

Should we be talking
about the devil and demons?

*Do Christians battle
with the devil?*


Give NO PLACE to the DEVIL

*Do demons dwell in
Christians and their homes?*

*Is there a demon for
every sickness and difficulty?*

*What about job?
Paul's thorn?*

RADIO MESSAGE by DWIGHT PORTER, D.D.

WARNING! 

THE content of this message is contrary to tradition and the voice of many teachers and preachers of our day. If under scriptural authority, you will discover God's answers to these questions. Your response to this biblical **TRUTH** will determine victory or defeat in your Christian life.

GIVE NO PLACE TO THE DEVIL

EVERYBODY seems to be talking about demon possession, Satan, and his work in the world today. Should this subject matter take our time and attention? There seems to be a revival of interest in matters pertaining to the supernatural. How sad and tragic to note that the devil's power is receiving overwhelming attention. We see and hear it everywhere.

My first direct confrontation with this unscriptural emphasis came to me while holding special meetings in Sauk Rapids, Minnesota. The pastor related the position of the evangelist who had just ministered before me. He assumed demons to be the cause of all difficulties, and classified the different sicknesses and all bad behavior as such. I was informed how he prayed for the demon of disobedience to leave the body of a misbehaving child. His position challenged my heart, and I began to study the subject matter. This premise is accepted far and wide, and it reaches into many evangelical churches and fellowships. Listen to the talk of the average Christian and hear credit given to the devil for their trying circumstances. Is such practice scriptural?

The June 19, 1972 issue of *Time* magazine featured a story entitled "The Occult: A Substitute for Faith: Discussing and analyzing cults worshipping Satan, from texts from the *Satanic Bible*." The article reported the upsurge of public fascination with witchcraft and spiritualism. An old house on a street in San Francisco is painted black and called "The Church of Satan." Its leader, Anton Szandor LaVey, calls himself the "High Priest of Satan," and declares that he has dedicated his organization to the proclamation of "complete sexual permissiveness, unbridled vengeance and unrestrained greed." This leader now claims followers numbering over one quarter of a million people.

How can an unheard of cast, featuring obnoxious scenes of nauseating frankness, become perhaps the greatest box-office success of that time? "The Exorcist" indicates modern man's interest in the spiritual, whether it be of God or Satan. Naturally, when the world becomes alive with a subject matter, it will soon be in the pulpit and in the pew. After all, our evangelical booksellers must also get in on the financial bonanza, thus books about Satan and demon possession begin to flood the religious market.

Are we as Christians to dwell on the power of Satan? Are we to fill our mind with his power and authority? How dare we give him so much attention? To do this is a direct violation of the commandments of God in the New Testament. Entertaining the very thought of a Christian being possessed of the devil is blasphemy. What a dreadful toll the Christian will suffer to conclude that he must do personal combat with the devil. I do not care what books you have read, or whom you have heard preach on this subject. I earnestly pray that by the time you have come to the end of this sermon God will have revealed to you that the conflict is between Him and Satan, and you are not involved in the battle.

NOTHING NEW

Read all of the books written on the subject and you will discover nothing new about Satan. All God desires us to know about the unseen spirit is recorded in His Word, the Bible. "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Corinthians 2:11). Time is precious and too many people are without the knowledge of Christ as Savior for our minds to be filled with someone's experiences with the devil and demons. I happen to know exactly how Satan operates, and I realize that his approach has always remained the same down to this day.

If you are not already familiar with it, study the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Satan still uses the same lies. His avenues of approach are the lust of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life. This same approach was evident in the temptation of Christ in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). The world is filled with these same three things: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2:16).

Why should we react as though for the first time we are discovering Satan's power in the world around us? He is still limited and controlled by God. In grace our Heavenly Father not only tells us of his power and method of operation, but also reveals his defeat and ultimate end. How dare we waste our mental processes dwelling on him? We do it because he works upon the minds of men. How sad to see so many professing Christians dwelling on his person, power, and acts.

The commission from God is to declare the gospel to EVERY creature upon the face of this earth. The gospel is the declaration of the action of Jesus Christ in behalf of sinners. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and in which ye stand. . . . For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:1, 3, 4).

OUR ATTRACTION

It is not the devil! So many people give constant credit to Satan. "The devil made me sick." Most sickness is the consequence of our own dissipation, not Satan's work. "Satan kept me awake last night. He is giving me a real battle." Some poor, misguided Christians conclude that all difficulties are the direct work of Satan. How conceited can one get? How important a person must be for Satan to spend so much time and energy on him! Exercising the wrong mental attitude toward our difficulties, it becomes easy to receive Satanic oppression and depression. The next automatic conclusion is the possibility of demon possession. Imagine the paralyzing thought of a child of God concluding that the enemy of their Heavenly Father might possibly have such power and control over one of His children!

Our attraction is not Satan. Plain scripture directs our thought patterns away from him. “Neither give place to the devil” (Ephesians 4:27). In the context, the subject matter is anger. The New American Standard translation is nearer the original Greek text. “Do not give the Devil an opportunity.” Do not let the sun go down while you are angry. Do not stay angry or give the devil an opportunity to use your aggravated wrath to serve his hellish purposes. Some preachers rant and rage against the devil as though the victory for righteousness depended solely upon them. This pattern of unscriptural action is appealing to many who love a good fight. By dwelling upon their hatred and resentment in such frenzied aggression, they play into the hand of the very one whom they are attacking. God’s Son will ultimately reign. These same preachers hold in their hand a Book from heaven that declares God has already won the conflict. Why get so anxious or excited as though uncertain as to how the contest will end? The battle is between God and Satan, and Satan is already defeated! The contest is over! Why not relax and do the job of evangelizing the lost and building up the saints per the instructions of the Good Book?

How dare we fill our mind with the devil’s work, when we have the absolute final Word of God that declares Satan a defeated foe? We are to be **LOOKING UNTO JESUS, TUE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH**” (Hebrews 12:2)! We are already victorious. “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God” (I John 5:4, 5)? “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might **DESTROY** the works of the devil” (I John 3:8).

OUR POSITION

We are not weak and sickly, doing conflict with a great powerful devil. God takes care of him. We are in the present position, as sons of God, of absolute triumph. “Now thanks be unto God, which **ALWAYS CAUSETH US** to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savior of his knowledge by us in every place” (II Corinthians 2:14). Please note where our triumph is located. Not in our human effort or conflict with any enemy, but we are led into constant (always) triumph **IN CHRIST**. Note that God causeth us to do so. He has never lost a battle. He has already declared the doom of Satan and all his hordes. “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Revelation 20:10).

Do you believe the ultimate future of Satan is settled? You can be assured that Satan believes that last verse of scripture. He has influence and power only upon those who do not believe it. He is a defeated foe, with his end determined and declared by God. And you spend time and energy doing battle with him and giving him credit for troubling you?

When the sinner repents and believes Christ to take his sins on Calvary’s cross, he does not create the fact; he simply rests in the fact established since the foundation of the world when, as we note in Revelation, the Lamb of God was slain (13:8). Never forget that the cross was God’s visible expression of a fact already established by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God. “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknow!edge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain” (Acts 2:23).

Our position in Christ forever removes us from doing battle with Satan. He i~ beyond our power in the natural. God warned us of this fact. “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” (Ephesians 6:12). The annor provided is sufficient to withstand all of Satan’s attacks. Why should I consider him other than a *defeated* foe? “Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (Ephesians 6:11). The armament is listed in verses 13-18.

ABSOLUTE VICTORY

The power and authority invested in God's children is **thrilling** to behold. God's grace and provision is not less today than in the New Testament times. "Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19). "And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name" (Luke 10:17). It is still true today, so why dwell on demons? They are put to flight through the name of Jesus Christ. "Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour" (Acts 16:18). Remember, it is our Father Who has already declared the complete defeat of Satan. "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ALL POWER is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18).

Christ has provided for us absolute and final victory. "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15). We have sufficient power to resist our adversary. Since God tells us to resist him, we can do it by His power. Do not make a big, momentous battle of it. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the god of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablished, strengthen, settle you" (I Peter 5:8-10). "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

Why waste time and energy on the devil and his demons? We know who he is and what he is going to tell us. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44).

SATAN'S DEFEAT

This is an already accomplished fact. God help us to realize it and live in the reality of it. "For as much then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might DESTROY HIM that had the power of death, that is, the devil" (Hebrews 2:14). "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might DESTROY THE WORKS of the devil" (I John 3:8). Satan is already judged with the sentence passed and eventually carried out. "Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged" (John 16:11).

The only struggle we have is with ourselves, not Satan. Our responsibility is to declare and mean it, "NOT I BUT CHRIST"! Obedience to the plain instruction of the Word of God is our thrilling opportunity and challenge. As God's children, we can obey! "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). We do not defeat Satan! This an accomplishment plainly revealed in the Word of God. Believe it and get your thought processes off Satan, demons and hell, for you are more than a conqueror. "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37).

God has absolute control over Satan, and He does not need or use Satan to buffet His children. He promised to do the chastening directly. "For whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Hebrews 12:6). We dare not take the historical record of Paul's thorn and use it as a doctrinal dissertation that Satan also buffets us when we have a bit of difficulty.

PAUL'S THORN

Here is a thorny problem for many people and ministers. Note the wording of II Corinthians 12:7: "There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me." When we talk to God about the things transpiring in our lives, we always receive an answer. Paul heard it after he asked three times for removal of the thorn. "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice,

that it might depart from me” (II Corinthians 12:8).

It is important to realize that Paul recognized the purpose of the thorn. “And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure” (II Corinthians 12:7).

How sad to hear people talk about their thorn. The historical account of Paul’s thorn does not demand a repeated performance. It was Paul’s thorn, not yours. It is as unscriptural to expect and plan for your personal thorn as to generate some kind of fleece to find God’s will. No such direction is given us in the Bible. God’s response to Paul did not grant his petition. If God does not change the situation, He gives us power to cope with it. Of course, we will be the better for having gone through any ordeal. “Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Romans 8:26). Although Paul requested the departure of the thorn, God said NO. He presented Him with something better than instant deliverance. “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness” (II Corinthians 12:9a).

Was this thorn in the flesh a terrible thing for Paul? Not so! Listen to his reaction and response. “Most gladly therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong” (II Corinthians 12:9b, 10). There is no victory for Satan in this. Paul does not dwell on the instrument, for his rejoicing is in the strength communicated to him by God. Here is the reason he can talk freely about mortifying the deeds of the body in Romans, chapter 8. Paul reports complete victory over the adversary.

The disciples returned with the same report. “Not withstanding in this rejoice not; that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20). Christ told them not to rejoice in the subjection of demons. Such power is on the basis of their being IN CHRIST and a part of God’s family.

Every time Paul was bruised, he became a more spiritual and effective instrument in the hands of God. He was a greater servant because in the midst of physical weakness, God’s power could be demonstrated within him. With each buffet of the messenger of Satan, he became stronger.

JOB’S SITUATION

So many people accept the historical story of Job, declaring that God uses Satan to chastise His servants. What a terrible accusation against a loving Heavenly Father. Let us take a closer look at Job’s situation. “There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and shunned evil” (Job 1:1). In verse 3, we note, “that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east,” as far as possessions were concerned.

Satan is a complainer, whiner, and an accuser. As he was in the days of Job, so he is today. He cries to God, with accusations against the saints. While Satan accuses, Christ is constantly interceding for His children (Hebrews 7:25). Listen to Satan’s whining and accusations against Job: “Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land” (Job 1:9, 10).

Remember the conflict was not between Job and Satan. The discussion and conclusions were between Satan and God. Certain limitations were given to Satan in his dealing with Job. “And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord” (Job 1:12).

God is not primarily interested in things as we mortal beings are. Satan concluded that if he could destroy all the things that Job possessed, he would curse God to His face. “...Put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face” (Job 1:11).

Listen to Job's reaction: ". . . Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:21, 22).

Satan's next proposal was that Job would curse God if his flesh and bone were afflicted (Job 2:4, 5). Again God gave absolute direction to Satan: "And the Lord said unto Satan, behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life" (Job 2:6). So again we learn that all of Satan's action is under the absolute control of God. How did Job survive this test? "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: but I will maintain mine own ways before him. He also shall be my salvation: for an hypocrite shall not come before him" (Job 13:15,16). Of course, God knew of Job's reaction to all of his troubles long before his response became a reality.

Don't try to tell me you are another Job. There was only one whom God used to teach you that Job's condition came to pass as a demonstration of God's control over Satan and the man He created. For your individual suffering, God has declared His purpose: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into various trials, Knowing this, that the testing of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking nothing" (James 1:2-4).

"And not ~nly so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope; And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given unto us" (Romans 5:3-5). From these scriptures we learn by suffering that we arrive at maturity (which perfection means in the Greek). The ultimate end of trials and testings is hope, which means confident expectation in the promised future even becoming a reality. If willing to stand up under difficulties, we will be the stronger for such action on our part. If we desire only smooth sailing, we will have no ministry to others in their hour of need.

"Grace be to you, and peace, from God, our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them who are in any trouble, by the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted of God. . . . And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation" (II Corinthians 1:2-4,6). How dare we blame our sufferings and afflictions on the devil?

God did not use Satan to rain fire on Sodom. *He* did it. God did not use Satan to bring the flood; it was the *direct act of God* in judgment. Satan did not bring sickness upon us. *We* did it in open rebellion against God in the Garden of Eden. Why give Satan attention, credit, and glory for it?

In the midst of our everyday trials and struggles, the Psalmist informs us of the consequence of dwelling in God's provision. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress: my god; in Him will I trust" (Psalms 91:1, 2). With Christ as our refuge and fortress, we need not worry one second about the enemy. "And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15).

GOD'S ABSOLUTE CONTROL

Here is thrilling truth. Don't you dare to miss it. In his relationship with Christians, Satan is under the absolute control of God. Satan knows this, but many Christians fail to recognize this fact, so they are easily taken advantage of. One of the biggest lies coming from the pit of hell is that Satan has access to God's children anytime and anywhere he pleases. Satan has no access to precious souls abiding in Christ. God informed Satan what he could and could not do with His servant Job. Why should we fear and cringe before Satan when he is a defeated foe? Here is a verse of scripture that we need the Holy Spirit to burn into the center of our hearts and minds. "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and THAT WICKED ONE TOUCHES HIM NOT" (I John 5:18). The person BORN

OF GOD does not practice sin. There is no accusation before the throne of God. He is not touched by Satan.

“For we are HIS workmanship, created IN CHRIST JESUS unto good works” (Ephesians 2:10). We maintain the position of abiding in Christ and the consequence is that Satan cannot touch us.

Listen to Christ’s statement to His disciples about Satan. “Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me” (John 14:30). If Satan has nothing to do with Christ, then he has nothing to do with us if we abide in Christ. How thrilling! “Abide in me, and Tin you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me” (John 15:4).

SATAN’S PATTERN OF ACTIVITY

The Bible is the ONLY AUTHENTIC source of information concerning Satan. Do not waste your time listening ~ experiences with demons by people who are delighted with such strange mystic spiritual happenings.

Satan acts with intimidation. He tries to frighten people everywhere by his noise and hunger. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (I Peter 5:8).

Satan sets traps for individuals that he might hold them captive. “And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will” (II Timothy 2:26).

Satan is a trickster and uses every possible method to deceive and lure us. He is a liar and everything he says is a lie. “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44).

Satan has power but is not omnipotent as is our God. He possesses *only* the power *allowed* him by God. “Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders” (II Thessalonians 2:9).

Satan is a great imitator. “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transform as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (II Corinthians 11:13-15).

We all know that Satan is more powerful than any human being. Man is no match for him in any circumstances or at any time. Satan is more powerful than any group of men put together. Even Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil, disputing about the body of Moses, did not bring against him a railing accusation. He said, “THE LORD REBUKE THEE” (Jude 9).

In no way do I desire to minimize the power of Satan. He is the ruler of a great kingdom, according to Matthew 12:26. His headquarters is in the stratosphere. “In which in times past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience; Among whom also we all had our manner of life in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others (Ephesians 2:2, 3). He has control of all the damned of every race, color and creed. He is worshipped by the fallen angels, demon spirits. He directs and holds them captive at his will. “And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will” (II Timothy 2:26). *To the Christian, Satan is a defeated foe, for which we praise God from whom all blessings flow!*

Always remember that Satan operates within the mind of men. “In whom the god of this world hath BLINDED THE MINDS of them which believeth not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (II Corinthians 4:4). How dare we Christians fill our mind with the devil? Our thought process has been declared by God and, with His power, we can maintain absolute control over it. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect

peace, whose MIND is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee” (Isaiah 26:3). “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just; whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, THINK on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

We have no darkness in Christ. “He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him” (I John 2:10). We have absolutely no business thinking about the devil. Let us keep out of his territory. Darkness does not belong in the Christian’s life. We must not dwell on it. We are not to talk about the secret works of darkness. “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret” (Ephesians 5:11, 12).

DOMINATION OF FEAR

People dominated by fear easily accept unscriptural talk about demon power and the devil. I once heard a Christian lady tell me “the devil kept me awake last night.” (It was probably the late snack she had before retiring!) In the way of response, I informed her of my lack of understanding that the devil thought her being awake was so important that he left his throne (or wherever he was) in order to keep her awake. How ridiculous! How conceited and important a person must be to receive such attention. Fear of the devil and his demons clearly demonstrates a lack of the revelation of God’s perfect love. “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath punishment” (I John 4: 16-18).

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (II Timothy 1:7). We have power over our enemy instead of cowering before him. God tells us who is ready for the conflict and who is not. “And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there who is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren’s heart faint as well as his heart” (Deuteronomy 20:8). “No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is from me, saith the Lord” (Isaiah 54:17).

DEMON POSSESSION

No record is in the Bible where Christ or the apostles carried on a lengthy conversation~ with the demons. They were immediately rebuked in the name of Christ. The most prominent story in the Bible is the maniac of Gadara. His being was possessed beyond doubt, with his nakedness, living in tombs, and cutting himself with stones. By the way, when he was in his right mind, he was fully clothed (Luke 8:35). No question was raised about the demon-possessed damsel who was following Paul and Silas in Philippi, for she was guilty of foretelling the future for financial gain. Today~ many misguided people find demons in every sickness, behind every bush, and in every action that does not please them.~In no way do I deny demon possession in our day, but it is still rare and evident signs must accompany them. Here are a few signs:

1. Demons will peep and mutter in strange manner: “Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead” (Isaiah 8:19)?
2. A person possessed by the spirit of antichrist will not testify to the deity or incarnation of Jesus Christ: “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. By this know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God; and this is that spirit of antichrist, of which ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world.. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God” (I John 4:1-3, 15).

No indication is found in the Bible that a Christian can be possessed of a demon. Please do not waste my time telling me about someone you know or of whom you've heard. We are to operate on a scriptural level, not observation or experience. The demon-possessed person whom you use as an example is not a child of God. There is no co-existence between the Holy Spirit and the spirit of the devil in the same body. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?" (II Corinthians 6:14) "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Corinthians 6:19, 20).

STOP THESE THINGS

1. Reading articles and listening to discussions about the devil.
2. Keeping your mind on the devil and his power.
3. Blaming the devil for your ailments and problems. Whatever you acknowledge Satan to do, it is his privilege, because of your admission, to take advantage of the credit given to him.
4. Rebuking the devil, as though he has some inroad into your life and controls your being.
5. Acting as if the devil is more powerful than your provision found in Christ.
6. Giving the devil credit for your sickness when it is the consequence of your own dissipation.
7. Giving your mind to Satan by reading pamphlets, books and articles in magazines on the power of Satan who is our defeated foe. *Give no place to the devil!*

DO THESE THINGS

1. Keep your mind on heavenly things. Obey God in your thought pattern, over which you do have control. Otherwise God would not tell you what to think: "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are honest, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, **THINK ON THESE THINGS**" (Philippians 4:8).
2. Rejoice in the constant triumph that is yours in Christ: "Now thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place" (II Corinthians 2:14). "Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4).
3. Satan's doom is sealed and announced in the Bible. **BELIEVE IT!** There is no reason to dwell upon him or his power.
4. Recognize that you do not battle with the devil; this is the work of God and the Holy Spirit.
5. You resist the devil when you discredit him and refuse his lies. Remember that God never uses Satan to chasten or minister to His children.
7. Become so saturated with knowledge of your blessed Lord that everything foreign to His Spirit will be spurned, refused, and resisted.

YOUR RESPONSE TO TRUTH

What will it be? Will you dare to claim the victory Christ purchased for you at the cross? Or will you continue to be fearful, worried, and governed by your emotions or the loud voice of a mere man who speaks contrary to the Scripture? Do you need to find a quiet place of prayer and confess your sin of unbelief and giving credit to the wrong person? Remember, we are not striving to get the victory over the devil. On the basis of our position in Christ, the victory has already been won for us on the cross and in the empty tomb. Now, we as Christians, are **LOOKING UNTO JESUS**, the Author and Finisher of our faith. We are living and declaring the victory that has been provided for us by the Captain of our Salvation.

GOD'S PROVISION FOR EVERYONE

Are you in God's family? Has a miracle happened within your life that has transformed your pattern of living? The miracle of the New Birth must be a reality within your heart and mind. It is a prerequisite to your being in the family of God.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the WRATH OF GOD abideth on him" (John 3:36). "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, SHOULD NOT PERISH, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

If you fail to acknowledge your sin in repentance and believe Christ to become your Savior, then, this moment, you are under the wrath of God and Satan's control, which means he will claim your soul in hell for all eternity. Oh, wait a minute! You say you do not believe that? In what way does your lack of faith change the plain declaration of God in His Word?

Satan is defeated *only* in the life of a Christian. If you are not in God's family, I urge you to find a place of prayer; name your sin to God directly, and trust His Son, Jesus Christ, to cleanse you and place His Spirit on the inside of you. What a thrilling change will come to pass in your life!

"But as many as received him (Jesus Christ), to them (the receivers) gave He power (authority) to become the sons of God (in His family), even to them (can be *YOU*) that believe on His (Christ's) name" (John 1:12).

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