

Do NOT Be Outwitted By Satan

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[0 : 00] Please turn with me to Ephesians chapter 6. Before I get into today's sermon, I want to explain something.

I want to explain an illustration that I used last week, and one of our attenders had rightfully brought this to my attention.

Last week, we were speaking on the authority or lack of authority that Jesus, goodness gracious, that Satan has, right?

If you're new, we're in the middle of spiritual warfare. So we've been talking a lot of few points. So last week, I was talking about sometimes we see, the reality is, and we're going to go into that today, demonic influence can be seen very differently.

And people start to think that they see demonic influence when they see demon possessions and demonic influence. And I made an inference last year, or last week, to, and I just kind of said some of our Quest kids who are from Africa may have experienced that.

[1 : 09] And it's true. Africa just isn't one small country that we know of. And I use Chris as an example. The countries that I was thinking in my head were Senegal, where Chris hails from.

And in fact, I just received a prayer letter from a pastor friend of mine who was in Sierra Leone. And he was talking about the biggest question that he gets from some of the people there is, how do we deal with spiritual warfare with demon possessions?

And as one of the students pointed out, Africa is 1.2 billion people. And it's a stereotype that I use. So for you that are here, please accept my forgiveness on that. I wasn't encapsulating everybody. People come from different countries within that continent. But the point that I was bringing up with my wife and what she experienced in Victoria is that our society becomes more secular.

We're going to see more of that outward possession type of power. Where the gospel isn't, Satan kind of gets in and does his thing.

[2 : 10] So we can expect. But that does not mean we are any more holy. I remember there was a radio program a couple weeks ago and the guy was saying how much more moral United States was over Canada because of kind of the abortion issue going on, right?

It was a political thing. And he says, you know, they're not even, that's not even an electoral issue. Those guys are all going to hell up there, right? And I started writing the guy and saying, listen, hey, really?

I lived in the States for seven years. Just, you don't experience the crime and the violence and murders and some of those other things.

Plus, you guys are the biggest purveyors of pornography in the world. So I was just going to say, we certainly have these categories that we put sin in. My point is, I was talking about a very specific manifestation of sin.

And I was thinking about the countries that I know. I was actually involved with the UN war tribunals, going after criminals of war and all that, that happens.

[3 : 21] So it's not all extensive. So if you know of anybody who's offended, I heard some people were offended. Please pass that on to them. So today, we are in the book of Ephesians.

The year was 1941 and most of Europe was now under Nazi control. So confident were the Nazis of their control of Europe that they actually opened up a new front with Russia.

It was not bearing very well for Russia. And by 1943, Russia, at a summit, met with the leaders of the Allied armies and said, Hey, America, Britain, we need you guys to attack the mainland of Europe.

So that will force the Nazis to take some of their forces away from the Russian front and start engaging them. If you weren't sure, after that full collapse, a lot of the Allies fighting was in North

Africa and in little parts off the Adriatic.

But Europe itself really was not being touched by this. What the Russians were asking was no easy thing.

[4 : 40] In fact, the British and Canadian armies and navies one year earlier had attempted to land on mainland Europe. This city was Diop.

If you are familiar with your Canadian history, this was a war that lasted for six hours. 900 Canadian soldiers were killed. 2,000 Canadian soldiers taken captive.

It was a disaster. What the Allies realized, it was easy to put a lot of people on the ground, but to get machinery, tanks, and heavy artillery, it would take a larger undertaking.

You see, Germany had set up what is known as the Atlantic Fortress or the Atlantic Wall, and it ran from all along of France and all the way into Norway.

You should be able to see a picture here. The yellow donate shows where this wall was. And it wasn't always a literal wall, but it was a land that was manned by over 15,000 reinforced bunkers, reinforced artillery, machine gun nests, tens of thousands of barbed wire, millions and millions of miles, and all sorts of ways to stop the Allies from coming to Europe.

[6 : 06] Here, this slide is a picture of one of the fortified cannons. And so these things, the Germans had really dug themselves in deep. See, the reality is the Germans understood that an attack had to happen.

They knew it had to happen at some place, and there was actually six different locations that the Nazi command recognized where the Allies might attack.

It might be France, Italy, Greece, and possibly even Norway. So we see these are the different areas that the Allies were considering attacking.

Now, what you need to understand is when an amphibious landing comes in, you need three times to six times more men than defending forces.

Okay? So if you have 300,000 men on land, you can push back a million people. All right? A million soldiers.

[7 : 12] That's a lot. In fact, running from Belgium, Holland, and all the way to France, the Nazis actually had one and a half million men in that area under a field marshal's command.

Well, now what? So the Germans had more than enough boots on the plan, but they recognized they could not defend every part of the wall.

So they had a plan. They had inserted over 130 top-level spies into the British command who were all a part of that area.

So they had all these hundreds. So there's actually this German colonel who was in charge of organizing all of this. And he felt very comfortable with this idea because their idea is all we need to do is find out where the Allied armies are coming in, and we can push all our men there and easily repel them because all we need is a one-to-six, one-to-four-man advantage.

Well, eventually the Allies devised an attack strategy called Operation Overlord, which happened on June 6, 1944, which we call D-Day.

[8 : 30] The Allies landed at the beaches of Normandy with over 300,000 troops and over 10,000 armored units. They actually had close to 3 million men over in England waiting to come over.

The Germans, who, as I said, had over 101.5 million men on that side of the coast, more than enough to quash any invasion.

In fact, in the general area of Normandy where they landed, they actually had over 300,000 troops under command of one of the greatest German generals or field marshals of that time named Erwin Rommel.

You would think that this was more than enough to repel any invasion. So the question to ask is, what happened? Why were the Allies able to land and gain ultimately victory over Germany in the year that followed?

The operation that led to this victory is an operation called Operation Bodyguard. Operation Bodyguard was given to one of the most important yet little-known top-secret operations devised for World War II by Winston Churchill on Christmas Day in 1943.

[9 : 51] Historians would go on to call Operation Bodyguard one of the greatest deceptions that man had ever seen since the Trojan horse.

The Allies devised a plan to trick the Germans into thinking that the Allies had such big armies that they could attack two different places at the same time.

Normandy and the favourite spot, Pas de Calais. If you notice on the far side, you see Pas de Calais.

That is only 20-mile difference. That's like going from Tawasson to Vancouver Island. Not very far. Actually, that might be a little bit too far, but it was 20 miles away across the English Channel. And what made Pas de Calais so interesting, it had a railway centre. So the Germans theorised that if the Americans come this way, they'll have a railway network to go all across Europe, and there's actually a port, a deep water port, where they could land all their troops and tanks and never had a problem because that was the problem at Dieppe.

[11 : 06] So if there was a place that the Americans were going to attack, this had to be it. And you know what? The Allies allowed them to believe that this was going to happen.

First thing that the Allies did is they sent out false radio messages. They sent out radio messages that army units were gathering outside of Pas de Calais.

And they made them somewhat easy to intercept. The other thing the Germans didn't know is that the Allies had actually cracked the German secret code.

It was called ULTRA. And all those 130 spies that they had sent over, every single one was captured. It's called Operation Double Cross.

So what they did is they took the German agents and made them send false information back to Germany. So the Germans are like, whoa, look at all this information we're getting.

[12 : 04] Allies, they're talking about Pas de Calais. We're seeing more radio messages coming through. Then they also started to hear of what's called the First Army Group, which is made up of 85 divisions.

That means over a million men. So big was this conspiracy that National Geographic magazine, do you guys remember National Geographic? For some of you guys, do you guys even know what a magazine is?

Right? It used to be a bundle of paper that would be sent to a home with really nice pictures and stuff. It came monthly. Anyhow, in this magazine, they actually showed every division.

So Chris, being in the military, the division he belonged to, he'd have a special patch that would designate who he belonged to. In this, they had 85 different patches.

This would be one. This is a fake patch. The unit does not exist. But the Germans, reading National Geographic, understood that, holy cow, the Americans have got this whole big army going up.

[13 : 11] And then the next thing they did is they started to allow Germans, American allies had complete air superiority. But at 20 miles, you can get a plane pretty high from Germany looking down on.

But they'd only allow them to go no lower than 30,000 feet. So the U.S. Army had hired artists and designers from all over Canada and U.S.

And they made blow up tanks. And they made blow up tanks. Fake tanks. Fake artillery guns. Fake jeeps. Fake planes and trucks.

And what we see here is a speaker set up that could send sounds over 20 miles. So they would park these over the cliffs of Dover and along that part, point it towards Germany to make it sound like a million men were at Pas de Calais or were ready to invade, right?

So it was like one of the great ruses, the guy on the right side is just a blow up artillery gun. And then they planted tents, acres and acres and acres of tents.

[14 : 25] And they did two other things that was really outstanding. If you're a war historian, you would know of General George Patton. He was considered one of the Americans' greatest tactical generals.

And in the German mind, if America was going to attack, they're going to use their best general. So they had Patton run around on East Sussex, the Dover side, with public meetings.

And the Germans would intercept those TVs and films and see this general meeting with people, talking about, and they're thinking, oh no, that is where the attack's got to come from.

And then the last bit that they did, which I thought was very interesting, in a prison exchange, they released an ailing German army who was part of the Africa Corps, and they drove him through the real army.

The real army, which was 200 miles away from that. And he allowed them to see, and this guy was a military tactician, started counting the tanks and the tents and knowing all these things.

[15 : 34] So when he went over, the Allies actually changed all the village names, all the street signs, to make it seem he was in Sussex.

So when he gets back to Germany, hey guys, this is the army. I saw it with my own eyes. But they were actually 200 miles away.

So when the attack at Normandy actually happened, the Germans had an incredible tank group waiting outside.

And they actually had 300,000 men. So when the attack happened at Normandy, the Germans wouldn't go for it because they said it's a fake attack.

They're doing that to distract us because the big attack is coming at Pas-de-Calais. It took them seven weeks to figure out the truth.

[16 : 36] Seven weeks of the Americans being, or the Allies being able to bring in eventually over 30 divisional men, which is over 300,000 and 10,000 armored units.

By the time they finally engaged, the Allied units were ready for them and wiped out over 200,000 of them in their trap. Looking back, historians were in agreement that despite the immense advantage in code-breaking and the double agents that the Allies had, there was one essential ingredient that they needed to ensure its success.

And that was the willingness of the Germans to be deceived. They needed the willingness of the Germans to be deceived.

You see, the Germans were victimized by their own strength, which was military logic. They kept saying, if I were in their shoes, this is what we would do.

This logic filtered out all contrasting truth. The reality is, that's how Satan works, right?

[17 : 57] He gets us to rely on our strength in order to use it against us. To get us to believe something even in the heart of contrasting strengths.

People say that this was the biggest deception since the Trojan horse. It was the biggest deception since the Garden of Eden, right? Since the very beginning of time, from the earliest time in heaven, Satan thought he was something more than he was not, was able to recruit a third of his angels, they're thrown out of heaven.

We see him show up in the garden. He whispers four things in Eve's ear. And I need us to understand that. We're not going to spend a lot of time here with this. But these are the four things that Satan always whispers in our ears as well.

And we're actually going to get into more details how he does that next week. But I just want you to understand that the deceptions he uses are the same deceptions that the Americans pulled on the Germans.

Or to not offend anybody here, of course, the Allies, right? One, Satan places the commands of God in negative light. He places the commands of God in a negative light.

[19 : 20] There was a simple question that Satan asked Eve in the garden. He said, did God actually say you shall not eat of any tree in the garden?

He reworded what happened. The real words that God said is you may surely eat of tree, every tree in the garden. Every tree, but of the tree of the knowledge of God in evil.

You shall not eat. All right? So he's putting the emphasis on the not. But we're kind of the same way when we're kind of facing God's commands towards us.

We know we've been there. We were young. We hear it from their kids. We kind of get hung up on the negative things we can't do rather than all things that we can do. Amen? We just do that.

We just get fixated. And it's going to answer for us why. Number two, Satan calls into question God's motive and character. Satan always calls God's motive and questions his character.

[20 : 26] This is found in Genesis 3, 4, and 5. When he says, you will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be open and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

You see, what he's doing is he's getting Eve to question God's goodness. That somehow God is not good and fair.

So what he's doing, Eve, is he's robbing you of the authority of you making that decision. Who's been there?

Right? I know better. Right? You know what? This applies to the Vantils, not me, right? They're from South Africa. This is obviously a command for South Africans, right? No.

It's for everyone. And we need to understand that. The third thing that Satan lied about is that man can be like God.

[21 : 29] By being the authoritative one, that is ultimately what it is to be like God, right? You know what God and evil is, so you decide what is right to or not to do.

You don't need God telling you that. You become, as I said, your own authority. You understand that your freedoms and choices are restricted, and you don't like that.

And then the fourth way is Satan makes sin look good. He makes Satan's sin look good. So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate.

Who here truly sins willingly? Unless you're rebellious and out of your mind. The reality is, Satan has a way of making sin look so good and yummy and desirous.

And we're going to talk about this and we're going to see in the next couple of weeks how this fits into the armor of God. But we need to understand these four points as we go forward in today's sermon.

[22 : 58] I noticed, if you'll notice, at the beginning of your bulletin, I entitled this sermon, Do Not Be Outwitted by Satan. Do not be outwitted by Satan.

It's actually taken from Paul's word in 2 Corinthians 2.11. So that we would not be outwitted by Satan for we are not ignorant of his designs.

Satan has a goal. Satan's goal is to injure God's glory. It is to injure God's glory. It is to separate us from God.

Right? And because we bear that image, we are the target of attack. So how does he do this? He hinders us from worshiping God.

He hinders us from obeying God. And he hinders us from living to the glory of God. This is his main goal.

[24 : 08] There's three other goals. Two, to overthrow the kingdom of God. To overthrow the kingdom of God. To retain what he possesses.

That means to keep what he has. And the fourth one is to regain what he lost. Whether it be territory, possessions, whatever. He wants you back.

Now, Satan has a strategy. Satan has a plan to accomplish his goals.

The other issue he has is he has a means, a method to accomplish his plans. What Paul is telling the church in 2 Corinthians here is, we know his plan.

We know his methods. And we know his means. Therefore, do not be outwitted. Don't get outsmarted.

[25 : 13] Don't fall for the traps. Don't listen to the fake radio reports. Don't listen to foreign spies.

Don't do any of these things. Now, what did Jesus come to do? Called the callus to repentance, right? He came to deliver the captives.

Jesus came to drive Satan out. And he came to liberate those that are bound. So let's turn back to Ephesians 6.11.

This is today's verse. It's a simple command. Put on the armor of God.

That you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. That word schemes kind of stands out, doesn't it?

[26 : 24] It's not a word we use very often. It can be translated as wiles. It means deceptive ways to do things.

Not only is it deceptive, but it implies an orderly, logical arrangement and plan, usually in steps to deceive someone.

That's what the Allies did to the Germans. Right? There was a logical arrangement of thought, planning actually began over a year before everything could work.

Certain things needed to be put in place in time. It requires knowledge. That means Satan knows us.

It's an ability to carry out that plan. Nobody plans, you know, as much as I like Hawaii. I have not set out a plan in motion to take it over.

[27 : 27] Right? I don't have the ability to do so. I could devise a plan of where the amphibious landings could come, where the bombs could drop to knock off their radar stations or sink their fleet, whatever.

It'd just be a waste of time. I do not have the ability to do stuff. But Satan does. And he has a method and a system to accomplish his goals.

And it's part of his method and system is trickiness. Trickery and craftiness. What Paul tells us quite plainly is that Satan has schemes that he uses against us.

So this Sunday, I want to concentrate on a general understanding of Satan's power. Last week, we talked about Satan's authority.

Right? We learn that Satan has no rightful authority over any place, people, or thing. Then any authority that Satan has, it's he's either taken it wrongly or man has given it to him.

[28 : 45] The fact of the matter is, Satan doesn't even rule over hell. He was cast out of heaven and now fights back against God. So the obvious question is, and this is what was asked to me last week, how was Satan able to accomplish all that he has if he does not have authority?

Why is he called the prince of the air? Why is he called the prince of the world? And as we know, simply put, man, when he rebelled against God, inadvertently or purposefully joined Satan and his army of fallen angels.

What this army lacks in authority, they have in power. They have in power. Authority is the right to rule.

Like a king, through his lineage, has the right to rule. That's the whole reason why Queen Elizabeth is sitting on the throne. She is the first daughter of her parents after he wasn't actually the oldest brother.

His older brother actually abdicated the throne, given the rights to Queen Elizabeth's father. And she was the firstborn and she becomes queen.

[30 : 02] She has the authority. Charles can't say, hey, I'm taking over. Doesn't work. He has not authority. After she passes, the authority goes on to him.

Right? We see a lot of nations that are ruled by leaders who have authority, sometimes through power.

Right? They use war. North Korea would be an example. He controls the army. He gets the authority. In many places of the world where God is not preached and people are not pursuing God, Satan has his way.

He has the power. And first of all, who is he? John tells us quite clearly. Jesus Christ said in John 8, 44, Satan was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him.

When he lies, he speaks out of his own character. For he is a liar and father of lies. He brings people in. He talks.

[31 : 14] Come on, Eve. Did God really say that? Come with me. Have real power. Last week we learned that Satan is not a god.

He is a created being. He has a will, intellect, and emotions. He is mighty. But he is not the almighty. And the way he gains power is through his schemes to fulfill his plans.

So I want to go over what some of his power derives from as well. Number one, his power is he is a spiritual being. He is an angel.

Satan is not physical. We cannot see him. How nice it would be, right? If this was a fleshly war, we would just lock our doors.

In the States, we'd carry about 12 guns. That'd be in the kids' room. Right? We could mount a defense. But we are fighting cosmic powers.

[32 : 18] Things we do not see. And the place where we see Satan start his attacks is in the mind. He whispers in our ears.

He entered into the heart of Judas to betray Jesus. He entered the heart of Ananias to tempt him to lie to the Holy Ghost. The reality is he is smarter than us.

John Calvin called him the acute theologian. And he is cunning. The second place where Satan derives his power is experience.

He's been around from the beginning. His arrows always hit their target. He has mastered the art of wickedness. He has mastered how to shoot.

He knows the best times to shoot. He knows the best bait to use to get us to bite. He knows how to disguise sin.

[33 : 19] And in fact, there is not a defense that he has not seen. He attacks swiftly. And he just in seconds.

And always has an argument to use for every one of our arguments. Satan's experience helps him to confidently assault the holiest of believers.

The reality is he cannot keep believers out of heaven. But he will do what he can to rob them of their joy of salvation. So one author says he cannot shipwreck our faith.

But he can keep us in the storm for a long, long time. That's one place where he has powers in his experience. Number three, because he's not physical, he does not tire.

He does not tire. He attacks relentlessly, endlessly, tempts man to keep him from God. He has one purpose.

[34 : 20] It is a single-minded purpose. And this makes him a formidable foe. So Satan may tempt us to be idle, but he is never idle.

The fourth area where he derives power from is he has a kingdom of demons at his disposal. We learned last week that a third of the angels followed Satan's lies.

They were cast out of heaven. Some were locked up in hell, but there are many who serve him. And those that serve him watch us. And what makes them particularly strong is they are united in purpose.

They all hate God. They all hate God's glory. They are united in this opposition of God and God's purposes.

As one pastor simply states, every demon opposes God's position, his precepts, purity, and his people. Like Satan, they do not tire.

[35 : 28] They do not take breaks. They do not fight for better pay. Right? As God's angels rejoice over a sinner's repentance, evil angels rejoice over the destruction of a sinner.

One Puritan pastor simply said, ruined sinners are the only trophies and spoils of hell. The fifth place of his power is the world system.

The world system is on his side. This is a world that is influenced by him. They accept his ideology. Back in September, I preached a sermon on the world as Paul describes it in Ephesians 4. He says its thinking is futile, meaning it can't think in a way that glorifies God.

It has willfully ignorant thoughts of God's truth. It says the world is callous to the sins that surround them.

[36 : 42] There is no shame in their understanding. And is depraved in their thinking. Their minds don't work anymore.

It's like they can't tell what's right or what's wrong anymore. Just an example, just this week. Crazy article. A woman in the United Kingdom.

She's a head of the doula midwife association or whatever you want to call it. And she was fired, let go, because she made a statement.

She said that only women can have children. Boom, gone. Thrown out of her position. All testimony to the fact that she was very effective, very honorable.

Did her job well. But because she made a statement that every person in the deepest part of their souls knows is true. She's thrown out.

[37 : 46] And number six. Our flesh works for Satan. That's the other place where he gets his power.

Our flesh is the landing spot. It's where the amphibious vehicles, when they're mounting their attack, is our flesh.

It is the perfect landing spot for sin and temptation. It is the rebel in the camp. Because of this, we often cannot distinguish Satan's suggestions for our own corrupt desires.

We like to think that our heart is good and knows all things. And only does pure and wonderful things. In 1 Chronicles 21.1, the Bible records that Satan was tempting King David to count his army against the explicit words of God.

When David was doing that, do we really believe he knew Satan's telling him to do that? And he does it? No. I'm sure David would have stopped right away.

[38 : 58] But that's sometimes our flesh. Next week, we're going to talk specifically about the specific means Satan uses against us and how he sows seeds against God.

How he gets us to believe the lie rather than the truth. How he makes bad appear good, sinful behavior look righteous. Makes lies seem more attractive than truth.

Makes sin so appealing that we willingly do it. Like I said earlier, it's temptation that has to look good.

Has to sound good. It has to meet our deepest needs. Temptation has to get us to believe it's good. Otherwise, we wouldn't be tempted.

Question gets asked is, who does Satan attack? I want to do this, just give you four things that he attacks really quickly. First person is Jesus Christ, right? Remember, the wise men come to Herod. [40 : 03] And Herod goes and tries to wipe out all the young men. That's how violently Satan opposes God. Then in Matthew 4, in the wilderness, He attempts to tempt Satan, Jesus to sin.

Think about that for a second. He is so bold, so cunning, so good at what he does, he believes he can get the Son of God to go with him, right?

He pitched it. That's boldness. Right? The reality is, why is he so bold?

He attacked our first parents, who had no sin in them. They bought it, right? He attacked and defeated the greatest saints that we know in Scripture.

Moses fell for it. He attacked the patriarchs. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, they all bought the lies. We just got to look at the kings.

[41 : 14] David. Solomon. The wisest man who ever lived could not outwit Satan.

So he thinks he's something special. And he comes against Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us that Satan actually wars against holy angels.

In Daniel, it's recorded that Michael, the archangel, was trying to get down to Daniel to let him know that God has heard his prayers.

And it talks about the demons held him back for 21 days. He had to fight his way to Daniel. It's believed, and it's mentioned there, that Satan had possession over the kings of Persia and Greece, that they were under demonic influence.

The third area that Satan attacks is Israel. Revelation talks about the woman about to give birth. That is Israel. And the dragon would try to devour it.

[42 : 27] Jesus. The fourth focus of his attack is believers. The church. Revelation 12.10 says, And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ has come.

Check this out. For the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before God. Before God, Satan is accusing us.

Do you know that? He's telling them about all our dirty deeds, all our garbage. This is why you should not have them. They're horrible people. Quit loving them. Pull back your blessing.

What chance do we have against such a foe? It's interesting that when the Puritans, who've probably written more on this subject than any other part of church history, don't write that much about Satan, but they write a lot about his power.

And they tell us why. They want to present to us that Satan is a daunting enemy. But they say this not to intimidate us, but they tell us to motivate us.

[44 : 05] To motivate us. It's easy. My mom was just listening to this last sermon. She says, Man, that first part, I'm depressed. How could I ever win against such a foe? But I think it's important for us to see and understand this.

When we understand that he is a daunting enemy, it motivates us to be watchful. Motivates us to be watchful. Two, it motivates us to rely on God.

Amen? Motivates us to rely on God. That we would be a complete and utter fool to go into battle on our own. That's why it tells us, You will fail.

The man with the purest heart failed. The wisest man failed. And Moses, who he said, The most humble man, failed. There is no character aspect of yourselves that can bring you victory against Satan.

So what do we do? It motivates us to cling to God. To cling to God. Understanding Satan's power is to stir us up, to put on the whole armor of God.

[45 : 18] It's never meant to paralyze us with a false fear of him. But it causes us never to be dismissive of him. And it's why we need to highlight the danger of his assaults.

It's why generals study war history. Right? You need to know what's been tried. The reason they know when you make an amphibious attack, you need three times his men or six times his men, is because history's told them.

Every time they do that, they fail. Right? So you need to understand and learn from our past. Well, I'm here to tell you that there are some limitations to Satan.

All right? Some limitations to Satan. So before we go in next week, we're going to go into the types of historical attacks that Satan has used on us, the strategy he has used since the dawn of man. And then we will study the armor of God, how it defends us against those attacks. We need to understand Satan's limitations. One, God is sovereign. God is sovereign.

[46 : 31] Job clearly teaches us that Satan is under the supreme authority of God. Supreme authority of God. Does this make sense to me?

No. It doesn't. I can't explain the ins and outs of it. We cannot even pretend to understand this. But it's what the Bible teaches. And Satan, believe it or not, is part of God's great purpose. God could have destroyed him at the very beginning.

Right? As soon as he knew that pride was welling up on him, boom, gone. But he did not. Not only that, he allowed Satan to bring evil into our world.

And he even allows Satan to exercise certain amount of power. But sometimes it makes sense, right?

[47 : 34] Sometimes God uses Satan to punish our foolishness. To punish our foolishness. Sometimes God abandons us and sets us free to Satan to bring us to our senses.

1 Corinthians 5. A man was in a relationship with his stepmother. Which the whole church knew was evil, was open. News.

And he says he's handing him over to Satan so his body could be destroyed, but his spirit saved. And he uses Satan to bring about God's purposes.

Remember Daniel? Thrown into a den, a pit, hoping he would die, sell him off to slavery. Who knew that God would use that to bring freedom and protection to his people?

By him Daniel, I'm like, hey man, that's not my plan. But God used it. Here's a couple things that we need to understand under the part of God's sovereignty.

[48 : 43] One, there's no evidence anywhere that Satan can read our thoughts. They believe he can insert images, see our imagination, but I think because Satan has been around so long, has so much experience, he can kind of read what's going on.

There was this time, when I was living with Cesus, I was downtown Toronto, and I had about a two-block walk to get to the subway station. Um, yeah, about 200, 300 yards.

And it's kind of a upper middle class wealthy. There's some pretty big people living in the condos. And there was this woman walking probably about 50 to 75 meters.

And I knew she was very tall. But every person who she walked by were all going like this. They were like, like guys were stopping in their tracks or, you know, I don't think she was a circus clown. So when I finally make it to the end, there's this guy there. And like, some guys were like this. It turned out to be a world famous supermodel. Okay. I didn't know, I didn't get to see her really, except I saw this tall person.

[49 : 57] And I saw this whole row of people on the sidewalk reacting to that. But my instance experience told me there's probably a super model type woman up there.

So when I got there, it wasn't a big surprise. Because I saw every guy just stop in their tracks, right? Satan's a lot like that. He knew, he knows how we respond to things. And it's almost as if he is reading our minds.

He can see the effects of certain passions and actions. The second aspect, kind of going along with that, is that although Satan can't read our future, he does have experience how we will sometimes act about certain things, right?

Hey, you know, sometimes our mom just simply said, hey, I knew you were going to do that, right? You can give them all the free options you want, but you know your kids so well, they're going to act in a certain way.

And if they said, hey, you're a lot like Satan, they're probably pretty close to being right on that, right? They observe, they know you. Satan can sometimes fool us to get us to think that he is reading our mind and that he is reading the future, but scripture does not, tells us quite clearly that there is some things of the future that are clearly hidden from him.

[51 : 22] I said this last week, he cannot perform miracles. He cannot perform miracles. Some people get upset about that. The reality is he can do incredible and amazing things. You remember the storms of Job that caused the death of his family, he had control over certain things, but a miracle is what I describe as a real act done visibly and above the power of nature, right?

He can't create life. Ex nilo, we were created out of nothing. He uses deceptions of the senses, manipulations of our imagination.

But as some theologians write, he does know some of the secrets, ways of nature's working, but he cannot perform miracles. And Satan has one other major limitation.

Major limitation. It's called the will of God. It is the will of God. If God tells him to keep his hands off us, he cannot touch us.

He actually needed God's permission to come after Job. God had to allow that to happen. He can only harass us as God allows.

[52 : 34] The biggest question is, why would God ever allow such a thing? The Puritans provide two reasons.

The first is to actually encourage the faint-hearted. That sometimes life can be so horrible and so pounding that God protects them.

Doesn't allow more assaults to come on because he's going to hold them to the day of redemption. Then the others, and if you are like me, you've fallen for the trick and you've come to realize how depraved of heart you really are.

Sometimes God allows Satan to take us down a hole that it reveals to us who we are without God. That's why Paul had a thorn in his side.

A constant reminder to keep him humble. But the reality is God rules. Period.

[53 : 45] End of story. God wins. Period. End of story. This is not a spiritual battle between two angry brothers.

And it seems that this is what Paul wants us to understand when we look at verse 13 when he repeats the command to put on your armor and stand firm.

Right? He tells us before, it's like, hey man, put on this armor. Then he tells us who we're fighting. You're going to be scared. But it's like he repeats this for a very specific reason.

Yes, where the battle's not flesh and blood. Yes, there's cosmic powers. Yes, there's present darkness. Guess what? Stand firm. Rely on me. Now historically, and I'm just going to let you in where next sermon's going, is we're going to look at some of the strategies and means that God, Satan, sorry, uses to attack us.

The first historical attack that we see is persecution. Persecution. God allows the church to be persecuted by Satan. But what we're going to find out, we're not going to spend a lot of time on this, is you know what persecution of the church has always led to?

[55 : 04] Growth of the church. It's always, it's caused the church to scatter. In Jerusalem, that's how we kind of got the comfortable saints out of Jerusalem, right? Brought persecution, pushed them out.

Gospel went everywhere. So if Satan is kind of thinking, is this my best means of attacking the faith? Probably not my number one thing to use.

Number two, demonic affliction, which an example would be Job, right? In there, demonic affliction, where he's needing again God's permission.

It's a very rare attack. It seems to be a very specific attack. But it entirely needs God's permission in there.

The third one is I call demonic influence, or what we commonly called demon-possessed. The questions that I always come out with is, can Christians be possessed?

[56 : 03] The answer is not, it's not, it's no, but that doesn't mean Christians can't be influenced demonically. Scripture actually talks about sins that lead to demonic influence in our life, and we're going to look at them next week briefly.

Fourth attack is witchcraft, the occult, false religions, which are overtly, false, they just cause confusion.

They're all the same. They're all untruth. But the number one most effective attack that Satan has on us is temptation.

That is, by and far, the number one most effective attack that Satan has on us is temptation. Next week, we're going to talk about the four targets of temptation.

Check out number one. It is to draw souls to sin. Draw souls to sin. If we sin, we're not glorifying God. We're not honoring Him. Number two, to divert us from spiritual duties.

[57 : 13] That is, ministering, serving, devotional time. Any time that we can do with God, spend time with God, he wants to divert that attention elsewhere. Number three, and most effective, sadly,

is dilute pure doctrine.

Satan wants to insert error into truth. And the fourth avenue is he wants to disguise the soul's true state. He wants believers thinking they're unbelievers and unbelievers thinking they're believers.

So I'm kind of excited about the next sermon, but I had to give you this background as we go into this next section because some of the, I'm going to be relying on a lot of what the Puritans wrote.

The Puritans wrote thousands and thousands of pages on tactics, techniques that Satan uses.

Then they also provide us the devices. How do we fight?

How do we recognize? So we're going to then go into the armor of God and we're going to look at each piece of armor and how this, when used properly, protects us from the works of Satan.

[58 : 21] Let me pray. We're a little bit late here. Dear Lord, Heavenly Father, we just, we just, we just, we just, we just,