

THE ARMOR OF GOD

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS WITH PASTOR JACK ABELEN

Knowing Our Adversary and the Armor of God Week 2: Eph.6:10-13 - Knowing Our Adversary (Part 2)

Review And Introduction

- A. A review of last week's study "Knowing Our Adversary Part 1," where we looked at the angel Lucifer - his fall, his desire, his accomplices, his limitations, and his ultimate future.
- B. Tonight in part 2 we want to focus on "Knowing Our Adversary" in terms of Satan's work in keeping those in the world under his control and away from the things of God. There are only two kingdoms in the world: God's kingdom of light and life and the kingdom of Satan, the god of this world, filled with darkness and death (Acts 26:18)(1Jn.3:10).
- C. We will discover the arsenal Satan uses to keep men in darkness, under his control, and in his kingdom.

Blinding Their Minds - 2 Corinthians 4

- A. **(1-2)** Unlike those looking for hidden meanings and using questionable tactics, Paul assures the Corinthians that his ministry is honest and open, dependent solely upon the clear, simple teaching of God's word.
- B. **(3-4)** If there is a lack of response, it is not due to Paul's honest presentation and life in Christ but rather, a consequence of the work of the enemy who wars for the souls of men. Paul knew he was in a spiritual battle and expected to see this battle unfold as Jesus was preached.
- C. Those who are perishing and refusing the Gospel do so under influence of the wicked one, who works to keep men's eyes from beholding God's grace. Satan seeks to have men forego the cross, even as Peter tried to convince Jesus to do (Mt. 16:22-23).
- D. Jesus has overcome the enemy and one day, we will see it as the title deed to earth is handed to the Lamb that was slain (Rev.5). Yet for now blindness due to sin and the activity of the enemy leave men in darkness and needing the reason and hope of God's love (Isa.1:18-19).
- E. Salvation requires more than simple rationale which is lost by spiritual blindness, where myth and superstition, self and faulty reasoning are the order of the day (2Ti.2:24-26). Satan's place of business is to keep man from Jesus, relying upon himself.
- F. Satan will use lies to bind, blind, control, and deflect the seeker. He will encourage self-confidence that makes no allowances for repentance, self-examination, or honesty.
- G. In the life of the lost, Satan uses these outlooks as footholds to keep the truth hidden, even as Paul declared that the Cross was foolishness (a cruel hoax, a joke) to them that were perishing (1Co.1:18). The plan of the enemy is to keep the lost laughing at God and His word (Isa.59:10).
- H. Yet Jesus has come to open the eyes of the blind (Isa.42:7). He does this by the work of the Holy Spirit, the teaching of God's Word, and the testimony of the lives of the saints.
- I. Since it is a spiritual battle, it is vital we go on the offensive in prayer to ask God to open the eyes of those sitting in darkness and under the power of the devil. If they could see God clearly, surely many more would turn to Him (Col.4:3).

- J. How vital it is that we are aware of the work of the enemy as we set out to share our faith. Don't lose heart for God still commands His light to shine out of darkness (Gen.1:3).

Jesus' Illustration Of The Blinding Influence Of The Enemy - Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

- A. The parable of the sower teaches us that it is the condition of the heart that determines receptivity to the seed, the Word of God. Here is where the enemy works, keeping the soil unfit for receiving, planting, and growth.
- B. **(19) Wayside soil:** It speaks of a hard heart; unreceptive, unyielding, and untouchable (Hos.10:12).
- C. **(20-21) Stony soil:** It speaks of an emotional, impulsive hearer; a quick response that doesn't last for it never touches the heart to produce sorrow over sin and repentance unto life. Any cost or difficulty in associating with Jesus and the Gospel brings a swift response of retreat.
- D. **(22) Thorny soil:** It speaks of a heart that is pre-occupied, double vision that leaves one dizzy and off balance. Competing cares keep this soil from producing any fruit and since there is no heart change, there is also no life in this divided soil (Hos.10:1-2)(1Ki.18:21)(Mt.6:24)(Jam.1:8).
- E. **(23) Good soil:** It speaks of a receptive heart; hearing and doing, saved, and lost to the enemy.

False Teaching - 1 Timothy 4:1-3

- A. Seducing spirits and doctrines of demons focus not on the soil but on the seed: religion without truth that appeals to a man's sense of accomplishment and self-love.
- B. These false teachings can be characterized by commonly held threads of evil:
1. Denying the truth of the Scriptures: Through misinterpretation or simple outright denial, many cults write their own version of the Bible to teach what no one would conclude by simply reading the Word. The consequences of adding to or removing from God's word are irreversible (Mt.15:2-3)(Pro.30:6) (Rev.22:18-19)(2Ti.3:16-17); yet men embrace teachings they agree with (2Ti.4:3-4).
 2. Denying the deity of Jesus Christ: If Jesus is not God then His death is of no benefit (2Pe.2:1) (1Jn.2:22). The devil has a list of approved messiahs and Jesus is not on it.
 3. Denying the grace of God: Most false religions offer a works/performance approach to God. God's word teaches otherwise (Eph.2:8-9)(Rom.11:6). But Satan has a faith plus "something" offer to deceive you.
 4. Denying or altering the 2nd coming to remove immanency and judgment: (2Pe.3:4) Many doctrines remove the coming of our Lord entirely to judge. Satan is working with them in close conjunction as they sing his tune.
 5. Providing other gods to worship: (Ps.96:5)(Ps.106:36-38) Satan wants every man worshipping him through a variety of offered idols. We will see this truth played out during the tribulation (Rev.13:15).
 6. Controlling world governments: The mandate of many politically is to control the spiritual beliefs of its people. In so doing, billions are left without a witness and overwhelmed by darkness, much to Satan's delight.