



Old Testament Reading: Psalm 1:1-16  
New Testament Reading: James 1:12-15, 22-27

**Spiritual Warfare**  
**“The god of this world”**

**Ephesians 2:1-7**

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In Ephesians 2:1-7, Paul said:

- Every born-again Christian was, at one time, dead in their trespasses and sins, children of wrath just like the unbelievers today, walking according to the course of this world, which Satan controls, and making their life choices according to the lust of their flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,
- But by God’s grace alone, through our faith alone, in Christ alone, God made us alive together with Christ. He raised us up to sit with Christ in the heavenly places, and that He did all of this so that in the ages to come, He might display the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- **“God delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of His dear Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin.”** (Colossians 1:13-14)

- ***“You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special people, that we may proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.”*** (1 Peter 2:9)

By His death on the cross:

- Jesus delivered us from the **penalty of sin** – 2 Corinthians 5:21.
- Jesus delivered us from the **power of sin** – Romans 6:14.
- Soon, Jesus will remove us from the very **presence of sin**, for He will take us out of this sinful world and into the eternal joys of heaven – Philippians 3:20-21

So, while we are not free **OF** sin’s appeal, for as long as we live in this sinful world and in these sinful bodies, we will be tempted to sin, we can still be free **FROM** sin’s power if we yield to the Holy Spirit when we are tempted.

- However, the day we were born again, we entered that spiritual battle between God and Satan that began 6000 years ago in the Garden of Eden and will not end until the end of the Millennium, when Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit.
  - 1 Peter 5:8 – ***“Our adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”***
  - Ephesians 6:10-12 – ***“Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, for we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”***
  - Ephesians 6:14-18 – ***“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which, you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.”***

According to 2 Corinthians 4:4, Satan is the god of this world and the one with whom we are engaged in spiritual warfare.

- While God the Father is still sovereign over all, in all, and through all, and Jesus still has “all authority in heaven and earth,” God is allowing Satan to operate within the boundaries allotted to him.
- The Greek word for “world” is not “kosmos,” which means universe, but rather “aionos,” which means age.
- As the god of this age, Satan has the major influence on the moral values and operational systems of the world, which he has designed to achieve his evil agenda.

Over the last 6,000 years, Satan has integrated his evil agenda into the 12 major operational systems of the world, so much so he now controls the political, educational,

religious, and entertainment venues of the world.

1. **Satan imitates God through false teachers, prophets, and apostles – 2 Corinthians 11:13-14, “*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.*”**
  - There are three kinds of false prophets.
    - **Heretics** – those who deny the truth of God’s Word but use it to accomplish their selfish ambitions.
    - **Apostates** – those who know the truth of God’s Word but have turned away from it and embraced Satan’s lies.
    - **Deceivers** – those who have a form of godliness but deny the deity of Jesus Christ and offer a gospel of easy believism.
  
2. **Satan imitates God by promoting false doctrines and false gospels – 1 Timothy 4:1 – “*Now the Spirit explicitly says that in the later times, some will desert the faith and occupy themselves with deceiving spirits and demonic teachings.*”**
  - Satan always begins by denying the inerrancy and sufficiency of the Scriptures.
    - Satan adds to the Scriptures to nullify the power of God’s grace.
    - Satan subtracts from the Scriptures to cheapen the power of God’s grace.
  
3. **Satan imitates God by placing false believers within the true Church – Matthew 13:24-26 – “*The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, the tares also appeared.*”**
  - God planting wheat seeds in the field illustrates the proclamation of the true gospel in the kingdom of God.
  - Satan planting weed seeds in the field illustrates the proclamation of the false gospel in the kingdom of God.
  - The wheat and the weeds (tares) grow up together, and at first the two are indistinguishable.
  - However, as they grow, their differences will become clear, and at the end of the age, the wheat (true believers) will be gathered into the barn (heaven), and the weeds (false believers) will be burned in hell.

- A tare is a religious person with the outward characteristics of a true believer who strives to live the Christian life through self-discipline, but they have never been born again.
- While Christians are not to examine others to see if they are in the faith, the Apostle Paul said, we are to examine ourselves to see if Christ truly lives in us.
- Right believing leads to right living, and 2 Peter 1:5-9 is a good standard by which we can measure our spiritual growth.

4. **Satan imitates God through false worship – Matthew 15:7-9 –**  
***“Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.”***

- Just as individual Christians are the salt of the earth and the lights of the world, preserving society from sinful decay and showing sinners the pathway to eternal life, collectively, the Church serves as the pillar and ground of truth and as the Lord’s Standard Bearer as it assembles for worship on the Lord’s Day.
- However, in these last days of the church age, the lights of the Church have grown dim, and the Lord’s Royal Banner has been allowed to fall in disgrace and dishonor.
- Rather than holding fast to the truth of the Word of God and lifting high His royal banner through genuine worship, the Church has adapted its message and ministries to attract the world to itself.
- By trivializing the elements of worship to make it attractive to the world, the Church, in effect, trivializes a Holy God and minimizes His desire and power to seek and save those who are lost.

5. **Satan imitates God through false churches – Revelation 3:16-17 –**  
***“So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.”***

- The church at Laodicea began around 1900AD and will continue into the Tribulation.
- The word “Laos” means “people,” and the word “dikazo” means “opinion!” The Laodicean church has abandoned the word of God and operates by the opinions and desires of its members. They are apostates in that they have turned away from the Word of God to be politically correct on the moral issues and, therefore, acceptable unto society.