

RESISTING SATAN

“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 6:12)

*“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you”
(James 4:7)*

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The Spiritual Battle

“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 6:12)

A REAL BATTLE WITH A REAL ENEMY

- 1) Describe the picture that comes into your mind when you think of Satan.
 - Does that picture help or hinder our understanding of his nature? How?
- 2) Does the devil want us to fear him or embrace him?

THE REALITY OF THE SPIRITUAL CONFLICT

- 3) We struggle to believe in the spiritual world, but which existed first, the physical or spiritual world (Job 38:4-7)?
 - Which world will outlast the other (Luke 20:34-36)?
- 4) Describe the nature of the battleground for our souls—the “*heavenly places*” (Ephesians 1:3,20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12; cf. Hebrews 12:22-24).
 - Is this talking about something in the present or future (1:3,20)?
 - Is this a realm where we actively participate, while still in this world (2:6)?
 - Who else operates in this spiritual realm or domain (2:6; 3:10; 6:12)?
 - Does all of this sound a little weird?
- 5) What is Satan fighting for (John 12:31; 1 John 5:19)?
- 6) What does he do to draw men away from God (Ephesians 2:2-3; Colossians 1:13)?
- 7) What does he use to exert his power and influence over us (Luke 22:31; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 3:5)?
- 8) What does he like to use to deceive us (John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; cf. 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 John 4:1-3)?

FIGHTING THE BATTLE ON TWO FRONTS—The Battle Within And The Battle Without

9) Describe the battle (the ‘civil war’) that wages within each of us (Galatians 5:16-18; Romans 8:5-9)?

- What kinds of fruit does it bear when we give in to the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21)?
- What kinds of fruit does it bear when we give in to the spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)?

10) Describe the battle that we wage against the world (2 Corinthians 10:3-6).

- Why does the nature of the world stand opposed to God (1 John 2:15-17; James 4:2-4)?
- Why is Satan able to use it so effectively against us (1 John 5:19; Luke 4:6; Ephesians 2:1-2)?

CONCLUSION—“*The Devil’s cleverest ruse is to make believe that he does not exist*” (Donald Barnhouse, *The Invisible War*). Satan is a terrible adversary, but the one who is in us “*is greater than he who is in the world*” (1 John 4:4; Romans 8:35-39).

The Struggle Within

“For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish” (Galatians 5:17)

THE DUAL NATURE OF MAN

- 1) Explain how man is a composite being—what are the two aspects of his nature (2 Corinthians 4:16; cf. Ecclesiastes 12:7)?
- 2) What distinctions does the Bible make between the flesh and spirit (Matthew 10:28; 26:41; 1 Corinthians 5:5)?
- 3) What is man’s relationship to both the physical and spiritual realms (Romans 8:5-9; Colossians 3:1-2)?

MAN WAS CREATED AS A FREE MORAL BEING

- 4) How is man a rational being—what does he have the ability to do?
 - Proverbs 23:7—
 - Isaiah 1:18—
 - Mark 4:12—
 - 2 Corinthians 13:5—
- 5) What does that rational capability make him competent to do (Joshua 24:15; Deuteronomy 30:19)?
- 6) What mechanism has God given us to help us make the right choices (Romans 2:14-15; 1 Peter 3:16)?
 - How does it accomplish that purpose (cf. John 8:9)?
 - How do some people override that device?
 - 1 Timothy 4:2—
 - Acts 24:25—
- 7) What do all these rational capabilities require of man (Matthew 12:36; Romans 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:10)?

THE BATTLE RAGING WITHIN

- 8) What is the battle raging within each of us like (Galatians 5:16-17; Romans 7:14-25; 8:5-9)?
- 9) How does one side or the other win (Romans 8:6; Galatians 5:24)?
- 10) What do we need to do with our mind to overcome (Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 10:5)?
- How can we obtain such a mind-set (1 Corinthians 2:14-16)?
 - How important is it to obtain that mind (Romans 8:9)?

CONCLUSION--Both God and Satan struggle for control of our minds and lives. The battle lingers until we yield to one or the other. Trying to operate by both minds is self-destructive (James 1:7-8). Liberation can only come when we give in to God (Ephesians 4:17-24).

Our Adversary

“Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8)

WHO IS SATAN?

1) Is the Bible concept of “Satan” simply the personification of evil, or is he a real spirit being? How is he described in the following passages?

- Matthew 4:1—
- Matthew 12:24—
- Matthew 12:26—
- Matthew 13:28,39—
- John 12:31—
- 2 Corinthians 4:4—
- Ephesians 2:2—
- 1 Peter 5:8—
- Revelation 12:9—

2) How is Satan the enemy of God? How are the ways of Satan opposite from the ways of God—what kind of things has he introduced to the world?

- John 8:44—
- 1 John 3:10—
- Romans 6:16—
- Acts 13:10—

ORIGIN OF SATAN (The Bible does not give us a detailed account of Satan’s origin, but certain reasonable conclusions may be drawn from some Bible statements)

3) Is Satan a Divine Being—something like the “dark side” of God? What is true about the power of God (Matthew 19:26; Nahum 1:2-8)? From the following passages, what is true about the power of Satan?

- Job 1:12; 2:6—
- Luke 4:6—
- Luke 22:31—
- John 10:28—
- James 4:7—

4) Is Satan an eternal or a created being (Colossians 1:16)?

5) Is his power resident within and drawn from himself, or has it been given to him (Luke 4:6; John 12:31; cf. John 19:11)?

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- 6) What did Satan choose to do with the authority given to him (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4,9)?
- What was his possible motivation (1 John 3:8; 1 Timothy 3:6)?
 - How has he tried to thwart God’s plans in the past (Genesis 3:15; John 13:1-2,27; 14:30)?
 - What was Jesus able to do to him though (Luke 10:17-20; John 16:11; Hebrews 2:14-15)?
 - What does Satan try to wrest away from God now (1 John 3:8-12; 5:19)?
- 7) What awaits this rebellious being (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:10)?
- 8) Some passages are often misapplied when considering the origin of Satan. From the context of the text, what do the following passages have reference to?
- Isaiah 14:12 (cf. 14:1-17)—
 - Ezekiel 28:13-14 (cf. 28:11-19)—
 - Revelation 12:7-9 (cf. 12:1-17)—

CONCLUSION-- *“The commonest question is whether I really ‘believe in the Devil’. Now, if by ‘the Devil’ you mean a power opposite to God and, like God, self-existent from all eternity, the answer is certain No. There is no uncreated being except God. God has no opposite. No being could attain a ‘perfect badness’ opposite to the perfect goodness of God...*

*“The proper question is whether I believe in devils. I do. That is to say, I believe in angels, and I believe that some of these, by the abuse of their free will, have become enemies to God and, as a corollary, to us... They do not differ in nature from good angels, but their nature is depraved... Satan, the leader or dictator of devils, is the opposite, not of God, but of Michael.” (C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*)*

The Devices Of Satan

“Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices” (2 Corinthians 2:11)

THE POWER OF SATAN

- 1) Is his power boundless or does it have limitations (Job 1:12; 2:6; Luke 22:31)?
- 2) Whose power is greater than his (John 10:28; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Colossians 2:15)?
- 3) Can we defeat him by our own power, or do we need help (Ephesians 6:10-18)? Why?
- 4) How does the Bible describe his power and his character in the following verses? What does each of these symbols represent?
 - 1 Peter 5:8—
 - Revelation 12:9a—
 - Revelation 12:9b—
 - Revelation 12:10—

SATAN’S DOMAIN AND KINGDOM

- 5) In what sphere is his power the greatest (1 John 5:19; Ephesians 2:2-3; 2 Corinthians 4:4)?
- 6) How is Satan the “*ruler of this world*” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)?
- 7) Where does the source of Satan’s power and influence lie?
 - Genesis 3:1-5—
 - John 8:44—
 - Revelation 12:9—
 - Ephesians 6:11—
 - 1 Timothy 3:7—

THE DEVICES OF SATAN

8) What is Satan's "trump card" for deceiving the world (2 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 2:9; 3:9)?

9) Identify some of Satan's deadliest devices from the passages below (2 Corinthians 2:11).

- Luke 8:12—
- 1 Timothy 4:1—
- 2 Corinthians 4:3-4—
- 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12—

10) Where do Satan's deadliest attacks come from?

- Matthew 7:15—
- Acts 20:29-30—
- 2 Corinthians 11:13-15—
- 2 Peter 2:1-3—
- Jude 4—

CONCLUSION-- The battle is being waged between God and Satan, between man and Satan (Ephesians 6:12), and the trophy is the soul of man. Do we want to serve the one who died for us, or the one who wants to kill us (Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13)?

The God Of This Age

“But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe...” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)

THE GOD OF THIS AGE

- 1) If Satan is not Divine, how can he be considered “*the god of this age*” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Galatians 1:4; cf. Romans 6:16; 1 John 5:19)?
- 2) How does he control the thinking of men to motivate and manipulate their actions (2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Ephesians 2:1-2)?
- 3) What happens when men refuse to acknowledge and honor God (Romans 1:18-25; 1 Corinthians 1:21-25)?
 - Romans 1:21b—
 - Romans 1:21c—
 - Romans 1:22—
 - Romans 1:23—
 - Romans 1:25a—
 - Romans 1:25b—
 - 1 Corinthians 1:21—
- 4) When men reject the “*deep things of God*” (1 Corinthians 2:9-14), what do they trade for them (Revelation 2:24)? How deep does the well of Satan’s wisdom run (2 Peter 2:18-19; Jude 16)?

CONFRONTING TODAY’S CULTURAL ASSUMPTIONS

- 5) Where can we find true wisdom (Colossians 2:2-3; 1 Corinthians 1:25)?
- 6) What are we warned to avoid (Colossians 2:4,8)? In what area do we confront some of the greatest threats to mankind in today’s world (2 Corinthians 10:4-5)?
- 7) The thinking of our day has been influence by many factors—both subtle and overt. What are some ways in which you have observed the impact of any (or all) of the following men of the last two centuries—Immanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, Sigmund Freud, Vladimir Lenin, John Dewey or Benjamin Spock?

8) Consider the current thinking of our culture on issues like:

- Religion—
- Homosexuality—
- Separation of church and state—
- Young people and sex—
- Moral absolutes—
- Pursuit of self—
- Lack of accountability—
- List others that you can identify—

9) List some places where these philosophies are raising their heads and affecting our views of our present-day world.

10) In all of these things, what has Satan effectively concealed from us (Colossians 2:2-3; John 8:32; Acts 4:12)?

CONCLUSION— In a society where the worst of sins is not to conform, it is not flattering to think of ourselves as mindless conformists. Especially when we deceive ourselves into thinking we are “free-thinkers.” We blindly accept contemporary assumptions—assumptions which are not true, even though we are convinced they are, because everyone else accepts them.

In other times and other places, our assumptions are dismissed as nonsense. But since they are our assumptions, in our time, they are especially dangerous to us! Don’t fall prey to them (2 Corinthians 4:3-6)!!

The Power Of Temptation

“But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death” (James 1:14-15)

SATAN DOESN'T PLAY FAIR

- 1) Who brings temptation upon us (James 1:13; 1 Corinthians 7:5)?
- 2) Where does temptation begin (James 1:14)? Why does this make our own temptations so strong?
- 3) Where does Satan consistently send his most intense efforts to tempt us?
 - How do our weaknesses of the flesh make us vulnerable to him (Matthew 26:41; cf. Luke 22:31,46,53)?
- 4) Is anyone exempt from Satan's temptations (Hebrews 4:15; Luke 22:28)?
- 5) Satan appealed to those things that Jesus desired when tempting Him. Which desire of Jesus did Satan appeal to in each of the following temptations (Matthew 4:1-11)?
 - 4:2-4—
 - 4:5-7—
 - 4:8-10—
- 6) What is the nature of some of the temptations Satan brings against us?
 - 1 John 2:15-17—
 - 1 Timothy 6:9-10—
 - Matthew 13:22—
 - Matthew 5:27-28—
 - Matthew 20:20-26—
 - 2 Timothy 2:22—
 - 2 Corinthians 12:7-10—

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION

- 7) Considering what we know about the origin of our temptations (cf. James 1:14-15), how can we begin to defeat them (Proverbs 4:23)?
- 8) What has God promised us about our temptations (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Peter 2:9)?
- 9) How is Jesus able to come to our aid with our temptations (Hebrews 2:17-18; 4:15-16)?
- 10) What benefits come to us when we overcome temptation?
 - 1 Peter 1:5-7—
 - James 1:2-4—
 - James 1:12—
 - 2 Corinthians 12:7-10—
- 11) When are sinners “*delivered unto Satan*” (1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Timothy 1:20)?

CONCLUSION--Temptation is universal, but the actual thing that tempts us is individual since it springs up from within our own desires. So the good news is that Satan is limited in how much he can tempt us—the bad news is that he knows our weaknesses and exploits them to our own destruction.

Learning To Say “No” To Ourselves

“Then He said to them all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me’” (Luke 9:23)

SELFISHNESS IS THE ROOT OF ALL SIN

- 1) How is sin actually a selfish choice (James 1:14-15)?
 - Who did the prodigal son care about (Luke 15:12-13)?
 - Who did the older brother care about (Luke 15:29-31)?

- 2) We live in a society which promotes self. The word “I” is even the most popular word used in the English language.
 - What are some of the statements we commonly make that expose our self-centeredness?
 - What are some of the popular slogans we hear that promote this self-centered thinking?

- 3) Where should “self” rank, in order of importance (Matthew 22:36-40; Philippians 2:3-4)?

- 4) How is promoting our own selfish desires a threat to that divinely established order?

- 5) How can we put “self” in its proper place?
 - Luke 9:23—
 - Luke 14:33—
 - Philippians 3:7-8—
 - Galatians 2:20—
 - 1 Corinthians 15:31—

LEARNING TO SAY “NO” TO OURSELVES

- 6) Some people today claim to have no control over themselves and their sinful actions—they claim to be “born this way” or seek some biological reason for their actions. What are some of the sins these people claim to be “out of their control”?

- 7) Why must we take accountability for our own sins (2 Samuel 12:13; Psalm 51:1-4)?

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- 8) Will God hold us accountable for those sins—excuses or not (Romans 1:18-21; 2:1-11)?
- 9) On the day of judgment, what will be the most surprising sin for which we will be judged (Matthew 25:31-46)?
- 10) How did Jesus describe to His disciples, the commitment necessary to follow Him—In what ways would they have to say “no” to themselves (Luke 9:23,57-62)?
- Luke 9:23—
 - Luke 9:57-58—
 - Luke 9:59-60—
 - Luke 9:61-62—

CONCLUSION—“*Denying oneself is not a matter of giving up something... it is a decisive saying ‘No’ to oneself, to one’s hopes and plans and ambitions, to one’s likes and dislikes, to one’s nearest and dearest, for the sake of Christ*” (F.F. Bruce, *Hard Sayings Of Jesus*, p.152).

In a generation which is enamored with self, subduing and controlling ourselves is an even greater challenge. But if we do not control “self” then we lose the battle to Satan.

Abstain From Every Form Of Evil

“Abstain from every form of evil” (1 Thessalonians 5:22)

EVIL COMES IN MANY DIFFERENT FORMS

- 1) What sinful response toward the things of this world, is identified in the following verses (1 John 2:15-17)? Then, describe what each of these things means:
 - 1 John 2:16b—
 - 1 John 2:16c—
 - 1 John 2:16d—

- 2) How does each of the “*works of the flesh*” (Galatians 5:19-21) correlate with the categories of sin identified above? Explain your conclusion about each of the sins listed.
 - Adultery—
 - Fornication—
 - Uncleaness—
 - Licentiousness—
 - Idolatry—
 - Sorcery—
 - Hatred—
 - Contentions—
 - Jealousies—
 - Outbursts Of Wrath—
 - Selfish Ambitions—
 - Dissensions—
 - Heresies—
 - Envy—

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- Murder—
 - Drunkenness—
 - Revelries—
- 3) Sin comes in many different shapes, sizes, and types. Give examples of some sins that would illustrate the categories of sins that are listed below, or some sins that are motivated by these sins of the heart.
- Addiction (1 Corinthians 6:12,19-20; 2 Peter 2:19)—
 - Compromise (Matthew 12:30; 2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1)—
 - Envy (Matthew 27:18; Acts 13:45)—
 - Indecency (Romans 1:24; Ephesians 4:19)—
 - Lust (Matthew 5:27-28; 1 Timothy 2:9-10)—
 - Pride (Philippians 2:3; Mark 7:21-23)—
 - Selfishness (Romans 2:8; James 3:14-16)—
 - Self-Righteousness (Luke 18:9-14; 16:15)—
 - Spirit Of Disobedience (Ephesians 2:1-3; Colossians 3:6)—
 - Violence (Romans 1:30; 2 Timothy 3:3)—
- 4) Are there any other general categories of evil that you would identify and include in the above listing?
- 5) Where does all this corruption in the world come from—the desire to gratify what (2 Peter 1:4)?

CONCLUSION—We are to avoid and abstain from every type of evil, hating even the appearance of evil which would stain our righteous garments (Jude 23). The lust for worldly things comes in different forms, but they all draw us away from God. Therefore we must “*Abhor that which is evil. Cling to what is good.*” (Romans 12:9).

Examples Of Failure

"He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning" (1 John 3:8)

EXAMPLE OF FAILURE—CAIN (1 John 3:12)

- 1) How is Cain identified in the Scripture (1 John 3:8-15)?
- 2) How did he become that (1 John 3:10)?
- 3) What was the motivation behind his actions (1 John 3:12)?
- 4) Trace the downward spiral of Cain's failures and the consequences that followed (Genesis 4:1-24)
 - What started everything (4:5a)? How was Cain responsible for this?
 - What was Cain's reaction (4:5b)?
 - What made it worse (4:5c)?
 - What dangerous consequences followed these actions (4:7b; cf. Ephesians 4:26-27)?
 - What solutions did God offer to this problem (4:7a,c)?
 - What happened when Cain did not overcome his temptation (4:8)?
 - Did he appear to feel any responsibility or remorse for his actions (4:9)?
 - What response did Cain have to his punishment—where did his concerns lie (4:13,14c)?
 - What mistaken conclusion did Cain draw about these events (4:14b)?
 - How did Cain further complicate his predicament (4:16)?
 - What effect did Cain's last action have on his descendants (4:16-26)?
 - Lamech (4:19,23-24)?
 - Lamech's sons and descendants (4:20-22; cf. 4:26)?

EXAMPLE OF FAILURE—JUDAS (John 13:2)

- 5) How was Judas different from the other apostles (John 6:64,70-71)? How were they all the same (Matthew 16:21-23; 20:20-28; 26:31-35,56; Luke 22:24-34)? Why were the others not failures?

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- 6) Trace the steps of Judas' downward spiral and failure.
- Was his selection as an apostle a mistake of Jesus' (Luke 6:12-16; Mark 3:13-19)?
 - What power did he receive (Mark 3:15,19)?
 - How did Jesus describe him (John 6:64,70-71)?
 - What sin evidently motivated Judas (John 12:6; cf. 1 Timothy 6:9-10)?
 - How did it show itself again later (John 12:1-6)?
 - What did Satan entice Judas to do (Luke 22:3-6)?
 - Who approached whom (Mark 14:10)?
 - What was the proposition (Matthew 26:14-15)?
 - Having allowed Satan access to his heart, what had Judas predetermined would eventually happen (John 13:1-2,10-11,18-30; 17:12)?
 - In what subtle ways did Jesus remind Judas of the real treachery of his actions (Matthew 26:50; Luke 22:48)?
 - What did Judas try to do after his sin (Matthew 27:3-4)? What did he finally do (Matthew 27:5-10)?

EXAMPLE OF FAILURE—ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA (Acts 5:3)

- 7) How was this couple different from the other disciples who sold their lands and gave the proceeds (Acts 4:32-37; 5:1-10)?
- 8) What did Satan tempt them to do (Acts 5:3-4)?
- 9) What was actually the sin that condemned them (Acts 5:3-4)?

CONCLUSION— Those who fail are those who follow in the devil's footsteps. Notice how Satan uses his greatest schemes to bring each of these characters to sin and destruction. Cain murdered his brother (1 John 3:12)—Satan is a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). Judas left his appointed place (Acts 1:16-17,20,25)—Satan left his appointed place and proper domain (Jude 6). Ananias and Sapphira lied and tried to deceive (Acts 5:3-4,9)—Satan is the father of lies and deceit (Revelation 12:9; John 8:44).

Examples Of Faith

*“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world.
And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith” (1 John 5:4)*

EXAMPLE OF FAITH—JOB (James 5:10-11)

- 1) Did Job know who was bringing those trials against him (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-8)? Did he ever know what was going on behind the scenes in the battle for his soul?
- 2) Who did he assume was bringing these troubles upon him (Job 1:21; 2:10)? How was that—what appears to be a reaction of faith—actually his first great mistake?
- 3) Trace the circuit of Job’s journey from great faith to failure to even greater faith.
 - How did Job initially react to his trials (1:21; 2:10)?
 - What happened to his strength and resolve (3:1-26)?
 - What advice did his friends begin giving him (4:1-9; 5:8,17-19)?
 - What was he looking for to make sense of his condition (7:17-21)?
 - What accusations does he begin hurling at God (9:14-24)?
 - At the same time, what is he confident about himself (9:17,21)?
 - What does he begin to argue about with God (10:1-3,7)?
 - What does he ask God to do (13:20-24)?
 - What does he further accuse God of doing (16:9,11-14,17; 19:7-12; 23:3-16; 24:2-12,22-25)?
 - When God finally answers, what does Job begin to see about himself (38:1-5; 40:1-8)?
 - How did Job’s faith actually become stronger through his trials (42:1-6)?
- 4) Job was an example of perseverance and God’s mercy—not because he didn’t sin—but why (James 5:10-11)?

EXAMPLE OF FAITH—PETER (Luke 22:31)

- 5) Like Judas, Satan tested Peter at very crucial times:
 - After Peter confessed Jesus’ deity, what did the Lord entrust to him (Matthew 16:18-19)?

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- How long did Satan wait to test Peter (Matthew 16:21-23)?
 - On the night that Satan brought Jesus to death, why did he long to test Peter too (Luke 22:31)?
 - Whose help did Peter have (Luke 22:32; John 17:9-17)?
- 6) What was the difference between the reactions of Judas (John 13:26-30; Matthew 27:3-5) and Peter (Luke 22:31-34,54-62) after their respective failures?

EXAMPLE OF FAITH—JESUS (Hebrews 4:15)

- 7) Why was Jesus “*led into the wilderness to be tempted*” (Matthew 4:1)? Why did He confront the devil face to face, rather than allowing Satan to subtly tempt Him (James 4:7; Luke 4:13)?
- 8) What was the nature of each of Satan’s temptations of Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13)?
- Matthew 4:3—
 - Matthew 4:5-6—
 - Matthew 4:8-9—
- 9) How did Jesus respond to each of Satan’s temptations (Matthew 4:4,7,10)? What insight does that give us to know how to overcome his temptations (1 John 2:14)?
- 10) Having overcome temptations Himself, what does that enable Jesus to do for us (Hebrews 2:14-18; 4:15-16)?

CONCLUSION—The difference between the temptations of Jesus, and those of Job and Peter, was that the latter two failed before they ever succeeded. Therefore, there is hope for all of us who are sinners (Romans 3:23). Through faith we can overcome!!

Drawing The Line

"Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)

WHO DECIDES MORALITY?

- 1) What problem do we have when trying to determine what is moral and acceptable behavior in our ever-changing world (Jeremiah 10:23)?
- 2) How do we determine God's will concerning our conduct and actions (1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 2 Peter 1:3-4)?
- 3) How clear is God's will concerning those actions or activities which are good or evil (Romans 12:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)?
- 4) Is the Bible clear about every situation in life? Is everything in the Bible "black and white" or are there some "gray areas" that we must struggle with? Does that mean that there is nothing in the Bible that is "black and white"?

WHERE DO WE DRAW THE LINE?

- 5) When certain activities are not specifically described in the Bible, how do we determine where to draw the line? What principles do we need to consider? *(The following principles are adapted from Roy Cogdill's, The New Testament Church, pp. 83-84)*
 - Does it destroy your identity as a Christian by causing you to be regarded as of the world (2 Corinthians 6:14; 7:1; Romans 12:1-2)?
 - Is the practice questionable in your own mind and therefore an offense to your own conscience (Romans 14:23)?
 - Does it have a weakening influence on others and will it become a stumbling block to them (1 Corinthians 10:23-33; 8:7-13)?
 - Is it destructive to your body (1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 10:31)?
 - Does it conflict with your duty as a Christian (Matthew 6:33; 2 Timothy 2:4)?
 - Does it cultivate an inordinate fleshly appetite (Romans 13:13-14; 1 Corinthians 9:27)?
 - Does it bring you under weakening association and influence (1 Corinthians 15:33)?
 - Does it bring upon you an unequal yoke and place you at a disadvantage in serving the Lord (2 Corinthians 6:14-18)?

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- 6) What do we need to help us make those judgments (Philippians 1:9-10)?
 - 7) What do we need to consider in making those judgments (Philippians 2:15; 2 Corinthians 8:21)?
 - 8) Is God satisfied if we try to live as close to “the line” separating right from wrong as we can (Isaiah 5:20; 1 Peter 4:2-4)? What attitude does that show Him (Matthew 12:30)?

DANGER OF LETTING MY CONSCIENCE BE YOUR GUIDE

- 9) Is it possible for someone else to be faithful to God even though he doesn’t draw the same conclusions, or draw the line in the same place on some issues, that I do (Romans 14:3-6)?
 - How is that possible (Titus 1:15; 1 Corinthians 6:12)?
 - Are there some things that I would consider to be wrong, which you would consider to be right? What is God’s view toward each of us (Romans 14:1-6,13-17)?
 - Is my conscience to be your guide in such matters (Romans 14:4,10,13)?
 - Is the writer here speaking of sinful things, or things which some think to be sinful (Romans 14:1,6,16,18)?
 - How am I to respond to someone whose conscience causes him to “draw the line” in a different place than I do (Romans 15:1-7)?
- 10) What are the dangerous consequences of “judging other people’s actions by my own conscience” in the following examples (cf. 2 Corinthians 10:12)?
 - Joshua 22:1-34—
 - 1 Corinthians 8:1-13—
 - 1 Corinthians 10:23-33—
 - Romans 14:1-23—
- 11) Which is worse—to bind where God has not bound, or loose where God has not loosed (Revelation 22:18-19)?

CONCLUSION—None of these passages ever justifies sin. We must remember that God regulates morals—not us. Based on the principles God has revealed, we must weigh our actions and make our decisions based on what He said! That, more than anything, will help us know where to “draw the line”.

Overcoming The World

"I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:13-14)

CAN WE OVERCOME THE WORLD?

- 1) We begin to overcome the influence of the world, by taking the proper attitude toward it. What should be our response to the world and its temptations, according to the following verses?
 - 1 John 2:15-17—
 - Romans 12:1-2—
 - John 17:11-21—
- 2) Where does this change begin (Romans 8:5-10)?

HOW DO WE OVERCOME THE WORLD?

- 3) Where does it begin for every Christian (Luke 17:3; 1 Timothy 4:16; Acts 20:28)?
- 4) Where do we attack and offset the power of the sin and worldliness that would overcome each of us (Romans 6:12-14)?
- 5) How radical is the commitment we must make (Romans 12:1; Galatians 5:24; 6:14)?
- 6) What must follow that action (Romans 12:2b)? How do we accomplish that and bring about a permanent change (Romans 12:2a,c)?
- 7) When our very thought processes are transformed, what kind of thinking do we then adopt and attempt to reflect (Ephesians 4:17-23; 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 Corinthians 2:16)?
- 8) How radical is that change (2 Corinthians 5:17)? Where are those changes reflected—what is put off, what is put on (Colossians 3:5-4:1)?
- 9) How do we maintain that change in our thinking and actions (Hebrews 12:1-2; Colossians 3:1-4; Philippians 3:13-14,20)?
- 10) What is necessary in our long-term efforts to maintain our separation from the world and its sinful things (Hebrews 10:35-39)?

CONCLUSION—“*Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within*” (Romans 12:2, *J.B. Phillips translation*). The temptations of the world that would draw us away from God are not stronger than God’s pull on us. Yet, since we are the ones who choose either God or the world, their power is sufficient to entice us away from God. We can overcome or be overcome by this world—it is up to us (Philippians 2:12-13).

Resist The Devil And He Will Flee

"Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7)

THE DEVIL CAN BE RESISTED

- 1) Is the devil's hold on us greater than God's (Romans 8:31,37-39; John 10:27-29)?

- 2) What has Jesus done to the devil and his power?
 - Matthew 12:29—
 - John 12:31—
 - John 16:7-11—
 - Colossians 2:15—
 - Hebrews 2:14-15—
 - 1 John 3:8—

- 3) What has He empowered the church to do (Matthew 16:18)?

RESIST THE DEVIL AND HE WILL FLEE FROM YOU

- 4) It is foolish to think that the strength to overcome the devil lies within ourselves. Where can we draw sufficient strength to overcome him (Ephesians 6:10)?

- 5) What else must we do at the same time we resist him (James 4:7-10)? How much effort must we expend (1 Peter 5:8-9)?

- 6) What must we avoid doing (Ephesians 4:27)?

- 7) What has God promised to us if we will resist Satan (1 Corinthians 10:13)?

- 8) How active or passive can we be in this resistance (Ephesians 6:10-19)? Why (6:11-13)?

- 9) Describe the armor God provides for us and its usefulness in helping us combat Satan and ward off his destructive blows against us (Ephesians 6:14-18; cf. 2 Corinthians 10:3-4).

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- Gird waist with truth—
 - Breastplate of righteousness—
 - Shod feet with preparation of gospel of peace—
 - Shield of faith—
 - Helmet of salvation—
 - Sword of Spirit—
 - Praying always in the Spirit—

10) When Jesus battled against Satan, what weapons did He use (Matthew 4:1-11; Philippians 2:5-8)?
What did He prove about them?

CONCLUSION—Satan is the most powerful foe we will ever have to face, but through Christ we have the strength to resist him. We can be victorious over Satan—but not with some half-hearted effort! Satan is a coward who can be put to flight by strong conviction and resistance to him and his temptations. Have you put him to flight yet?

Take Heed Lest You Fall

"Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12)

TAKE HEED LEST YOU FALL

- 1) Why is there danger when we think we have overcome Satan and his temptations (Romans 11:20-22)? What danger still exists (1 Corinthians 9:27)?
- 2) Is it possible to fall from God's grace after being saved (Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 6:4-6; 2 Peter 2:20-22)?
- 3) What are some of the dangers inherent in thinking that we have overcome sin, and are now living above it (Romans 2:17-24)?
- 4) Does God show any special favor to His children, just because they are His children (Romans 2:11-13)?
- 5) What are some of the things that cause us to stumble and fall away from God?
 - Luke 22:31—
 - Acts 20:29-30—
 - Matthew 13:21—
 - 2 Timothy 4:10—
 - 1 John 2:15-17—
 - Romans 8:13—

EXAMINE OURSELVES

- 6) Why should we examine ourselves—why do we need to establish the following things about ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:5)?
 - "If we are in the faith"—
 - "If we really know ourselves"—

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- “If Jesus Christ is in us”—
 - “If we indeed are disqualified”—

- 7) By what standard should we measure ourselves (James 1:22-25)?
- 8) What is the danger of measuring ourselves by our own estimates of self (Galatians 6:3; Romans 12:3)? What can it encourage us to do (Matthew 6:1-18)?
- 9) What is the danger of measuring ourselves by comparing ourselves with others (2 Corinthians 10:12,18)? What can it encourage us to do (Luke 18:9-14)?

CONCLUSION—Knowing ourselves and our true condition before God is the first step in doing what is right. When we examine ourselves, we may find ourselves to be satisfactory, or we may find ourselves to be condemned—but by all means, we need to find out now, before the Lord exposes us at the end (1 Corinthians 4:5)!

Complacency and overconfidence can cause us to fall just as surely as sin or false teaching. We must guard against becoming our own worst enemy!