

Satan and His Schemes

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[0 : 0 0] a seat and as you're doing so, please take out Ephesians chapter 6. If you haven't guessed from my prayer, if you're new, we are actually in the middle of a subject of spiritual warfare.

Spiritual warfare. Many of us are familiar with the term. It does not matter what church background you usually come from, but there is a lot of different things about it that we do not understand, a lot of things that we do understand, and I'm hoping through this series that we will be able to understand it better. Got a question for you guys. How many of you guys were teenagers in the 60s?

Don't be shy. Come on, Chris. He's being honest there. All right. You guys were lived through what some historians call the greatest invasion of mankind. It's called the British invasion, right?

If you were living here in North America or United States, you understood what I mean when I say the British invasion. Previous to that, Britain was greatly influenced by American rock and roll.

They were the trendsetters. They were the ones who defined the culture until 1960. In a town of city of Liverpool rose the Beatles. The Beatles became the most influential music group in all of rock and roll.

[1 : 4 0] Their effects on musicians are still heard of and doing influence today. Now, not only the Beatles were a powerful group, but many other bands followed them.

And one band that was born out of England two years later was a group called the Rolling Stones. If you're familiar with the Rolling Stones, you're probably saying, I'm a Christian. I don't know anything about the Rolling Stones.

There's a reason for that. The Beatles, as one critic wrote, were capable of serenading their songs into your heart, right? She loves you. All we need is love. Da-da-da-da. Right? Well, the Stones took an entirely different path. If the Beatles were positive, the Stones were negative.

The Stones put out a wild and defiant image. They were the bad boys of the British invasion. So bad that Queen Elizabeth acknowledged the Beatles in 1965 and called them members of the British Empire due to the influence of their rock and roll. The Stones, arguably in the 60s, just as big, it took her till 2003 to admit the Stones in. In fact, when they presented the Stones, when they had the award, the Queen herself made sure she was scheduled for surgery and would not have to be there.

Okay? Now, the Stones would argue that there was a lot of pressure being put on them at that time. There was pressure by the press, religious leaders, parent groups, and even government who were wanting to lay charges on them for moral corruption. Yes, back in the 60s, there was a law that if you influenced other people to do immoral acts, you could be charged. And these groups were trying to bring these charges against them. Well, Mick Jagger, the lead singer of the Stones, was like, hey man, we're really not that bad. You're kind of making too much of a deal over this. So what he decided to do is he decided to write a song to show how bad he really wasn't. And this song became, according to Rolling

[4 : 29] Stone magazine, which is unaffiliated with the rock group, the Rolling Stones, this song is recognized as the 35th greatest rock and roll song of all time. The song is entitled, Sympathy for the Devil.

In this song, Mick introduces the devil as a man of wealth and taste, who's actually been around for a long, long, long time, stealing millions of souls. He claimed he was around when Jesus Christ walked the earth. He was around when there was the hundred-year war against England and France. The song sings that this man of wealth and taste was around when the Russian Revolution occurred. He was behind Hitler's attack of World War II and he was even behind the assassination of the Kennedy brothers.

Throughout the entire song, Mick asked the question, what's my name? What's my name? Mick's conclusion was that we are all Lucifer. In fact, he says, cops and criminals and sinners and saints are all different sides of the same coin. Mick Jagger was trying to say, hey man, don't get too off about us. Look at all the other things that other people did that was really evil. So quit making a fuss about us and our music. He says, evil has been around for a long time and he's even quoted as saying, we're just innocent kids trying to have a good time. What do you think? Were they right or were they wrong? Carlos Santana, if you are a musician, he's recognized as one of the greatest guitarists of all time, was there through that time and he's quoted as saying, I don't have no sympathy for the devil.

I like the beat of the song, but I never identify with the lyrics. Jagger and Richards, who is the lead guitarist, don't really know the full extent of what they're talking about. If they knew what they were getting into when they sing that song, they would not be doing it. The devil is not Santa Claus.

He's for real. How does our culture regard Satan? There's not a lot of talk about it unless you are a horror movie fan, right?

[7 : 25] We just seem to not really acknowledge him so much. In fact, unless you have experienced some sort of great evil, perhaps genocide, perhaps vile war crimes that you believe is beyond the extent of man, the idea of the devil might pop into your mind.

The reality is, we here in North America live in a relatively safe bubble thinking that there really is no evil. Some famous philosopher simply said, with the invention of the light bulb and the radio, Satan disappeared from our vernacular.

In fact, in churches of the last 20 years, if you go to most seminaries, preachers are encouraged not to mention the word sin.

If you don't talk about sin, guess what? You don't talk about Satan. And as you all know, we know we live in a culture that is moving more atheistic by the day.

What's interesting is that sociologists are now observing that they are seeing an explosion of new interest in the witchcraft, the occult, astrology, paganism.

[9 : 04] even this year at the U.S. Navy Academy, a very distinguished school in the United States, they were forced to allow a satanic Bible study.

Where crosses once stood, atheists are open to put up statues honoring Satan. The reality is this stuff doesn't belong in some foreign pagan nation, but it's becoming more evident here in our backyards as well.

If you are curious to how things are in Squamish, I would encourage you to ask a police officer what happens after dark in our town.

How much do you know about Satan? How much do you know about the adversary that is called the devil?

Today, I'm going to look at who he is, what is his beginning, what is he about? But more importantly, I want to teach about what or who he isn't.

[10 : 20] Like any good war general, it's important to know our enemy. As we understood several weeks ago, the reality is we are in a battle.

That is without a doubt. That is what the Bible clearly teaches. It's interesting, if you're a historian, the American World War II general, George Patton, had an entire team of scholars and German experts, so whenever he was going to fight a tank battle, he would get them to study everything he knew about that general.

Even to the point he would know when that general's anniversary date was for his marriage. He wanted to know everything that he could about it in order to be used against him.

in fact, if you know your Bibles, you know the Bible begins with the devil in the very first book. We know the devil is at the end of the story in the very last book.

So turn with me to Ephesians 6 to 13. This has been our text as we are getting into later understanding the armor of God, but in order to understand it better, to greater insight, we need to understand who this enemy is.

[11 : 46] If you were with us last week, we learned what our command is. Here's our command, verse 10. Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.

We read that the how do we do this? Verse 11, by putting, we put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

There we hear the answer why. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

Therefore, we see this command repeated again, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand firm.

If you're with us, that idea of standing firm isn't as if there's been a big battle and you just happen to be the last one standing who a bullet missed or you didn't get hit by artillery or a smart bomb, when he's talking about standing firm, it's a preparation that allows you to stand firm, that will allow you to be standing up at the end of the battle.

[13 : 23] Now, just to give you a quick overview of Satan, the revelation of Satan existence is found in 27 different times in the Old Testament in eight books.

And each of these references are exactly consistent with what is written in the New Testament. Of the 27 times Satan is mentioned or evil, 18 times he is directly called Satan.

The word Satan means one who opposes, one who is an adversary. In the New Testament, we read 2 Corinthians 11, Revelations 12, and Revelations 20, testify that Satan began in the Garden of Eden in Genesis 3.

We just don't read about him in Genesis 3, but the New Testament authors testify to it as well. 1 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 18 refer to him as a lying spirit.

In the New Testament, Satan or the evil one appears 74 times. Every single New Testament writer mentions him.

[14 : 41] 28 of 30 references in the Gospels involve either a direct encounter with or mentions of Satan. The name devil is found over 30 times in the New Testament.

That word means slanderer. One who accuses another of a false account. He is known by many different names and we're going to cover them.

There's actually close to 30 different names and each name carries a greater understanding of who he is. So what I want us to see from this overview is the Bible has plenty to say.

about Satan. But today I want to key in on two Old Testament passages. Please turn with me in your Bibles to Ezekiel 28.

Ezekiel 28. I'm going to use PowerPoint. I'm showing you people I can change. Right? I can use modern technology.

[15 : 53] But I want you to see this in your words yourselves. If you don't have a Bible or you're like me, the Bible's print is too small. We go for big, right? All right.

Let's begin in Ezekiel. Now this is in the middle of a prophecy against a king of Tyre at the time. Tyre was an island nation, very perverted, strut out against God.

But in the middle of it, the writer Ezekiel pops in this story about Satan. Check out verse 12. You were the signet of perfection.

If you were looking for a sign of perfection, it would have been Satan. Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

Right? It speaks of being so complete that he possessed the seal of perfection, full of wisdom, perfect in beauty. Men, it's still not okay to tell your wife that she reminds you of the devil.

[17 : 07] Right? Could be seen as a compliment in this way, but I would not advise it. So let's take a look at verse 13. You were in Eden, the garden of God.

Every precious stone was your covering. Sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper. Sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle.

I don't even know what that is. And crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created, they were prepared.

Right at the very beginning, when our ancestors, Adam and Eve, walked on this earth when he created, Satan was there. Take a look at verse 14.

You were an anointed guardian, cherub. I placed you. You were on the holy mountain of God. In the midst of the stones of fire, you walked.

[18 : 16] Cherub is a type of angel that God has designed. in the cherubs. But these special line of angels actually surrounded the throne of God.

It was the cherubs that were in Isaiah 6. Remember the vision that Isaiah has in the throne room of God. And they say, holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty.

Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty. not only did he have that title, but he was the anointed guardian cherub.

Notice it says, I placed you on the mountain of God. This wasn't a position that he earned.

It wasn't like all the angels got together and had a hand-to-hand combat situation. they didn't play jeopardy or to figure out who was the smartest.

[19 : 26] He did not earn this, but God in his wisdom that is sovereign placed him there. Look at that word, in the midst of the stones of fire you walk.

Scholars believe that is the inner sanctum where God exists. not only on the highest high, but on the most inner sanctum of God.

It was a position given to him by God. Verse 15, you were blameless in your ways from the day you were created.

There was no sin within him. There was no blame that could be afforded him until unrighteousness was found in you.

You see, the sin arose in Satan. It wasn't created by God. It was outside of God. However, one day it was found. Verse 16, in the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence in your midst and you sinned.

[20 : 41] So I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God. And I destroyed you O guardian cherub from the midst of the stones of fire. So Satan was removed from the holy mountain.

He was removed from the inner chamber because there was a spirit of rebellion that was found in him. Notice verse 17, your heart was proud because of your beauty.

You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor. The beauty and the wisdom that he had given he thought was for his advantage, for his own good.

But it was not a part of what God created, but pride rose up in him. And then we see this switch back to the king of Tyre.

I cast you to the ground that I believe. It is referencing to Satan. I expose you before kings to feast their eyes on you. But the multitude of your iniquities in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries, so I brought fire out from your midst.

[21 : 56] It consumed you and I turned you to ashes on the earth in the sight of all who saw you. This is God's response to pride.

If you're familiar with the writer James, he simply says, God opposes the proud. Now turn with me to Isaiah chapter 14.

Chapter 14. In the words of this property gives us some more insight into this being Satan. Isaiah 14, starting in verse 12.

How you have fallen from heaven, O day star, son of dawn. How you were cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low.

Anybody using a King James version? Anybody really old school? Like, is from the 60s or something? We got one? All right. Okay, you can actually see there's another word for dawn star.

[23 : 09] It's Lucifer. All right? If you have the King James version or a new King James version, they use the word Lucifer, which has kind of gotten into the vernacular that that is his name.

We're going to see that his name changes very quickly if it was that. Or we could just say Lucifer means star of the morning or son of the dawn.

However, what we do know his name is called Satan when God casts him out of heaven. Verse 12 again. How you were cut down to the ground, cut down to the earth.

Verse 13. You said in your heart, I will ascend to heaven above the stars of God. I will set my throne on high.

I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will make myself the most high God.

[24 : 16] There's a lot of use of a primary personal pronoun I there. This reveals his heart and it reveals a prideful heart.

Pride produces discontent. being the most anointed cherub wasn't enough. Being the seal of perfection wasn't enough.

He wanted the place of God. Reality is very few of us would ever say that, God.

But the truth of the matter is, we all want to be God. We want to define what is right. We want to define what is wrong.

We want to be our authority over what is true, what is wrong, what is right for me. Hey, that might be wrong for you. This is our world today.

[25 : 27] That is why you go to school, university, the idea of objective truth no longer exists. It's all rooted in this desire to declare yourself God.

Take a look at verse 15. But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.

Sheol is the Old Testament designation for the abode of the dead, the underworld, the grave, or what we commonly refer to as hell.

Luke 10, 13, Luke records Jesus saying, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

and we know Satan's rebellion will ultimately end in his own destruction. Now I just want to give you a quick little overview.

[26 : 36] Revelations 20, 10 simply states that the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

There is no hope for Satan. Satan cannot be saved. There's not sometimes. There's no need to feel sympathy for him. He has made his choice.

This is the ending God has designated for him. But what's interesting is that when Satan was thrown down, he didn't go down alone. Revelations 12 actually makes reference that he was able to take a third of the angels with him.

So in his scheme to overthrow God, he gathered men under his command or angels under his command to come against God.

And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world. He was thrown down to earth and his angels were thrown down with him.

[27 : 48] Verse 4 tells us that a third of all the angels were cast down with them. So, what do we conclude from all of this?

So today I want to share with you five satanic truths. Alright, now that we have that background of who he is, I want to share five truths about satanic that I believe will affect your understanding of who he is and hopefully see yourself in the picture or how this understands, how this, anyway, you'll get it, what I'm saying.

Alright, the biggest thing that we can take away from these sayings or these verses is Satan is a created being. Get that? Satan is a created being.

Alright? He is not God. He is not another type of God. It's not like he's the yin to God's yang, the opposite mirror image who just happens to be evil.

He is not God. Satan is not eternal. Satan is not all knowing. Satan is not all powerful.

[29 : 09] Satan is not all present. And as I touched on last week, and we're going to learn a little bit more today, Satan does not rule hell like God rules heaven.

Alright, a couple of weeks ago, you had a survey before we went into this series. I want to know what you understand. We're going to get to some of that, but that was one of the questions.

Two-thirds of you said he did. That's our great understanding. Don't worry, I don't know who it is. Right? You put on your codes, but Satan does not rule these things.

Satan is not everywhere. He cannot read your mind. Satan cannot tell the future. Theologians have debated long about whether he can actually do miracles.

The reality is many believe that he only can persuade you that he can do miracles, but he cannot. Do you remember when Moses came before Pharaoh? His magicians were only able to go so far in their miracles keeping up with Moses that they just couldn't do it anymore.

[30 : 24] Right? Their smoke and mirrors games just couldn't do it. God and God alone is the only one that can do miracles. miracles. In fact, there's nowhere in scripture that gives any evidence that any angel can do miracles.

And that is what Satan was created as. So it's not as if in his rebellion he gained more powers. All right? This is important to understand.

2 Corinthians 11.14 tells us that although he is an angel of darkness, he disguises himself as an angel of light.

Reality is Satan is mighty. He is not the almighty, but he was created as an angel. And on the pecking order of authority, guess who's above us?

Angels. All right? But, Satan demonstrates three basic characteristics of personhood. We're going to look at all three here.

[31 : 32] One, he has an intellect. Satan has an intellect. With his intellect in Matthew 4, he tried to tempt Christ. He tried to argue.

We saw his intellect with Eve, right? Did God really say that? We understand the schemes of the devil, which we're going to be talking about.

That means schemes are his plans, his tactics, his methods, his procedures, his technical ways of doing things. The reality is Satan tries to gain advantage of Christians and he uses his intelligence to do so.

We might think he reads our minds, but you know what? Satan's been watching us for a long time. He knows mankind. He probably knows us better than we know ourselves.

He's been watching. He sees how man responds to certain situations, certain impulses, certain things with the eyes, certain things that we hear.

[32 : 39] Nothing is new to Satan, but that does not mean he can read our mind, but with his intellect, it certainly looks like it. In fact, we will soon learn that Satan is one who gets a game plan for dealing with each and every one of us.

This is an enemy that is so cunning that he actually attracted a third of the angels to follow him over God. Two, Satan has emotion.

Motion, we see it expressed in pride and in anger and the third quality of his personhood we see is he has a will. He had a will.

He made a decision to do what he did. He had a will to rebel. He had a will to recruit other angels. He has a will to attack us. He has a will to destroy the works of Christ and he has a will to destroy our faith.

Besides being a created being, the second truth of Satan is Satan is a spirit being. He's not physical. He's not hindered by our physical physicalness.

[33 : 55] He's not made up of matter but he's made up of spirit. Even though he can appear as a physical being because he is spiritual, he is not limited to this physical realm.

The third truth of Satan that we understand is that although Satan is not everywhere, he has extraordinary mobility. Both Job 1.7 and Job 2.2 tell us that he went to and fro over the earth.

So although he is not everywhere like God is, he has the ability to travel very fast. 1 Peter 5 tells us that he prowls around like a roaring lion.

Four, he can function in heaven and on earth. Now this idea of heaven, people have wondered how can that be so?

Because he's evil, he's evil, he's bad, God is holy, cannot accept it. But we don't know how far in heaven he can go, but he can go as close to heaven to actually converse with God.

[35 : 03] 1 Kings and Job tells us that he can get close enough to converse with Yahweh. We know he can approach Jesus in the wilderness.

So he can communicate, he can get close enough to communicate. And the fifth truth I want us to understand here is that Satan has fallen angels at his disposal.

He's not on his own. Jude 6 tells us that actually some of them are eternally locked up in hell. How many does he have? We don't know. We know that he began with twice as many angels and demons but the Bible does not tell us how many angels there are.

There's legions upon legions. So what we can conclude from this is that he's got a whole bunch of worker bees willing and able to do his will.

Let's look back at Ephesians 6. This is where it gets good. Alright? Verse 12. Paul tells us, for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

[36 : 36] First thing that this tells us is there is an organization and it is highly organized. There are those who have rulers and there are those who have authority. Alright?

We see these as different categories upon which we struggle against. Now, if I gave you 10 commentaries and I asked you to find exactly what these words are, you'd probably get close to 10 different answers.

Much ink has been spilt trying to figure out what these exactly mean. we do not know, but there's a few things we do know.

Notice he uses the word against four times. That's telling us there's adversaries against us in four different ways. They are not flesh and blood.

Now, notice when we see rulers and administrators, those are neutral terms, right? You can rule for good, you can rule for bad, you can have authority in good ways, you can have authority in bad ways.

[37 : 40] We do understand this word cosmic powers means worldly influence, ideas, creation of false religions, political structures, thought processes.

But ultimately, the word we need to pay attention to is this present darkness. This is the reality upon which we exist.

So now, this is the question I think that, whether you realize it or not, this is the question you want answered. What are they the rulers of?

Who do they have authority over? who is it that they have the ability to influence? And I think it's really important for us to understand these things because there's great confusion in the evangelical Christian world over this issue.

Now, for some of you who did not take the survey, I asked three specific questions which indicate your knowledge or understanding on this subject. the questions were, and you were to either strongly agree, agree, don't have a clue, disagree, or strongly disagree, right?

[39 : 07] You're kind of in that range of five. So one of the questions I said was, so I made statements, certain locations such as places of pagan worship are spiritually more dangerous than others.

67% said strongly agree or agree, all right? Two-thirds agreed with that idea, okay?

Second question is, Satan is the ruler of hell. Same amount, two-thirds stated that they either agreed or strongly agreed that Satan is the ruler of hell.

Then the third question is, people can be more vulnerable to satanic attacks because of their family background, okay? Two-thirds stated they either agreed or strongly agreed with that statement.

This is remarkable consistency, well done, right? Okay. What these answers reveal is there are places or things or people that you believe that Satan has authority or rulership over.

[40 : 29] And I'll tell you why you probably believe that. When Paul says, you don't have to turn, I'll just read a couple verses, 2 Corinthians 4, 4, Paul says, in their case, the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Second verse is Ephesians 2, 2, which we covered in our series. And you were dead in the trespasses and sin in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air.

And then we read in Matthew 4, remember the temptation, Jesus? Satan makes this offer that's very interesting to Jesus, he says.

Again, the devil comes to him, Jesus, takes Jesus to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in their glory and he said to him, all these I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.

So when we realize that, when we read that, we think that there's actually these kingdoms that Satan owns, Satan has legal authority of, and if Jesus would bow down, he would just give them to him.

[41 : 53] Because why would he make an offer that wasn't something for him to offer? Does that mean that Satan has rulership, and authority over parts of this world?

Kingdoms? Territories? Is this world his? And does he have dominion over it? How many of you guys ever read that, this present darkness series by Frank Peretti?

Big influence in the Christian world. This was his worldview. By the way, he says, he wasn't really, he was just writing a fictional book. He wasn't trying to teach on spiritual warfare, but a great many people admit that they know spiritual warfare through this book, right?

There's several different views on this. One, he is a king here on earth until Jesus comes to kick him out. All right? That's one view. The second view, the reason why he has authority here, is that when he deceived Adam, he earned the right that Adam once had, so since Adam failed, it's like he gave him the right to rule.

So because of Adam's failure, Satan was able to step in and earn the rightful rule over man. So those two views is because God sent him out, gives him authority, two, or he tricked Adam and he gained authority that way.

[43 : 18] All right? This is what the Bible says. In fact, the Bible does not speak in any way that Satan has any authority to rule over man or place ever.

You know that? Check out this conversation between Paul and Jesus Christ in Acts 26 18. This is Paul heading out to kill Christians.

Jesus Christ appears before him and he tells Paul, he goes, I'm sending you, Paul, to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

All right? Paul, I'm sending you to go get these Christians, open their eyes and they come into the kingdom. It's exactly what Paul writes about in Colossians 1 13. It says, Jesus Christ has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved son.

Why are you and I before we became Christians in Satan's domain? Because we chose to. We were there because of our sin.

[44 : 45] Like Satan, we rebelled against God. In our foolishness, that is why we were there. But, what happens is, because of our revolt against God, we aligned ourselves with Satan.

All right? What that means is, Satan does not have rightful rulership over us. Satan does not have rightful ownership over a country, a place, a city, a building.

The reality is, he is a squatter sitting in a land that does not own him, that he does not own, telling everybody he owns it.

In that sense, he is a prince and a god. Those are small g, small p. and man in his sin is captive and blinded to this jurisdiction issue.

Fact of the matter is, most non-Christians don't even know they're in that land, right? If you asked any non-Christian, do you serve Satan?

[46 : 01] What? You're not. What, have you been listening to the Rolling Stones? Right? Never. They're appalled by such things. They don't want anything to do about that. I don't know if you've been bringing it up.

There was a video this week, Kanye West, he got saved, but he's on this airplane, and the guy's asking him the question. He's like, what are people going to say to you once they say it's all fake or this isn't the real thing?

And Kanye actually gives this great answer. He says, it's like we live in a dream or we live in life. And he says, those who do not know Christ are the walking dead. They don't know it. blind.

And Paul, and the people Paul calls to save, ditto, us, have a task of unblinding the blind. And we bring truth, right?

So, Satan does not own you. Satan does not have rightful ownership over you. He does not have rightful ownership over buildings, over countries or nations.

[47 : 03] He does not have rightful ownership over places of worship. He does not have rightful ownership over families. He does not have rightful ownership over physical objects.

What does this mean to you and me? We've heard the stories. You can actually speak to Chris. His parents grew up in Africa that when missionaries go into foreign land that Satan has had his way for decades, they see crazy stuff.

For some of you from Africa, I don't know exactly what your stories are, but there's a lot of places in pagan nations where Satan has had the run of the land, there's atrocities. And when the gospel comes in, Satan pushes right back.

There's no shortage of stories on this issue. Right? The reality is, we can expect to meet against that kind of opposition, can't we?

There is going to be opposition to the gospel. Dave just read an incredible story. They're not going to hate us because of us, but the one whom we present. Now, if a time comes we can answer more about these issues, but today in our world, as it becomes more increasingly pagan, we are going to see more and more of these types of events.

[48 : 25] We're going to see bizarre situations. In fact, there's a newspaper that is now, it's an online news, it records exorcisms, and they're recording that there is a mount, in the Catholic church, is more involved in demon possessions because they're trying to find an answer to the craziness that is going on in this world.

But the same battle that these missionaries have going on in other countries is the same battle we have in our homes. when we're dealing with a family member who's been enslaved by alcoholism, drugs, or any kind of an addiction, that is a huge battle.

Why? Because Satan has been in there for a long, long time. We have friends and family who've been enslaved to anger, they've been enslaved to bitterness, they've been enslaved to unforgiveness.

those are people who've allowed Satan to have an incredible amount of influence in their lives. A family member who's locked in what we would call stupid, foolish behavior that is destructive to their health and joy, no matter how many times you have tried to reason with them, they're still stuck there because Satan has had a say in their lives.

when we bring truth there, there will be a battle. I'm going to share with you a little bit about my life.

[50 : 05] I have a nephew. I raised him for a couple of years. My grandmother was abandoned by his mother, so I had him for a couple of years when I was in Victoria.

He has gravitated to Wiccan theology, witchcraft. He's been in court. He's now in his 20s. He's a broken boy, but I get this text yesterday.

I do not know who to trust. I'm being deceived by everyone. I don't know what's happening. My crystals are deceiving me.

He goes to astrologers, anybody to help him make sense of this world. He's given away thousands upon thousands of dollars.

You know what my reaction is? Quit being stupid. Quit being stupid. That's what it is. I want to smack him upside to the head. Right?

[51 : 09] I want to take control of his bank account so he can't buy this stupid stuff. You go into his thing, he's got all these altars and he doesn't really know what it means. You know?

That's deep brokenness. And the reality is because I know his mom and I know the stuff that she has dabbled with, it's a reality there for him.

This is why you go see Dave for counseling rather than me because I always start off with quit being so stupid. Right? But I think we all have that when we have friends or family in this part of life and we don't get it.

And the reality is it's because it's a battle not of flesh and blood. And sometimes when I see that I want to speak to the demon.

I want to tell him to get out of my nephew. I want to take authority over him. my nephew has been around the gospel his whole entire life. I want to bind it.

[52 : 20] I want to make authoritative pronouncements, proclamations. I want to say the name of Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ as much as I can. Thinking it's going to have some sort of effect and power over him and free him.

I know I got a funny story with my wife. I hope she doesn't mind sharing this story. But there used to be a guy who was possessed who used to come to my old church. And he'd be outside with these placards.

And my wife and I are newly married. And she's very curious to what's going on, of course. And she would say this today, why would anybody say negative things about my wonderful, loving husband? Right?

So she curiously went out and she just said, I rebuke you in the name of Jesus. And man, that guy just went off on her. Just crazy.

They don't like that name, obviously. But that did not give her any power over him, right? But I'm left to think, what do I do?

[53 : 25] I mean, God has incredible mercy just that I'm reading these books. I have this book. And it's written by Dave Powelson, if you all know, is a very well-known Christian counselor. And he writes this.

He says, as counselors, it's tempting for us to trust our theories of motivation and causality and our knowledge of how people tend to react to certain struggles.

things. It's easy to feel confident in what we know that we don't depend on our good shepherd for wisdom. I'm going to repeat that.

It's easy to feel confident in what we know that it forces us to no longer depend on our good shepherd for wisdom, for help, and the power to change.

But if you realize that there are forces at work bigger than you, it makes you really, really pray and really, really mean it.

[54 : 32] My friends, as we lean into this subject of great importance, we are to depend on God.

Notice verse 18 and 19, just drop down. Paul just simply says, praying at all times in the spirit, with all prayer and supplication.

To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints. I just prayed yesterday with my mom on the phone that God would open my nephew's eyes, eyes to the wonderful truth of Jesus Christ.

I preach the gospel to him, and I call him to repent, and I plead for the Lord to do a work in his heart. Remember the context of this book.

It's written to a bunch of people who were enslaved to demons. They were enslaved to magic, and they were enslaved to evil forces. And what does Paul do to invade this darkness?

[55 : 44] He follows Christ, he relies on God's strengths, stands up, and walks straight into the dark world as an ambassador of light.

My friends, are you willing to depend on the good shepherd for wisdom? are you willing to depend on the good shepherd for the power to change?

Are you willing to depend on God's greater strength than yours? And do you really, really mean it?

Because that's how this battle is going to be fought, by people like us who are going to cling to Jesus, and we're going to pray prayers that we really, really mean understanding that he is the one where we seek the wisdom, the help, and the power to change.

Next week, we're going to go into, we're going to explore what the schemes of Satan are, and the wonderful, we're going to be bridging into that, into wonderful provision that God gives us in the armor of God.

[57 : 02] Let me pray. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we just thank you for the grace that you have given us. We thank you for this word. The whole idea of Satan is sometimes a to be, dear God, is the kiss and see you