

A Believer's Authority

What's the Deal with the Devil?

We live in a world where moral decay is rampant. Confusion and every evil thing are splattered across our media screens in graphic detail. People are offended at everything. There are wars and rumors of wars. Disease and pestilence are on the rise, as are famine, drought, and death. Artificial Intelligence will soon be running the majority of the world in various ways, demonstrating an exponential increase in knowledge, and it is not necessarily helpful or good. Christian martyrdom and antisemitism are at all-time highs. These things I just mentioned are signs the Bible said would occur right before Christ returns (Matthew 24, Luke 21). Notice that all the things I just mentioned are evil or are being used in nefarious ways. There is a powerful *being* at work in these last days who is intent on causing as much destruction, death, and despair as he can before Jesus comes back. When Christ returns, this being will be bound for a thousand years, and then eventually thrown into a lake of fire where he will remain forever. Yet, sadly today, he roams free.

The *being* I'm talking about is Satan: The enemy of God and all humankind. He knows his time is short, so the uptick in chaos, confusion, and death is but another clear indicator that Christ is returning soon. Until then, Satan will attempt to cause as much pain as he can. Most of his activities take place unrestrained. His authority, albeit limited, for the most part, goes unchallenged. People, even a majority of church people, are afraid of him or are ignorant of the fact that he is the one causing so much pain and turmoil in their lives.

The Devil has done a great job concealing his existence and influence. When things go wrong, he gets us to blame God--- or everyone else except him. We need to put a stop to this. Maybe we cannot deter his impact in this country or even this state from our little spot in Illinois. But we can certainly stand up to him and challenge his authority in our personal lives, our families, and our locale.

Today I want to give you some knowledge —biblical knowledge —about who **Satan is, what authority and power he has, his tactics in warfare, and how we**

can resist him. The Bible in Hosea 4:6, says ***My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.***

- I. **Who is satan**, a.k.a the Devil, also known as Lucifer. Lucifer comes from the name meaning light bringer.

He was, once upon a time, an officer in heaven —possibly even the worship leader of heaven —because the Bible describes him as made of timbrels. When he moved, melody rang out like a wind chime moves in the wind.

(pic) Hollywood depicts him as fierce, menacing, and all-powerful. He is also shown to be intelligent and, in most cases, formidable. Because of such characterizations, many people fear him. Others, on the other hand, go about their life completely ignorant of his existence. Both instances are tragic. So, what is true about him? If he is as fearsome as he is depicted in Hollywood, what chance do we have against such a being when he comes prowling?

Addressing those two issues just mentioned, we can be certain he exists because the Bible tells us he does. However, thankfully, for those who are in Christ, we do not need to fear him. But we should know who he is and what he is because we are in a battle with him, and one of the first laws of warfare is to know your enemy.

He is a fallen angel.

Ezekiel 28:12–17

12 Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: (First half of this passage (1-10) is referring to a literal king (Phoenicia). But he is symbolic of satan, who is revealed in the second half of the passage, beginning in verse 12.

*“You were the seal of perfection,
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.
¹³ You were in Eden, the Garden of God;
Every precious stone was your covering:
The sardius, topaz, and diamond,
Beryl, onyx, and jasper,*

*Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold.
The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes
Was prepared for you on the day you were created.*

¹⁴ *"You were the anointed cherub who covers;
I established you;
You were on the holy mountain of God;
You walked back and forth in the midst of fiery stones.
¹⁵ You were perfect in your ways from the day you were created,
Till iniquity was found in you.*

¹⁶ *"By the abundance of your trading
You became filled with violence within,
And you sinned;
Therefore I cast you as a profane thing
Out of the mountain of God;
And I destroyed you, O covering cherub,
From the midst of the fiery stones.*

¹⁷ *"Your heart was ^[a]lifted up because of your beauty;
You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor;
I cast you to the ground,
I laid you before kings,
That they might gaze at you.*

Isaiah 14:12-15

¹² *"How you are fallen from heaven,
O ^[a]Lucifer, son of the morning!
How you are cut down to the ground,
You who weakened the nations!
¹³ For you have said in your heart:
'I will ascend into heaven,
I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;
I will also sit on the mount of the congregation
On the farthest sides of the north;
¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,
I will be like the Most High.'*

¹⁵ *Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol,
To the ^[b]lowest depths of the Pit.*

So, as we can see, Satan is, in origin, an angelic being. However, he was thrown out of heaven for trying to usurp God's authority. Pride rose up in his heart in defiance against God's authority.

(pic satanic church) Did you know the slogan for the satanic church is "do what thou wilt?" It's a phrase that strikes at the heart of authority, elevating man to the place of God, and submitting to no one. Of course, satanists are blinded to the part of their rites where Satan demands absolute allegiance and submission to *his* authority--- if you become one of his followers.

So, back to his identity and power.

When he was cast out of heaven, he lost his physical powers and strength, which God's holy angels possess. But he still has his intellect. So, the primary way that he inflicts pain and suffering is through the minds of people by deceiving them, getting them to believe lies, and subsequently getting people to do his work of stealing, killing, and destroying.

In our world, He has limited authority. Yet, He is still called the god of this world (**2 Cor. 4:4**) and also the prince of the power of the air (**Eph. 2:2**). He is alive and well on planet Earth, as evidenced by his handiwork. But again, his authority is limited. However, in some instances, He appears to have **some power to inflict** diseases according to **Luke 13:16**.

Nevertheless, he, generally speaking, is still powerful and should not be underestimated in his ability to inflict suffering, turmoil, torment, disease, death, and pain or chaos at a moment's notice. **He is a master deceiver** and the ultimate **evil puppet master** (pic). There is no good in him whatsoever. In fact, Jesus called him the ***father of lies and a murderer from the beginning*** (**John 8:44**). He is those things and does have power, but he is not undefeatable, and he is not stronger than God or we who have the living God residing in us (**1 John 4:4**).

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

a. How did he get authority on earth if his office was originally in heaven?

As mentioned in this series, when Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden, they were given dominion over all created things. However, Satan deceived them into giving him the authority God gave them. When they did, Satan became the ruler of this world.

Nevertheless, when Jesus went to the cross, died, and rose again, he disarmed Satan and retrieved the original authority God had given us. Now, Jesus has all authority and shares it with those who are his own.

For those who are not Christ's, the unsaved people of the world, they are not necessarily under the authority of the Devil **unless** they listen to his lies, make agreements with him, and continue to be dominated by sin. Which they do, and thus places him under his authority and influence. They become his slaves.

Romans 6:16

Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?

Even Christians, though we have Christ's authority to rule over satan and any demon, when we yield ourselves to Satan's deception and obey him instead of Christ, we open ourselves to the Devil's meddling in our lives, not to mention his slaves---if even for a moment. This process is often called in Christian circles, **opening a door to the enemy**. It is very real and can have very severe consequences.

Note that satan *does not have authority* over our lives unless we yield to him.
How do we yield to him?

II. The battle for authority often happens in the mind.

Satan doesn't come in and take our authority away from us by force. Like with Adam and Eve, he does it through **deception and lies**. The struggle for authority and our allegiance happens in the mind.

As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he (Prov.23:7a)

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." – Proverbs 4:23

"Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires." – Romans 8:5

If satan can get our minds filled with the world and get us into fellowship with darkness, he's got us. When we listen to his lies and make agreements with him, we will begin to do his will. When we do, we open up doors to the enemy. The devil wants us to open doors for him into our lives.

This is why the Bible says, Think on those things above and not below:

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." – Philippians 4:8)

Have nothing to do with evil **Ephesians 5:11** (*And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.*). Yet, we watch programming and listen to things that fill our minds with worldliness. **What we think on, will be what we do.** Just a side note: We need to be careful with Halloween. We think it to be harmless. However, satanists consider it to be their high holy day. When we participate with it, we invite darkness into our lives.

Satan knows how are mind works. As mentioned, He is the master deceiver. When our mind is **filled with trash, our life will be a dumpster**. When we compromise with the world, we compromise with the ruler of the world, and his ways will manifest in our lives for the worst--- **not the best**. Fyi, He will not leave us alone if we think giving in to him will get him off our back. It will not. He wants us dead and miserable.

Our path to purity and to seeing our authority dominate the powers of darkness lies in our ability to **keep our minds pure**, walk in belief and faith, remain under the blood of Jesus, stay in relationship with Christ and His word, and allow less of the world to find a place in our souls (verse: **Eph. 4:27** *do not give place to the Devil*) i.e. real estate in our souls.

The Devil, if given the opportunity, will take up residence (a place) in our minds and soul. Ephesians was written to Christians. He is more than happy to live rent free even in the souls or bodies of Christians. While Christians can't be possessed (in fact, possession is very rare even with unbelievers), we can allow unholy spirits to have a place in us, which is why we are warned about it in Ephesians.

Demons are like a squatter entering our home through an unlocked window or open back door. They have no rights to ownership initially, but if left unchallenged they can act as if it is theirs because they were allowed to stay. So, imagine a squatter coming into your home, sitting on your couch, and watching tv with your remote. Until we kick them out, they'll stay and act as if they have every right to be there: eating our food, using our water and electricity. The longer they stay, the more they feel they have rights to the house. But in such an instance, if we stand on our authority, use the law and kick them out, they have to leave (at least that how it works in other states).

That is how it works in our temple as well. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Christ purchased us with his blood, but we can leave the door open to evil squatters due to what we have allowed in our minds; and they will stay there, making themselves at home, until we evict them using the laws of God. When they are really stubborn, this is where deliverance ministries become helpful. In such ministry, we tear down strongholds the enemy has set up in our souls and physically evict evil squatters through truth encounters consisting of God's Word, the blood of Jesus, and God-given authority and power.

This another reason the Bible warns us against allowing strongholds to take root in our lives. The longer a stronghold remains, the harder it is to tear down and get out. But really the best prevention is to keep a clean, well-guarded house before an intruder can enter. This idea takes us to point four.

III. How to live in victory and keep a clean house

We live in victory and keep a clean house when we stay in the Word of God, pray without ceasing, obey Christ, keep our minds and hearts unpolluted, and stop lies with truth when we find ourselves hearing them.

We can do all of this in the following six ways:

1. **Know your position (belief)** — You are seated with Christ in heavenly places (Ephesians 2:6). His power is our power.
2. **Know and memorize the Word and the promises that are ours**
3. **Submit to God** — Authority flows from submission (James 4:7).
4. **Resist the Devil** — Don't negotiate; resist him with truth.
5. **Walk in the light (confession)** — Darkness loses power where light shines.
6. **Stay armored — Ephesians 6:10–18** — the armor of God is spiritual protection against Satan's schemes.

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the ^[a]wiles of the Devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of ^[b]the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

Conclusion

Satan's authority is given to him, not by God, but by us. Nevertheless, our authority in Christ **is greater than any authority he has**. Yet, do not underestimate him. He does still have power. He is a fallen angel. However, his primary power is not physical strength, but in his craftiness to **deceive, accuse, and lie**. He is good at it. The best. He can use anybody who is willing to be used, even for a brief moment, to be his tool of destruction.

When we know who we are in Christ, we no longer need to fear Satan — we are to overcome him. When we stand in truth and our authority, we strip him of power.

Next week, we will look at our authority scriptures and the ways we are to exercise our Christ-given power.
