 11:12-15; Matthew 7:15; Jude 4

This of course agrees with the teaching of Jesus when He said, beware of wolves in sheep's clothing. Not all who appear to be godly, truly are. What you see is NOT what you get. And you know what, preachers and teachers are some of the devil's most used change agents...masters of disguise...real life cloak and dagger individuals. Don't doubt it...read II Pet. 2:1-3. -- And just as was stated in the previous point about discouragement, they may not even be aware of what they are doing. But, some may...they use godliness as a means of earthly gain, and may know fare and well that they are con artists, but many others may themselves be duped. Once again, just as the Lord said...they are blind guides..and if the blind lead the blind, both fall into the pit. So, what is a person to do? First, we must never reverence a preacher or teacher beyond what is written. And second, be very careful of gullibly buying some doctrine because of its appearance...and third, when doubt arises and something is seen to not harmonize with all the Word has said, then say...GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

Your comments:

3. Appeals To Man's Three Basic Weaknesses - I Jn. 2:16; 5:19

From the beginning, even with Adam and Eve, Satan uses these three techniques to undermine man's relationship with God...to tempt man, just as he used all three to tempt Jesus and through these three basic ways he ultimately corrupts man. --

First, the lustful desires of the eye - our eyes are said to be windows of the soul and so when the Lord warns, if your eye becomes dark, how truly dark your life can become, we need to take that very seriously (Luke 11:33-36). When we look longingly at women not our wives, when we look longingly at the possessions of others or even those in the store or online shopping...and we then become covetous or discontented or envious...that is SIN...and that is the Devil at work.

Then there is the **lustful desires of the flesh** - We may think that something that feels so good can't be wrong...but that is just a humanly worded song. Alcohol and drugs are desires of the flesh...they make us feel good or enable us to escape grief...foods for the stomach, and the stomach for food...so Paul says in I Cor. 6...but he then goes on to say God will destroy both...and we must not be mastered by it. This, too is a device of the devil.

And the third avenue of worldliness is the **Pride of life** - Was this Ananias and Sapphira's downfall? Wanting the glory of giving all when really all they gave was some? (See Acts 5:3). Is this the one that the devil most relates to personally? In I Timothy 3:6, where the qualifications of bishops is given, an interesting thing is said when warning to not appoint a new convert to the office...it says, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. When we begin to feel big, or want to be seen as big, we need to be saying loud and clear...GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12)

Read Acts 20:29-30 and find the pride reference.

Your comments:

4. Accusations, Belittlement, Slander - Revelation 12:10

Job was on the receiving end of this..."you have hedged him about to where I can't get at him...but you let me touch him he will curse you." -- John the Baptist felt the brunt of such slander.. "He has a devil"...and even Jesus... "He is a glutton and a winebibber". All good people experience it at one time or the other, so be ready for it. It is a ploy of our enemy that we should not be ignorant of. It may come from family...Job's wife joined with the devil saying, "Why not curse God and die, Job"...She likely did not even know she was working for the devil. She may have thought it a loving thing to say to her husband, to spare him more grief. And going further, she may have done it only this once, but for at least a moment she became a conduit for the devices of Satan. -- Belittlement may come from brethren...possibly well-meaning brethren like Peter to Jesus (Matthew 16:21-23), but if it does not line up with God's will it is a working of Satan. -- Accusations may come from the world...through even outright persecution...or more subtly through the social pressures of peer groups...or even completely being ostracized...rejected by friends and deserted. When this happens think...GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

Your comments:

5. Doubt - Genesis 3:1

Did God really say you can't eat of every tree? Sounds like, "Can you really be sure the Bible is reliably translated?" "Do you really think that God really that narrow or demanding?" "Are you telling me that there is only one true church?" "Surely one is not going to be lost just because he wasn't baptized." "Did God say you CAN'T use instruments of music in worship?" "God is too loving to send anyone to hell...forever. Are you sure there is a hell?" These and myriads like them are questionable doubts of who? The devil. -- But, expand on this a bit more...doubt or suspicion of others is also a tool of Satan. God is love and love believes all things, hopes all things, thinks no evil, etc. (I Cor. 13). And this is regarding one another, not only God. A device of the devil is to get us to be skeptical, paranoid, and suspicious of others. When this thought comes say...GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

Your comments:

6. Idleness - I Tim. 5:11-15

Turned aside after who? Satan! With all of our leisure time today...be careful it does not become the devil's playground. Now this may be a hard one to accept, but idleness is the devil's workshop. So when we have too much free time...more than adequate to rejuvenate our bodies or give our minds a break from the stress of work, so as to rest and recuperate mentally, then be careful...the devil is lurking. One of the reasons man needs to busy himself in the worthwhile pursuits of his hands or mind is so as to not be busy in other men's affairs...for we haven't got the time. Or for that matter we do not even worry about a lot of things...we haven't got time to worry. Read Ecclesiastes 5:18-20. -- In the end, beware of idleness and say GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

Your comments:

7. Confusion - Mt. 13:24-30, 36-43

All the many denominations today...the many faiths, the many baptisms...makes it difficult for the investigating individual to know who or what is right. It can be quite confusing. Just as there are counterfeit currencies of money and some of them are really hard to recognize, so too with religion. There are counterfeit gospels (Galatians 1:6-10), counterfeit churches, doctrines (I Tim. 6:3) and Christians (II Cor. 11:26) and all this needs to be seen as the workings of Satan. Paul says in I Timothy 4:1 that there are doctrines of demons. James says in 3:16, where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. God is not a god of confusion (I Cor. 14:33)....so, GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

Your comments:

8. Snatching The Word Out Of The Heart - Lk. 8:12

Though we may not be sure how he does this, he certainly does hinder the Word from going deep into people's hearts in some way or another. Even when we cannot with certainty see the finger of the devil in hindering the good of saints, it is ok to lay the blame at his feet. We do the same thing in the opposite way. We may not always be able to see plainly the hand of God's blessing or Providence in matters, but are quick to credit and thank Him for all good and perfect gifts and the favorable outcomes that come our way. -- One seemingly certain way that Satan snatches the word from people's hearts is by them failing to act on what they have heard...and soon they are playing right into the devil's hand. He does not mind us hearing the word of God, possibly even believing it...a least a little...just as long as we do not act on it. When we entertain acting on what we have heard and believed, do not delay...for if we delay, Satan may snatch it away and the power of the message may never come again. Oh, you may hear it again...maybe, but it may not touch your heart the way it is now...Satan has snatched it away for ever. Don't let this happen...GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

Your comments:

9. Misapplication and Misdirection - Matthew 4:5-10

The jump off the temple and God will save you temptation, along with the Devil's quoting of Scripture to justify it, is a gross misapplication of Scripture. Oh, he quotes it correctly, but then incorrectly applies it. And in so doing he placed it in contradiction to another part of Scripture...something that can never rightly be done. -- The temptation to bow down and worship Satan and you will receive the kingdoms of earth is an example of misdirection. Christ is to become king over all the kingdoms of the earth, but it is in God's way, not this. -- Today there are many examples of this...misapplications of scriptures dealing with the destruction of Jerusalem...making them applicable to the end of time. Misapplying OT teachings of the Sabbath or teachings about miraculous gifts of the Spirit to today. -- And when it comes to misdirections, they too abound...for instance...Exalting tolerance above truth...emphasizing the head more than the heart...making size more important than sort....stressing the positive to the neglect of the negative...putting happiness above holiness...majoring on this world, instead of the next...and on and on the lists could go. GET BEHIND ME SATAN.

Your comments:

10. Hardening Of The Heart - Hebrews 3:12-13

This device of Satan is similar to #8, snatching the word out of people's heart. The difference is that in this one man is consciously doing some sinful things to the point that our heart gets hard and we ultimately depart from God. But, this too is the Devil's doings. Plainly speaking, sowing "wild oats" in our youth is sowing oats in the devil's field...and hardening our heart. -- Doing something wrong just once

is a rationale of the Devil...and hardening our heart. No one will ever know. Right. That's a joke. God knows and He is the only one who ultimately matters. Whenever we hear voices in our head speaking this way we need to forcefully say...GET BEHIND ME SATAN!

Your comments:

11. Thorns In Our Flesh - I Cor. 12:7-10

Now, the Lord left it there to humble Paul, but notice it was the Devil's thorn given Paul...is there such a thing today? To what extent I do not know, but can there be fleshly thorns in our life? Yes. Is that of God or the Devil? You know the answer...GET BEHIND ME SATAN!. See Job 2:7.

Your comments:

12. One of Satan greatest tools is to use marital unhappiness to draw you away from God.

Why? It mirrors the church so much (see Ephesians 5:22-33). Also notice even intimacy issues are providing Satan an opening for temptation. This should be avoided. See I Cor. 7:5

Your comments:

13. False Teachers & Doctrines - I Timothy 4:1; II Peter 2:1-3

Where can we find true wisdom (Colossians 2:2-3; 1 Corinthians 1:25)?

What are we warned to avoid (Colossians 2:4,8)? In what area do we confront some of the greatest threats to mankind in today's world (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)?

The thinking of our day has been influenced by many factors—both subtle and overt. What are some ways in which you have observed the impact of any?

Consider the current thinking of our culture on issues like:

- Religion—
- Homosexuality—
- Separation of church and state—
- Young people and sex—
- Moral absolutes—
- Pursuit of self—
- Lack of accountability—
- List others that you can identify—

List some places where these philosophies are raising their heads and affecting our views of our present-day world.

In all of these things, what has Satan effectively concealed from us (Colossians 2:2-3; John 8:32; Acts 4:12)?

Your comments:

14. - Blinding Minds - II Cor. 4:3-4

If Satan is not Divine, how can he be considered "*the god of this age*" (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Galatians 1:4; cf. Romans 6:16; 1 John 5:19)?

How does he control the thinking of men to motivate and manipulate their actions (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Ephesians 2:1-2)?

How does he blind our minds?

3) What happens when men refuse to acknowledge and honor God (Romans 1:18-25)?

- Romans 1:21b
- Romans 1:21c
- Romans 1:22
- Romans 1:23
- Romans 1:25a
- Romans 1:25b

When men reject the "*deep things of God*" (1 Corinthians 2:9-14), what do they trade for them (Revelation 2:24)? How deep does the well of Satan's wisdom run (2 Peter 2:18-19; Jude 16)?

Your comments:

15. False Signs and Wonders - 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

Your comments:

16. Miscellaneous hindrances - I Thessalonians 2:18 - Even if we cannot clearly see his handiwork every time, we like the apostle Paul can clearly do one thing, and that is lay all hindrances to doing God's will at his feet. I have observed that when we let the devil hinder us in some good work, more hindrances will likely come. Paul experienced it, time and again, and so shall we. If it works, why stop? But, let us not make his efforts easy...but make his task difficult. And one good way to do that is to know our enemy and his devices. That way we will be forewarned, forearmed and better able to fight off his advances.

Elymas is described as an agent of the Devil when he tried to block Paul's influences for good. See Acts 13:6-10

Your comments:

Lesson 4 - The Power Of Temptation

"But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death"

(James 1:14-15)

I) Satan Doesn't Play Fair

Who brings temptation upon us (James 1:13; 1 Corinthians 7:5)?

Where does temptation begin (James 1:14)? Why does this make our own temptations so strong?

Where does Satan consistently send his most intense efforts to tempt us?

- How do our weaknesses of the flesh make us vulnerable to him (Matthew 26:41; cf. Luke 22:31,46,53)?

Is anyone exempt from Satan's temptations (Hebrews 4:15; Luke 22:28)?

Satan appealed to those things that Jesus desired when tempting Him. Which desire of Jesus did Satan appeal to in each of the following temptations (Matthew 4:1-11)?

- 4:2-4

- 4:5-7

- 4:8-10

What is the nature of some of the temptations Satan brings against us?

- 1 John 2:15-17
- 1 Timothy 6:9-10
- Matthew 13:22
- Matthew 5:27-28
- Matthew 20:20-26
- 2 Timothy 2:22
- 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

II) Overcoming Temptations

Considering what we know about the origin of our temptations (cf. James 1:14-15), how can we begin to defeat them (Proverbs 4:23)?

What has God promised us about our temptations (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Peter 2:9)?

How is Jesus able to come to our aid with our temptations (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15-16)?

What does Jesus say to pray in Matthew 6:13? What does this mean?

What benefits come to us when we overcome temptation?

- 1 Peter 1:5-7
- James 1:2-4
- James 1:12
- 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Lessons 5 - Drawing The Line

"Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil"

(1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)

I) Who Decides Morality?

What problem do we have when trying to determine what is moral and acceptable behavior in our ever-changing world (Jeremiah 10:23)?

How do we determine God's will concerning our conduct and actions (1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 2 Peter 1:3-4)?

How clear is God's will concerning those actions or activities which are good or evil (Romans 12:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)?

Is the Bible clear about every situation in life? Is everything in the Bible “black and white” or are there some “gray areas” that we must struggle with? Does that mean that there is nothing in the Bible that is “black and white”?

II) Where Do We Draw The Line?

When certain activities are not specifically described in the Bible, how do we determine where to draw the line? What principles do we need to consider?

- Does it destroy your identity as a Christian by causing you to be regarded as of the world (2 Corinthians 6:14; 7:1; Romans 12:1-2)?
- Is the practice questionable in your own mind and therefore an offense to your own conscience (Romans 14:23)?
- Does it have a weakening influence on others and will it become a stumbling block to them (1 Corinthians 10:23-33; 8:7-13)?
- Is it destructive to your body (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 10:31)?
- Does it conflict with your duty as a Christian (Matthew 6:33; 2 Timothy 2:4)?
- Does it cultivate an inordinate fleshly appetite (Romans 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 9:27)?
- Does it bring you under weakening association and influence (1 Corinthians 15:33)?
- Does it bring upon you an unequal yoke and place you at a disadvantage in serving the Lord (2 Corinthians 6:14-18)?

What do we need to help us make those judgments (Philippians 1:9-10)?

What do we need to consider in making those judgments (Philippians 2:15; 2 Corinthians 8:21)?

Is God satisfied if we try to live as close to “the line” separating right from wrong as we can (Isaiah 5:20; 1 Peter 4:2-4)? What attitude does that show Him (Matthew 12:30)?

III) Danger Of Letting MY Conscience Be Your Guide

Is it possible for someone else to be faithful to God even though he doesn't draw the same conclusions, or draw the line in the same place on some issues, that I do (Romans 14:3-6)?

- How is that possible (Titus 1:15; 1 Corinthians 6:12)?
- Are there some things that I would consider to be wrong, which you would consider to be right? What is God's view toward each of us (Romans 14:1-6,13-17)?
- Is my conscience to be your guide in such matters (Romans 14:4,10,13)?
- Is the writer here speaking of sinful things, or things which some think to be sinful (Romans 14:1,6,16,18)?
- How am I to respond to someone whose conscience causes him to “draw the line” in a different place than I do (Romans 15:1-7)?

What are the dangerous consequences of “judging other people's actions by my own conscience” in the following examples (cf. 2 Corinthians 10:12)?

- Joshua 22:1-34
- 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
- 1 Corinthians 10:23-33
- Romans 14:1-23

Which is worse—to bind where God has not bound, or loose where God has not loosed (Revelation 22:18-19)?

We must remember that God regulates morals—not us. Based on the principles God has revealed, we must weigh our actions and make our decisions based on what He said! That, more than anything, will help us know where to “draw the line”.

Lesson 6 - Overcoming The World

For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

(1 John 5:4)

I) Can We Overcome The World?

We begin to overcome the influence of the world, by taking the proper attitude toward it. What should be our response to the world and its temptations, according to the following verses?

- 1 John 2:15-17—
- Romans 12:1-2—
- John 17:11-21—

Where does this change begin (Romans 8:5-10)?

II) How Do We Overcome The World?

Where does it begin for every Christian (Luke 17:3; 1 Timothy 4:16; Acts 20:28)?

Where do we attack and offset the power of the sin and worldliness that would overcome each of us (Romans 6:12-14)?

How radical is the commitment we must make (Romans 12:1; Galatians 5:24; 6:14)?

What must follow that action (Romans 12:2b)? How do we accomplish that and bring about a permanent change (Romans 12:2a,c)?

When our very thought processes are transformed, what kind of thinking do we then adopt and attempt to reflect (Ephesians 4:17-23; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 2:16)?

How radical is that change (2 Corinthians 5:17)? Where are those changes reflected—what is put off, what is put on (Colossians 3:5-4:1)?

How do we maintain that change in our thinking and actions (Hebrews 12:1-2; Colossians 3:1-4; Philippians 3:13-14,20)?

What is necessary in our long-term efforts to maintain our separation from the world and its sinful things (Hebrews 10:35-39)?

"Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within" (Romans 12:2, *J.B. Phillips translation*). The temptations of the world that would draw us away from God are not stronger than God's pull on us. Yet, since we are the ones who choose either God or the world, their power is sufficient to entice us away from God. We can overcome or be overcome by this world—it is up to us (Philippians 2:12-13).

Lesson 7 - Resist The Devil And He Will Flee

"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you"

(James 4:7)

I) The Devil Can Be Resisted

Is the devil's hold on us greater than God's (Romans 8:31,37-39; John 10:27-29)?

What has Jesus done to the devil and his power?

- Matthew 12:29—

- John 12:31—
- John 16:7-11—
- Colossians 2:15—
- Hebrews 2:14-15—
- 1 John 3:8—

What has He empowered the church to do (Matthew 16:18)?

II) Resist The Devil And He WILL Flee From You

It is foolish to think that the strength to overcome the devil lies within ourselves. So, where can we draw sufficient strength to overcome him (Ephesians 6:10)?

What else must we do at the same time we resist him (James 4:7-10)? How much effort must we expend (1 Peter 5:8-9)?

What must we avoid doing (Ephesians 4:27)?

What has God promised to us if we will resist Satan (1 Corinthians 10:13)?

How active or passive can we be in this resistance (Ephesians 6:10-19)? Why (6:11-13)?

Describe the armor God provides for us and its usefulness in helping us combat Satan and ward off his destructive blows against us (Ephesians 6:14-18; cf. 2 Corinthians 10:3-4).

- Gird waist with truth
- Breastplate of righteousness
- Shod feet with preparation of gospel of peace
- Shield of faith
- Helmet of salvation
- Sword of Spirit
- Praying always in the Spirit

When Jesus battled against Satan, what weapons did He use (Matthew 4:1-11; Philippians 2:5-8)? What did He prove about them?

Satan is the most powerful foe we will ever have to face, but through Christ we have the strength to resist him. We can be victorious over Satan—but not with some half-hearted effort! Satan is a coward who can be put to flight by strong conviction and resistance to him and his temptations. Have you put him to flight yet?

Lesson 8 - Take Heed Lest You Fall

"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall"

(1 Corinthians 10:12)

I) Take Heed Lest You Fall

Why is there danger when we think we have overcome Satan and his temptations (Romans 11:20-22)? What danger still exists (1 Corinthians 9:27)?

Is it possible to fall from God's grace after being saved (Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 6:4-6; 2 Peter 2:20-22)?

What are some of the dangers inherent in thinking that we have overcome sin, and are now living above it (Romans 2:17-24)?

Does God show any special favor to His children, just because they are His children (Romans 2:11-13)?

What are some of the things that cause us to stumble and fall away from God?

- Luke 22:31—
- Acts 20:29-30—
- Matthew 13:21—
- 2 Timothy 4:10—
- 1 John 2:15-17—
- Romans 8:13—

II) Examine Ourselves

Why should we examine ourselves—why do we need to establish the following things about ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:5)?

- “If we are in the faith”—
- “If we really know ourselves”—
- “If Jesus Christ is in us”—
- “If we indeed are disqualified”—

By what standard should we measure ourselves (James 1:22-25)?

What is the danger of measuring ourselves by our own estimates of self (Galatians 6:3; Romans 12:3)? What can it encourage us to do (Matthew 6:1-18)?

What is the danger of measuring ourselves by comparing ourselves with others (2 Corinthians 10:12,18)? What can it encourage us to do (Luke 18:9-14)?

Knowing ourselves and our true condition before God is the first step in doing what is right. When we examine ourselves, we may find ourselves to be satisfactory, or we may find ourselves to be condemned—but by all means, we need to find out now, before the Lord exposes us at the end (1 Corinthians 4:5)! Complacency and overconfidence can cause us to fall just as surely as sin or false teaching. We must guard against becoming our own worst enemy!

Conclusion

As we close this study of Resisting The Devil, what are some of the things you recall, have learned or about which you have been most impressed?