

THE DANGER OF UNCLEAN SPIRITS PART SIX

Let me begin tonight by saying that I tried to reduce everything I had on my heart to share this week into *one* message, but I just couldn't do it. There is too much ground to cover. So this is going to be a two-parter. I believe one of the main burdens of the Spirit in this hour, if not the main one, is that God's people learn the truth about the danger demon spirits pose to them. Unfortunately, Church World is divided between those who don't want to even talk about the Devil or what he is capable of doing; and those who have been deceived by the Devil, and are running around teaching all kinds of things about him and his kingdom that are not true. It's very hard to find anyone who has any kind of *balance* regarding this whole area of truth. Oh, and the same situation can be found outside the Religious System as well; so leaving the churches won't do you any good when it comes to this particular issue. There's just as much confusion over the subject out here as there is inside the system.

Aside from this being one of the main burdens of the Spirit in this hour, there are plenty of other reasons why we should learn how to recognize and defeat Satan and these unclean spirits. The first reason is simply one of survival. We have an enemy who is determined to destroy us, and this enemy can destroy us if we give him the opportunity to do so. If you don't know how to recognize and defeat an enemy who is out to destroy you, then the chances are pretty good that he will destroy you.

This is why Satan has invested so much time and energy *polluting* the churches with all kinds of doctrines which *preclude* the possibility of him being ever being able to destroy us. He has perverted the Scriptural teachings of God's love, sovereignty and faithfulness, of election and predestination, of grace and faith, and of Biblical security in order to blind us to the reality that it's possible for a Christian to end up lost as a result of being overcome by these invisible creatures. In my opinion, most of today's Christians are selfish, spoiled brats who would rather believe a lie that make them *feel* secure, than the truth.

The second reason we need to learn how to recognize and defeat these spirits has to do with *rewards*. God has called us to obtain a certain destiny and rewards, but we don't automatically obtain these things just by virtue of being born again. The Scripture teaches very clearly and in various places that we must be spiritually pure in order to obtain them—and you will never be *pure* if you are listening to, and acting upon, the thoughts, desires, and feelings of *unclean* spirits every day. The truth is, multitudes of Christians are obeying unclean spirits and having spiritual union with them every day because deluded preachers and Bible teachers tell them Satan can't touch them. Since this is what they are told and this is what they believe, they have no idea these spirits can give them thoughts, desires and feelings, and they are listening to them all the time. I'm not saying all these Christians will end up in Hell. But they certainly will not receive the *full* inheritance.

Again, this is precisely why Satan has invested so much time and energy *polluting* the churches with all kinds of errors which *preclude* the possibility of unclean spirits being able to really hurt us. We have no idea just how damaging these errors really are. For example, one of the biggest errors being propagated right now, inside the Church System, is the doctrine of salvation by grace *alone*. This doctrine came straight from the pit of Hell. It was conceived in the mind of Satan, yet it's being taught in the vast majority of today's churches. One of the things this error does is destroy the whole concept of victory and defeat in the minds of believers. Oh Yes, Christians still talk about victory and defeat. But for most of them, it's just religious verbiage because the fundamental doctrines regarding salvation which they have been taught, and when they have accepted, *cancel out* the whole concept of victory and defeat.

The “salvation by grace alone” heresy that is being propagated all over this planet is presented to people as a “package deal”. Religious leaders present salvation as an “all or nothing” proposition. Either you are saved by grace and that grace gets you the *whole* package—which includes all the rewards and all the glory mentioned in the Scripture—or you get nothing.

Well, if we get the whole package *by* grace, and if we can’t lose any part of that package *because of* grace, then how do you define victory and defeat? The only possible way to be defeated in this kind of a theological framework would be to lose the *whole* package—and of course, *that’s* not possible if you are a genuine Christian because to lose the whole package would be the same as losing your salvation. Supposedly, once we have been saved by grace, that grace keeps us saved, regardless of what we do or how we live. Therefore, when you get right down to it, there isn’t any room for the concept of “defeat” in today’s Evangelical theology because victory is by *grace alone*. Victory does not come as the result of anything you or I do or fail to do. In short, grace makes defeat impossible! This is a lie that is specifically designed to make us lose our rewards (at the very least), and even our very salvation (at the most).

The third reason we need to learn how to recognize and defeat these unclean spirits is because they are evil, and those who love the Lord should hate evil—“*Ye that love the LORD, hate evil!*” (Ps. 97:10)—said King David. If we love the Lord, we should have a desire to confront and overcome evil, especially within our own lives, whether it’s the evil of this world, the evil of our own flesh, or the evil of unclean spirits. Listen to the heart of David as he describes his love for God:

*Surely thou wilt slay the wicked, O God: depart from me therefore, ye bloody men. For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. **Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies.** Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Psalms 39:19-24

David said he hated God enemies with a *perfect* hatred. Perfect hatred is a *good* hatred. It’s a righteous hatred and it *pleases* God. Did you know there is such as thing as perfect hatred; or are you like the masses of today’s Christians who have been brainwashed to believe that *all* hatred is evil and un-Christian? Do you know it’s good to hate some things; or do you just assume that if you are a Christian, you will never hate anything? If your view of Christianity is the same as the majority, please explain the Lord’s commendation of the Ephesian church for “hating” the “deeds” of false teachers. “*But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate!*” (Rev. 2:6). Notice that Jesus didn’t say the “false doctrines” of the Nicolaitans. He said the deeds of the Nicolaitans. Do we realize it’s not wrong to hate the things God hates!

David’s love for God caused him to hate God’s enemies. His love for God caused him to defend God’s holiness, and God’s honor, and God’s name. In that passage he’s saying: “*I love God; and my love for God is so strong, I hate anybody who does anything wrong to my God!*”. He hated those who hated God. He was grieved with anyone who rose up against God. He hated them with a perfect hatred and we should be the same way. There should be something that rises up in us when people blaspheme the name of God or mock Him.

Well, someone might say, you have to be careful about this kind of thing because it's easy to become a hypocrite. It's easy to hate the evil of other people but not our own. True. But after David proclaimed his hatred for God's enemies, he turned around and asked God to search him and see if there was anything in him that would make him an enemy of God. In effect, he said: "*I hate them that hate Thee, oh Lord; I count them as my enemy. Now try me and search me and show me if there's anything in me that would make me your enemy. I want to hate anything that's in me that might cause me to be against you*". As long as we keep that kind of attitude, and as long as we keep allowing God to show us those things which we do that makes us His enemies, then we won't be guilty of walking in hypocrisy. We will be able to hate evil with a perfect hatred. We will be able to hate God's enemies, especially these unclean spirits.

But of course, most Christians would *never* pray that kind of a prayer anyway because they don't believe God would or *could* ever become their enemy as a result of anything they do or fail to do. You see, they have been taught that it doesn't really matter what they do or fail to do—it's all by grace. If you could do anything to make God your enemy, then salvation would not be by grace *alone*, would it?

The fourth reason we need to learn how to recognize and defeat these spirits is because it's a normal part of the Christian walk. Warring against the demonic kingdom isn't the job of a special class of Christian called "Deliverance Ministries". Every Christian should allow God to lead them into this kind of warfare.

*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 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 6:11-12

I would like to take a few minutes and highlight three points in this passage. First of all, Paul said we wrestle *not* against flesh and blood, but against the demonic kingdom—that is, against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. People read this and say "Amen". Then they turn right around and focus on flesh and blood. Whenever I try to highlight the fact that the current apostasy is the result of Christians being seduced by the enemy, the attitude is: "*Well of course the enemy is behind what's happening today. Who doesn't know that?*" Yet, they continue to talk about everything but the enemy! They expose everything but the seducing spirits and devils who are causing all this havoc.

They talk about all the false doctrine that is being accepted by the churches. They talk about all the fleshly religious programs that are being incorporated into the churches. They talk about all the worldly entertainment that has invaded the churches. They talk about the secular business principles that are being used to run the churches. They talk non-stop about the result of today's churches being seduced by demons, but they absolutely refuse to talk about the demons themselves!

In fact, not only do they refuse to talk about what demons are doing to Christians, they refuse to even talk about what demons do the *unsaved*! Except in the case of obvious demon possession—which is usually associated with witchcraft and out-right Satan worship—most of today's ministers emphasize "the flesh" when talking about the unsaved, just like they emphasize "the flesh" when they are talking about believers! It's incredible. Listen to what Paul said about the unsaved, and see if you can find a minister today who says the same thing.

*And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time 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 children of disobedience**: Among whom also we all had our conversation 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 2:1-3

Paul said the unsaved walk “according to the course of this world”. They also walk “according to the prince of the power of the air”—which is the “spirit” that works in them. He also said they have their conversation “in the lust of the flesh” and they fulfill the “desires of the flesh and of the mind”. Whenever you hear ministers talk about the unsaved, all you ever hear them referring to is the last two parts of that passage. When was the last time you heard a preacher or a Bible teacher expound on the realities of the phrase: “...*according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience*? I’ll bet that for most of you, you can’t remember ever hearing a sermon on that part of this passage because ministers just don’t talk about the unsaved in those terms.

Do you think it’s a *coincidence* that most religious leaders, both inside and outside the Church System, not only refuse to talk about unclean spirits in relation to Christians, but in relation to the *unsaved* as well? Do you think it’s merely a coincidence that wherever you turn, whether they are talking about the saved or the unsaved, today’s preachers and Bible teachers focus exclusively on “the flesh”?

I don’t! I think this is *exactly* what Satan wants. I think this is the purpose of all the doctrines he has invented, which are being taught in the churches, which hide and obscure his capabilities. Satan has done a good job of masking himself and hiding behind “the flesh”. He has blinded the minds of the vast majority of God’s people to the fact that he and his unclean spirits are directly responsible for many things we assume to be “the flesh”. It’s his plan to stay hidden in the background because as long as he does, he is unhindered in his work.

Paul didn’t say it’s the flesh that “*worketh in*” the unsaved. He said it is the prince of the power of the air who *works in* the unsaved. It’s the spirit of that prince that *works in* the unsaved. The flesh and the desires of the mind are just the tools or the means by which Satan enslaves the unsaved and has them doing *his* will. He uses their flesh; he uses the desires of their minds; but HE is the one who is working in them. It’s HIS spirit that indwells them. There is no way Christian ministers should be ignoring this reality—but they do.

Even when faced with the *obvious* supernatural power that is being manifested in all these “revival” churches; even in the face of the obviously *demonic* power that was on display for months during the Lakeland revival; most of today’s religious leaders still refuse to acknowledge the rise of Satan’s power within the churches and they continue to focus on “the flesh”!

Earlier this year I mentioned a guy who wrote an article in which he was lamenting the fact that so many people are trying to live the Christian life “in the flesh” and that’s why they are failing so miserably. I mention this again because it’s a perfect example of what I’m talking about. Like the vast majority of today’s preachers and Bible teachers, this guy’s view of what’s happening is that it’s happening *because* people are trying to serve God in the flesh. But the fact is, people have been trying to serve God in the flesh for *thousands* of years. If trying to serve God in the flesh caused the apostasy, why didn’t the apostasy start 75, or 150, for 250 years ago?

I repeat—Paul didn't say in the final apostasy would happen because people were trying to serve God in the flesh. He said it would happen because Christians will depart from the faith as a result of accepting (ie: giving heed to) seducing spirits and the doctrines of devils. It's my opinion that many of these doctrines of devils have actually become fundamental teachings (or what's called "orthodox beliefs") of Christianity and these "orthodox" beliefs are *designed* to hide the reality of what unclean spirits can do to people.

At one point in the this guy's article, he gave his view of why the Early Church had so much spiritual life and unity. He said: "...*the lives of the early Christians were supercharged with a joyous consciousness of the Presence of their living Lord. Because He was so real to them, all their thoughts and affections rested in Him*". Then he asks the reader some questions:

- ~ *Has this spiritual Presence of the living Lord become a reality to you?*
- ~ *Are you completely occupied with the indwelling life of Christ?*
- ~ *Are you truly satisfied in Him, or do you keep turning back to the natural world for your source of spiritual sustenance?*

While it's true, many of today's Christians are trying to serve God without going to the cross (in the flesh), that's not the main problem we face; and that's not the cause of the great apostasy either. People are being caught up in something much more *insidious* than trying to serve God in the flesh. I could point this guy to half a dozen people that I know personally, and many more that I am familiar with, who would answer "Yes" to all his questions without hesitation and every one of them are as deceived as you can possibly be because they are following another Jesus and another spirit.

The current apostasy is *not* the result of people trying to serve God in the flesh! We're dealing with something that goes much deeper than that. People are meeting, and establishing a very deep relationship with, a *living* being who they think is Jesus Christ. Multitudes of people are falling in love with *another* Jesus and receiving *another* spirit which is not the Holy Spirit. These people eat, drink, and sleep this Jesus. They believe they have turned their backs on "the flesh" and "the world" in order to get closer to this Jesus. Their life with this Jesus is just as real to them as your life with the real Jesus is to you. Their Jesus is everything to them. They become as committed to him as anyone in this room is to the real Jesus. Their Jesus talks to them; he leads and guides them; he empowers them; he provides for them. This Jesus even demonstrates his power publicly in healing revivals. Yet our focus is continually turned to "the flesh" and the flesh is said to be the cause of the apostasy!

I don't think it's a coincidence that this guy—and many religious leaders like him—refuse to acknowledge the role unclean spirits are playing in the destruction of the Church. I don't think it's a coincidence that they refuse to even acknowledge the role these spirits play in the lives of *unbelievers*. I think we are dealing with a deliberate cover-up. The very people who should be exposing these devils and seducing spirits are the ones who are protecting their identity and covering for them.

Secondly, Paul didn't say we *might* have to wrestle against wicked spiritual powers. He didn't say we *should* wrestle against them. He said: "For we wrestle." It was an assumed fact. He assumed *every* Christian was wrestling against them. It's shameful that Christians have to be convinced they need to wrestle against these powers. It's disgusting that they need to be urged to wrestle against them. It's a disgrace that God has to raise up people to sound an alarm and blow a trumpet regarding the need to learn how to recognize and defeat these spirits because this should be something that comes naturally to *every* child of God—just like prayer, Bible

reading, worship, and assembling together comes naturally to them. The reason God's people have to be convinced and persuaded to wrestle against these unclean spirits is because they have accepted the lies they are being taught by religious leaders who are themselves nothing but agents of Satan.

Thirdly, we need to take particular notice of the term "wrestle" in this passage because wrestling is a very *peculiar* kind of contest. Even in our day, when for the most part wrestling has become a staged show, you can still get a glimpse of what Paul had in mind when he used wrestling to illustrate our warfare with these unclean spirits. He used this kind of contest to emphasize certain things, such as the intensity of the struggle, the individuality of the contestants, and the close proximity of the conflict.

Wrestling is a one to one contest. One opponent singles out another and enters the arena with him. Each wrestler exerts his *whole* force and strength against the other. Each contestant is the *sole object* of his challenger's fury and it is continuous hand to hand combat. Wrestlers man-handle each other. They don't fight from a distance. And when your opponent actually has a hold of you, when he's got you in his grip, you only have two choices: surrender or fight back. You can't run and regroup. You can't hide and hope he goes away. Neither can you invent a theology that says he can't hurt you. The confrontation will continue until either you have conquered him or he has conquered you. That's the kind of warfare Paul is talking about.

Whether we like it or not, *eventually* we are going to have to learn how to wrestle and defeat these spirits, if we want to survive spiritually, because they will never stop harassing us and trying to deceive and destroy us. They will never settle for defeat and they will never relinquish any territory in our lives which they hold without a fight. We will have to learn how to wrestle and defeat them if we want to gain the inheritance and the destiny God has ordained us to receive—it's that simple.

Now, whenever I try to highlight what Paul said about the need to wrestle against the power of the demonic kingdom, I'm usually met with an attitude of *indifference* at best. Many times I am accused of teaching heresy and of exalting Satan's power above the power of God. The attitude of many of today's Christians seems to be: "*Why bother? Satan can't hurt us and we don't want to give him any glory*".

Well, I wonder if these people ever consider just how much glory they are giving to Satan as a result of their defeat at his hands? How much glory does *God* get when the people who have been the power to defeat the enemy, are instead defeated *by* him? The Christian who refuses to learn the wiles and devises of these unclean spirits, and who refuses to wrestle against them and gain the victory over them, is destined to be defeated and ruled by them—and believe me, that brings great *dishonor* to God.

Of course, most Christians don't even realize they are glorifying Satan and bringing dishonor to the name of the Lord because they have *no idea* they are being defeated by Satan. It's fairly easy to be defeated without even realizing it. There are multitudes of Christians walking around right now who have no idea they have been *seduced* by Satan. That's why it's called "*deception*" people. There are many Christians walking around right now who have been completely overcome by seducing spirits and they have no idea what has happened. In their deluded state, they proclaim Satan can't touch them. They are convinced that Jesus defeated Satan for them 2000 years ago, so they don't have to worry about him. They are convinced that they are eternally secure. They are convinced that all they have to do to be brought to glory is "believe" God has everything under control, and "believe" that He will protect them, and "believe" He is faithful to fulfill His promises—they call this "walking by faith". They have already been seduced but this is how they walk. It's truly a *pathetic* situation.

There are all kinds of ways you can end up following *another* Jesus and *another* spirit. But most of the people who have gotten themselves into this kind of a situation have *no idea* such a thing has happened to them. They have no idea they have been seduced. They have no idea they have been overcome. They have no idea they have been defeated. They have no idea they are bringing glory to Satan and dishonor to God.

People say: “How is such a situation possible”? My answer is: How can you possibly avoid such a situation when your mind is filled with so much error”? How can you *avoid* being deceived when you walk around thinking you *can't be* deceived? That very attitude opens the door for spirits to deceive you. How can you *avoid* being deceived when you believe Satan can't touch you because you are a “Christian”? That very attitude is an invitation for spirits to come and deceive you. How can you *avoid* being deceived when you accept today's perverted view of God's sovereignty? If you walk around convinced that because God is sovereign, you cannot possibly be deceived (or that you “won't” be deceived, which is the same thing), you are *asking* for trouble.

And let me ask all those who believe this perverted view of God's sovereignty a question: Why didn't the sovereignty of God didn't protect your *Christian* neighbor down the street? Why didn't the sovereignty of God protect thousands of blood-washed believers who are now walking in total deception? If any of you have bought into the lie that because God is sovereign, you cannot be seduced, overcome or lost, you need to repent because it's *pride* that made you susceptible to that lie. It's our *pride* that's always trying to convince us that we are “special” and that regardless of what has *already* happened to multitudes of other truly regenerated people (who serve the same “sovereign” God we do), somehow we are different. It's pride that makes us feel that somehow we know what happened to them will *never* happen to us.

Another reason Christians end up glorifying Satan instead of God is because they are taught that everything wrong in their lives is “the flesh”. They are never presented with *the possibility* that unclean spirits may be the source of some of their hang-ups, personality quirks, and strange habits. Well, some of our problems stem from the fact that unclean spirits have *entwined* themselves in our personalities before we were even saved. They not only entwined themselves in our desires and in our ways of seeing and doing things, they may have actually formed some of our habits. This is possible because if you obey the thoughts or desires of unclean spirits again and again, a habit or a personality trait is the result. Some of our personality traits were actually formed *by* unclean spirits as we began making our own choices in life.

Moreover, not all of these habits or characteristics are ugly or wicked. Some of them may seem very normal to us. Some of them may give us comfort or security. Some of them may give us pleasure. We may have a lot of our identity or ego tied up in them. In cases like that, it's very hard to put these aspects of our person on the Cross. This is why being “changed” from the image of Adam to the image of Christ is so vital. We don't know just *how much* of our personality has been formed *by* unclean spirits. We don't know just how many of our habits, or how many of our ways, have been shaped and influenced by unclean spirits. This kind of reality simply does not exist in the minds of today's Christians because they are taught that everything is “the flesh”. Did you have a wrong thought today? Well, that wrong thought came from your flesh. Did you have a wrong desire today? Well, that wrong desire came from your flesh.

This constant over-emphasis on “the flesh” not only blinds God's people to the reality and the work of unclean spirits in their own lives, it blinds them to the reality that all false worship *directly* involves unclean spirits. The Scripture is clear regarding the role unclean spirits play in false worship, not just in the last days, but from the very beginning. Anyone who ignores this and tries to keep all the focus on “the flesh” is doing so because they are

walking under the power of these spirits. In the end, we will be shocked to see just how many of today's preachers, scholars, theologians and Bible teachers are being led by these devils instead of the Holy Spirit.

*What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and **I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.***

Corinthians 10:19-20

Notice what Paul said about the nations who sacrifice things to false gods. He said the things the gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice *to devils*. It doesn't matter what kind of idol they have made—whether it's a representation of an animal, a representation of a human, or just a tree stump—behind that idol there is an unclean spirit who is *listening* to the prayers of the people who are praying to that idol. The people may *think* they are praying to whatever idol they have made for themselves, or to whatever deity that idol represents, but in truth, they are praying to demon spirits and many times those spirits will speak to them and *answer* their prayers.

We're not used to seeing this kind of thing so much here in the West because *that* kind of idolatry is practiced mostly in the East. However, I can assure you, there are still people in the world who serve god's of wood and stone. There are still people on this planet who pray to *literal* idols and many times they get their prayers answered, just like you and I get *our* prayers answered because they are praying to spiritual creatures who have the ability to answer many of those prayers.

Idolatry comes in all forms. Many people in western nations pray to the God of the Bible, but they are not genuine believers because they have never repented and received the blood atonement. Then there are the Roman Catholics, who pray to Mary. Despite all their protestations against such accusations, the truth is they do pray to Mary. They also pray to dead saints; and many times they get their prayers answered when they do. That's why, sometimes you will see testimonies in the local paper about someone who praying to this saint or that saint—particularly St. Jude—and they got their prayers answered. Well, my question is: who do you think it is that's answering those prayers. It's certainly *not* the God of the Bible! Either Satan himself is answering them, or one of these unclean spirits are answering them.

Other people who pray to the "Christian" God, but who have no relationship with Jesus Christ and are not true believers, would be the Mormons and the Jehovah's Witnesses. These are religious cults who use the terms of Christianity but they are not Christian because of their view of salvation and/or who Jesus Christ is. But millions of these people attend religious services several times a week. They sing songs to the Christian God and they pray to the Christian God. Moreover, many of them can testify that they have gotten their prayers answered. Again, I ask: who do you think it is that's answering the prayers of these people?

Don't ever think that idolatry—in whatever form it takes—is a stagnant religion because it's not. It involves the worship of, and interaction with, living, invisible creatures who have supernatural power. When people who practice idolatry pray to their idols, whatever those idols may be, the unclean spirits *behind* those idols are listening to those prayers, and they establish a very real relationship with these people. These spirits talk to them; they guide them; they protect them; they give them dreams and visions; they give them supernatural wisdom; they give them many of the things God gives us.

This is one of the reasons some people are so hard to win to Christ. They are convinced that they *already have* a relationship with God because their religious experience is real. It may be a counterfeit and it may be taking them to Hell—but it's real.

*And the priest shall sprinkle the blood upon the altar of the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and burn the fat for a sweet savour unto the LORD. And **they shall no more offer their sacrifices unto devils, after whom they have gone a whoring.** This shall be a statute for ever unto them throughout their generations.*

Leviticus 17:6-7

*But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; **then he forsook God** which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation. **They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods,** with abominations provoked they him to anger. **They sacrificed unto devils, not to God;** to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.*

Deuteronomy 32:15-17

*They did not destroy the nations, concerning whom the LORD commanded them: But were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols: which were a snare unto them. Yea, **they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils,***

Psalms 106:34-37

The Scripture makes it clear that when you are involved in false worship, you are involving yourself with “devils” or unclean spirits. It's not just the pagan nations who were worshiping *devils* through idolatry. Israel, God's chosen people, were also guilty of devil worship. As a matter of fact, devil worship in Israel was a common problem from the time they left Egypt because they had been infected with Egypt's idolatry. Many of them brought that false worship with them into the wilderness. Israel was infected with this kind of idolatry until God finally judged them and scattered them among the nations. Once they *returned* from Babylonian captivity, that kind of idolatry was no longer a problem. But until then it was. Listen to how Stephen describes it:

*This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear. This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: To whom our fathers would not obey, but thrust him from them, and in their hearts turned back again into Egypt, Saying unto Aaron, Make us gods to go before us: for as for this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. **And they made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol,** and rejoiced in the works of their own hands. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven; as it is written in the*

book of the prophets, O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, figures which ye made to worship them: and I will carry you away beyond Babylon.

Acts 7:37-43

The first major incident of idolatry and false worship that transpired among Israel took place just a few months after they left Egypt. That's when they made the Golden Calf. After that, God gave many of them over to the idolatry that was in their hearts. The whole 40 years that they wandered through the desert, they now only carried the Tabernacle of God, they *also* carried a tent for Molech worship and for the worship of the star-god Remphan—which were Egyptian gods.

There is a very unpleasant reality that we as God's people must face up to. We have a long history of making idols which represent the true God and worshiping them instead of Him. This goes all the way back to when our spiritual forefathers were delivered from the land of Egypt. In that society, the Old Testament Church (ie: National Israel) made literal idols that represented the God of Israel. When they did, they were worshiping *devils*, not the God of heaven. They prayed to those idols while claiming to be the Chosen People and the same thing is being done today by the New Testament Church.

I'm not talking now about Roman Catholics, who worship statues of Mary and pray to Mary. This too is false worship, and the Mary they are praying to is a "devil". Nor am I talking about the "jesus" of the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Mormon's, which is also a devil. I'm talking about many of today's Fundamentalist and Pentecostal church leaders who have created a *false image* of Jesus in the minds of many of today's Christians. These religious leaders have *redefined* the Jesus of the Bible over and over again until He has become a completely different Jesus. They hate the true Jesus; so they have created an "idol"—a MENTAL idol of a Jesus who is more to their own liking. They pray to *this* Jesus, they worship *this* Jesus, and they serve *this* Jesus, and the "devil" *behind* this Jesus talks to them, answers their prayers, gives them dreams and visions, and many of the things for them that the real Jesus does for you and me. They don't realize it, but the "Jesus" they are loving, serving and worshiping is nothing more than a demon spirit.

My point in going through all this is to try and make the spirit realm a little more real to us than it has been up to this point. We need to walk in the reality that this is a spiritual world we are living in, not a natural one. This natural world we see around us is just window dressing. It's just a front that conceals the REAL world.

It's also important to understand just how deluded the vast majority of today's religious leaders are when it comes to this world. They constantly focus on flesh and blood. They lay all the blame for the current apostasy on the flesh and blood. This is such a lie. Multitudes of Christians are being seduced right and left and by "devils". They are being seduced by the thousands into accepting, serving, and living for a "jesus" who is in fact an unclean spirit. The majority of today's religious leaders have themselves been deceived, and they have been seduced by *devils*—not by their flesh. Moreover, those same devils are constantly speaking *through* these leaders in order to deceive all the gullible "sheeple" who blindly follow them.

Now, before moving on, I want to look at one more important error many of these leaders propagate in their efforts to minimize the power Satan has and the danger he poses. They tell us that Satan cannot really perform *genuine* miracles, that all he can do is perform magicians tricks that look like miracles.

*And I saw three **unclean spirits** like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are **the spirits of devils, working miracles**, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

Revelation 16:13-14

John said he saw three unclean spirits come out of the mouth of the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet. These unclean spirits were sent to deceive the kings of the earth, to gather them together to battle. The way these will deceive the leaders of the world is by “working miracles”. The Greek word that’s translated “miracles” is the same Greek word that’s used when describing the miracles of Jesus. The word is “*semeion*” (say-mi'-on); Strong’s # 4592; and it’s translated as “miracle”, “sign”, “token”, and “wonder” in the New Testament.

Some examples of where *semeion* was translated into the English word “miracles” are listed below. By the way, all these references are from the Gospel of John—the same John who wrote the book of Revelation. I’m sure that if John thought the “miracles” of those unclean spirits in Revelation were just some a magician’s trick and not genuine miracles, you can be sure he would have found a different Greek term to describe the work of those devils. But he didn’t. He uses the same exact Greek term.

Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

John 2:23-25

After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias. And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased. And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

John 6:1-3

*But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth **many miracles**. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.*

John 11:46-48

*The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record. For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done **this miracle**. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.*

John 12:17-19

It's important to know that Satan can perform *real* miracles because it's through real miracles that Antichrist will gain entrance into the "temple of God" in the last days. In order to understand what's happening right now, we must have a proper understanding of what Paul was talking about when he made that statement.

*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...**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.** And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that **they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*****

II Thessalonians 2:3-4 & 9-12

You are all familiar with the traditional interpretation of this passage. The Jews are going to rebuild the Third Temple, after which a political leader will step up and claim to be Israel's Messiah. The Jews will accept him as their Messiah and he will take his seat in that rebuilt temple for 3½ years. Then, he will show himself to be of Satan and will start murdering all the Jews.

As you all know, I don't believe this is what Paul is talking about at all. And because it is extremely important that we get delivered of this whole idea so we can understand what God was really warning us about, through Paul, I'm going to take a few minutes and try to show you why this cannot be a reference to a literal temple in Jerusalem, and what it really means to have the man of sin sitting in God's temple.

In order to understand what Paul is talking about, you must remember that he was a Jew. He was thoroughly immersed in the history of the Hebrew race and their relationship with God, and the Law. When God saved him He gave Paul a revelation of what He was doing. He showed Paul that His plan is to make the elect Jews and the elect Gentiles "one new man" in Christ. This new man is referred to throughout the New Testament by Paul as God's temple. Paul began calling people the "temple of God" because the Spirit showed him what all the types and shadows of the Old Testament really meant, especially the Tabernacle in the Wilderness and the Temples. He saw that God's *final* and ultimate "temple" would be made of people, not of stone.

*And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, **and he shall build the temple of the LORD.***

Zechariah 6:12

Hundreds of years before Paul received his revelation, God spoke of the building of this final temple to the prophet Zechariah. The "Branch" Zechariah refers to is Jesus. God has ordained from the very beginning that He would be the one to build the *true* temple. This final temple would not be a temple of stone. Neither would it be made by the hands of man. It will be built by God Himself (Jesus), through the Spirit.

*Jesus answered and said unto them, **Destroy this temple**, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But **he spake of the temple of his body.***

John 2:19-21

Jesus was THE temple of God on earth while he was here. He manifested the glory of God among men. When people came to Him and asked for healing, help, advice, eternal life or anything else, He had the power to grant that request because He was the living temple of God on earth. He was the fullness of God dwelling in man. When the Lord said, “Destroy this temple”, He was letting the religious leaders of Israel know (in a subtle way) that the whole idea of God dwelling in a *building* was changing. He was letting them know that God's *ultimate goal* is to dwell in man, and that God had already begun building that new temple, and that He (Jesus) was the first and foremost living stone of that new temple. Jesus was the corner stone.

*Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a **chief corner stone**, elect, precious: and he that believeth **on him** shall not be confounded.*

I. Peter 2:6

*According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, **I have laid the foundation**, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.*

I. Corinthians 3:10

*Ye also, as **lively stones**, are **built up a spiritual house** [temple], an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

I. Peter 2:5

Jesus is both the Chief Corner Stone and the Foundation of God's final temple. This is why Paul said: "*For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ*" (I. Cor. 3:11 NKJV). After His death and resurrection, the Lord sent His apostles out to lay the foundation of the new temple. The way they laid that foundation was by presenting Jesus to all men as their Lord and Savior. Those who accepted the gospel were brought into a relationship with God and thus became *living stones* in the Lord's final temple. For the past 2000 years God has been building this temple with lively stones. When it's finally completed, He will dwell in it forever. It will be His habitation.

It's important that we understand THIS is the revelation God gave Paul. The Lord showed him that the Tabernacle in the Wilderness and Solomon's Temple were only *temporary* accommodations until the *real* temple could start being built. Paul saw already understood that it's the presence of God—and the presence of God *alone*—that makes a building or a person the temple of God, and that once His presence is gone, that thing or person is no longer His temple. He saw that God's ultimate goal has *always been* to have a living, breathing temple, through which He could manifest all the facets of His Divine nature in the earth—and he saw that the Body of Christ was destined to be that temple.

This is why he said: "*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you* (I. Cor. 3:16)? He would still be asking that question today if he were alive because 2000 years later, God's people

still don't have this all-important revelation about what God is doing. Whenever anyone says, "the temple of God", the first thing everyone thinks of is a literal Temple over in Jerusalem. This was *not* the way the apostle Paul thought, once God gave Him the revelation of the true and final temple. That revelation was burned into his mind and heart. So you can be sure that when someone said, "the temple of God", he didn't think...building. When someone said "the temple of God", he thought...*Church* because in his mind there was no other temple. There is only ONE temple of God in the New Testament and that temple is the body of Christ.

We are the temple of God! On the Day of Pentecost the Church was born and it officially became the temple of God. At that point the Temple at Jerusalem *ceased* being God's temple. Never again will God dwell in a building. Never again will a building function as, or be called, the temple of God. *We* are the ones the spirit of Antichrist wants to sit in. *We* are the temple he wants to defile. This is what we must remember when we read Paul's warning in Second Thessalonians or we will never really understand what he was saying.

Because of the revelation Paul was given, he would never again consider any kind of building to be the temple of God. How much less would he view an edifice that was subsidized by Antichrist and built by unbelieving Jews the temple of God? Maybe the unbelieving Jews who built such a temple would call it the temple of God; maybe dumb Gentiles and Gentile Christians would call it the temple of God; but the apostle Paul would *never* call such an abomination the temple of God. Never! To do so would be to deny the very revelation God gave him. It would contradict everything he taught.

Not only does Paul tell us repeatedly that *we* are now the temple of God, the few times he does mention the then-present Temple at Jerusalem, he never calls it the temple of God. He simply refers to it as ""the temple"" (*Acts 22:17; 24:12&18; 25:8; 26:21; I. Cor. 9:13*). Unfortunately, because our heads are filled with the traditions of men we can't grasp the simple meaning of what Paul wrote. The sobering ramifications of what he said never really penetrates our understanding. He was saying that in the last days, God is going to remove the restraint that's been on Satan for over 6000 years. God will let him do things he has *never* been allowed to do before.

What this means is that Satan will be allowed to duplicate and counterfeit the things of God so perfectly in the last days, even the *elect* will be deceived if possible. Those of us who living now, are living in the most dangerous time in history. We are facing a situation that no other generation of believers has ever had to face, and we are the least prepared of any generation to face it! The last generation of saints were destined from the very beginning to face the darkest hour in the history of this planet. But at the same time, that generation also has the greatest opportunity in history to overcome and glorify God. Listen to what the Lord says to the church of Laodicea, which is the last generation:

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

Revelation 3:20-22