



Overcoming The Dragon

Part Three

In the first two parts of this message we tried to show from Scripture that Satan's power is not going to diminish in these last days, but increase. Since this is the reality we are facing, it's dangerous to think we can ignore him.

We also saw that even though Jesus had authority over all the power of the enemy during His earthly ministry, He could not stop Satan from attacking Him—and the same is true of us. Having the power to overcome the enemy does not mean we can stop him from tempting or attacking us. Nor does it relieve us of the necessity of actually having to face him and overcome him.

Being a Christian does *not* automatically shield us from the activity of Satan. Many Christians have no idea that Satan can have authority over those areas of their lives which remain in bondage to sin. They don't know this because they have been taught the opposite by deluded church leaders. They have been taught that since we belong to Jesus, Satan can *never* have authority over any part of us.

*Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is **the servant** of sin.*

John 8:34

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

Romans 6:16

Jesus said if we commit sin we are *the servant* of sin. This is a kingdom law, just like the law of sowing and reaping, and it applies to *everyone*, saint and sinner alike. Neither grace, or mercy, or forgiveness, or justification can annul or override this law. The person who commits sin is the servant of *that* sin.

Just in case the reader may think the Lord was only talking to the Jews, and that somehow these words do not apply to those of us who have been "saved by grace", the Holy Spirit spoke the same truth through the apostle Paul, to *Christians* in Rome. He said we are *the servant* of the thing we are obeying.

If we obey sin, we are the servants of sin. If we obey righteousness, we are the servants of righteousness. Obviously, the choice to obey sin or righteousness is one that *only believers* can make. The unbeliever has no such choice; he is a prisoner to unrighteousness. We must understand that Paul was talking to us.

To be a servant of some one or some thing means we are *under the authority* of that person or thing. Does this mean that if a Christian remains in bondage to some kind of sin (or sins), he is not really a Christian? Not at all. That's not what Jesus and Paul were saying. They were explaining the way things work in the spirit realm. As long as a person yields to (obeys) a particular sin, he is the servant of *that* sin; it has authority over that particular area of his life. This means that Satan also has authority over that portion of his life *through* that sin.

This is a simple truth, and accepting it will not make us a weak or unfaithful Christian because we are giving too much glory to the enemy. Rather, it will make us stronger Christians because (hopefully) it will change our view of sin. It should cause us to stop viewing our sins as mere human weaknesses, which have already been taken care of as a result of being justified by the blood of Jesus. Instead, we should begin to realize that the sin we yield to actually has authority over us, and through it, Satan also has authority over us in that particular area.

Accepting this truth will not only better equip us to overcome the sin that so easily besets us, it will help us get a grip on what is happening today. It will help us to understand why so many of today's Christians are being deceived and overcome.

Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

II Thessalonians 2:1-4

The most common interpretation of this passage—which has its origins in the Pre-tribulation Rapture view of the end times—is that a demon-possessed ruler will take his seat in a re-built Jewish temple in Jerusalem and proclaim himself god. But this is not what Paul was talking about. He was warning us that in the last days, a very powerful, religious spirit (the man of sin; Antichrist) will take his seat in the temple of God (believers) and will shew himself (prove; demonstrate) that he is God.

We need to get our eyes off the natural realm for just a moment and realize that the entity we all refer to as "the Antichrist" is not a man. It's not a religious or secular institution. Neither is it a government. It's an *invisible* fallen angel. This is why the things we see happening today cannot be explained in political or cultural terms alone. What's happening goes deeper than Republicans versus Democrats, or Liberals versus Conservatives, or Totalitarianism versus Democracy. What we are seeing is *the result* of the work of a demon prince.

All the things we associate with the term "Antichrist" are actually *a manifestation* of this spirit. It's *this* spirit which has deceived the Church and caused the great apostasy. It's this spirit which is producing a Global Police State and a Global Religion. One day this spirit will cause the world to make an image to the beast and worship it. In the final hours of this age it will possess and empower a human political/religious leader.

We need to realize that it doesn't matter what political leader or what political party holds the reigns of power in this nation or any other nation. In the last days, God has determined to let this demonic prince rise up and conquer the planet—and *nobody* is going to stop it. God warned us this day was coming. He put those warnings in the Scripture for all to read and understand. The question is: Is anybody listening?

*Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that **he might be revealed in his time**. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And **then shall that Wicked be revealed**, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:*

II Thessalonians 2:5-8

When Paul starts talking about the revelation of the Antichrist he makes two basic points. First, he said this revelation has to do with something called the "mystery of iniquity", and that this mystery was already at work in his day. The iniquity Paul refers to is *not* the iniquity of the unsaved, for *their* iniquity is no mystery! The unsaved have always been godless; they have always murdered others to get power and to keep power; they have always

lived perverted lifestyles; they have always killed the people of God; and they have always manifested Satan's wicked nature to one degree or another.

Neither was Paul talking about the establishment of a world empire. Since the days of Nimrod there have been rulers who have established world empires. Again, this is no mystery! However, the iniquity of *God's people* is a mystery. How can those who have been born again, end up following another spirit? How can those who have been given God's Spirit, end up following another Jesus?

Secondly, Paul said that even though this mystery was already at work, it was being hindered from reaching its intended goal. However, some day that restraint would be removed and the mystery would *produce* what it has been trying to produce—the full revelation of Antichrist.

This is what Paul meant when he said the restrainer is restraining the mystery, so that he (Antichrist) may be revealed "in his time". The time of his revealing is the last days. So in our day, the thing that has been holding Antichrist back has been "taken out of the way". This makes our day *different* from any other time in history.

In Paul's day the mystery of iniquity was already working. *Believers* were being seduced. *Christians* were accepting another gospel, another spirit, and another Jesus. People who had been *born again* were being deceived by false apostles. John talked about the *human* anti-Christ's who were moving among the fellowships. But since the mystery was being restrained at that time, the ones who were being drawn away from the truth were a *minority* within the congregations. Today, since the restraint has been lifted, this mystery is reaching the zenith of its power and it's the *majority* of Christians who are being drawn away.

Until our time, there were things the spirit of Antichrist was *not* allowed to do because it was being restrained. But now, the restraint has been removed and it can do things it has never been allowed to do before. Some of these things include the *duplication* of everything the Spirit of God can do in a person's life.

As a result, it has already exalted itself *above* the true Spirit of God and taken its seat in the lives of multitudes of those who name the name of Christ. Right now it is demonstrating to them, through lying signs and wonders, that it is God (*the Holy Spirit*), and they are now following this wicked spirit faithfully.

How is it possible that a person who has been born again can *end up* serving Antichrist? It's possible because, first of all, Christians are not automatically protected from the deceiving power of Satan just because we are Christians. We are responsible to do our part in our walk with the Lord, in order to receive His protection and deliverance. If we do not do our part, we will not be protected. Few of today's Christians understand this simple truth.

For example: the Scripture says we should *cast down imaginations* that oppose the knowledge of God. It also says we should *take every thought captive* to the obedience of Christ (*II. Cor. 10:5*). The responsibility for doing these things rests upon us, not God. He cannot and He will not cast down our imaginations for us. Again, He has no intention of taking our thoughts captive for us.

If we *do* what He commands, we will have victory in these areas and we will remain under His protection. But if we are too lazy to do them, or if we think we don't have to do them because Christians are automatically protected, we will receive thoughts and vain imaginations from our own (wicked) hearts, or worse, from demon spirits. Then, when we *act on them* and get into spiritual trouble, or we end up in some kind of bondage as a result, we have nobody to blame but ourselves!

The Scripture also commands us to "flee from" the desire to be rich, and/or the idea that having great wealth equals godliness (*I. Tim. 6:9-11*). Once again, fleeing from these things is our responsibility. God cannot flee from them for us. If we flee from them, God will be there to help us and we will remain under His protection. If we do not flee from them, God is under no obligation to protect us and we could end up like the ones Paul describes below:

*But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, **which drown men in destruction and perdition**. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have **erred from the faith**, and pierced themselves through with **many sorrows**.*

I. Timothy 6:9-10

These people did not do their part. They did not flee from the desire to be rich, or the idea that attaining wealth is a sign of godliness. What was the result? They erred from the faith. They pierced themselves through with many sorrows. They fell into temptations and snares and lusts. Eventually they *drowned* in destruction and perdition!

The Scripture also commands us to flee from fornication and idolatry (*I. Cor. 6:18 & 10:14*). Again, fleeing from these things is our responsibility. God cannot flee from these things for us. If we flee, we will remain under His protection. If we do not, we will *not* be protected and we could miss the Kingdom of God altogether.

*Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: **neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God**.*

I. Corinthians 6:9-10

Friends, God never said He would protect us regardless of whether or not we obey Him: *men* are saying this. God never said we have automatic protection against the power of the enemy just because we are Christians: *men* are saying this. God told us very clearly in His Word that we must do certain things in order to be kept safe and secure. Once again: Is anybody listening?

This whole idea that we are automatically protected from Satan because we are God's children is in fact a *vain imagination* which is exalting itself against the knowledge of God as revealed in Scripture! Moreover, it's an integral part of the false gospel that's being preached all over this planet—a gospel of rebellion and lawlessness—which tells people they are kept safe and secure by *unmerited* favor, so they don't have to do anything or obey anything in order to remain protected and secure.

When you try to tell them this is a false gospel, that they must *do* certain things in order to remain under God's protection, they cry "legalism"! Then they accuse you of preaching "salvation by works". Since they have been deceived, they have no idea they are *walking in rebellion*, and when they read about what will happen to people who walk in rebellion in the last days, they have no idea it applies to them! For example, they read the following passage in the book of Daniel and they have no idea he is talking about them.

*Out of one of them came another horn [Antichrist], which started small but grew in power to the south and to the east and toward the Beautiful Land. It grew until it reached **the host of the heavens, and it threw some of the starry host down to the earth and trampled on them**. It set itself up to **be as great as the Prince of the host**; it took away the daily sacrifice from him, and the place of his sanctuary was brought low. **Because of rebellion**, the host [of the saints] and the daily sacrifice **were given over to it**. It prospered in everything it did, and truth was thrown to the ground.*

Daniel 8:9-12 NIV

It should be evident that Daniel is talking about *more* than just a human political ruler in this passage. He is also describing the *invisible spirit* that empowers this ruler. It's not the man who reaches to the host of the heavens and throws some of the stars to the ground; it's the spirit *inside* the man that does this. Those stars represent God's people, and this is exactly what we see happening today.

When Daniel talks about the little horn setting himself up to be as great as Jesus (the Prince of the host), he's not talking about the man: he's talking about the spirit inside the man. This is exactly what Paul was talking about in Thessalonians, when he said Antichrist will exalt himself:

"...above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

Again, when Daniel talks about the little horn throwing truth to the ground, he's not referring primarily to the man; he's talking about the spirit inside the man. Isn't this exactly what we see happening today?

*For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine**; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And **they shall turn away their ears from the truth**, and shall be turned unto fables.*

II. Timothy 4:3-4

What Daniel saw thousands of years ago is being fulfilled today, in *the spirit realm*. The things we see in the visible realm—Christians being deceived; Christians throwing truth behind their backs and turning to religious fables; Christians letting their love grow cold and allowing Antichrist to take his seat in their lives—are external manifestations of what is taking place in the spirit realm.

Why does God give so many of His people into the hands of Antichrist? Because of rebellion! Because they have accepted a *lawless* gospel which tells them they don't have to obey anything in order to be protected. They go through life ignoring the things God said we must do if we want to be protected from the deceptions of the enemy.

Of course, those who ignore the obvious things we are told to do in the New Testament, in order to remain under God's protection, will surely miss the *more subtle* ones. For instance: in one of the passages which speaks about the coming of Antichrist, we are given an important key of survival—a love for the truth.

*And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness **in them that perish**; **because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.***

II. Thessalonians 2:8-10

When reading this passage, there are a few things we must understand or we will completely mis-interpret what Paul is saying. First of all, he is not talking about a man or a government. He is talking about an invisible spirit, which he calls "that Wicked", which is going to come in those who perish. No man or government can come "in" people. Only an invisible spirit can do that.

Secondly, when Paul says those who do not receive a love for the truth will perish, he's not talking about the unsaved. He's not saying the unsaved will perish if they do not accept Jesus. He is talking about *Christians*. He is telling us that if we don't receive a love for the truth, we will end up believing *the lie* that damn's the soul.

Thirdly, Paul is telling us what to look for when this spirit starts trying to move in our lives. It will try to deceive us through supernatural power, signs and wonders. In other words, it will work in the *supernatural realm*. It will try to duplicate the way God talks to us and leads us. It will do anything it can to convince you that *it* is the Holy Spirit. The degree of success it will have in deceiving us will depend on where we are spiritually with regards to the issues we have mentioned:

~ How much sin are we yielding to?

~ How much rebellion are we walking in?

~ Have we received a love for the truth?

The more sin and rebellion we walk in, the easier it will be for the spirit of Antichrist to start moving in our lives. The less love we have for the truth, the easier it will be for him to start imitating the voice and presence of God.

God is faithful to His people. He tries to warn us again and again when this starts to happen. If we will listen to the warnings, if we will repent and turn away from (known) sin, if we will stop walking in rebellion and begin to obey His commandments, and ask Him to give us a love for the truth, He will deliver us. But if we continue to demand our own will and walk in our own way, He will not strive with us forever. There will come a point when He lets us go and we *will* end up serving another god.

Please Note:

There will be no January Newsletter. My apologies for the delay.

Zion's Trumpet/ Dan Mace
RR3 Box 985
Mifflintown, PA. 17059
717-436-8773
dan_o_mace@hotmail.com