

RECOGNIZING AND RESISTING THE DECEITFUL SPIRITS OF OUR AGE

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Introduction: Genesis 3:15 – ¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.”

From Genesis 3:15 on, we see the ongoing battle of the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman played out in the history of the world.

I. Contemporary anti-Semitism and contemporary anti-monogamous heterosexual marriage and anti-binary human sexuality

Consider the ways in which our culture has gone raving insane in these two areas in particular.

II. Satan as the ruler of this ungodly age, enslaving all outside of Christ

Without question, Christ has been given ultimate and absolute authority over all other powers and authorities in the world:

Ephesians 1:18–23 – ¹⁸ *I pray that* the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might ²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Despite this, Satan is granted power over all unsaved people, to enslave and control them, and also to bring distress to and affliction upon believers:

Job 1:13–19 – ¹³ Now on the day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, ¹⁴ a messenger came to Job and said, “The oxen were plowing and the donkeys feeding beside them, ¹⁵ and the Sabeans attacked and took them. They also slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ¹⁶ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The fire of God fell from heaven and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ¹⁷ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “The Chaldeans formed three bands and made a raid on the camels and took them and slew the servants with the edge of the sword, and I alone have escaped to tell you.” ¹⁸ While he was still speaking, another also came and said, “Your sons and your daughters were eating and drinking wine in their oldest brother’s house, ¹⁹ and behold, a great wind came from across the wilderness and struck the four corners of the house, and it fell on the young people and they died, and I alone have escaped to tell you.”

Job 2:7–8 – ⁷ Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. ⁸ And he took a potsherd to scrape himself while he was sitting among the ashes.

John 14:30 – ³⁰ “I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me”

Acts 26:18 – ¹⁸ to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

2 Corinthians 4:4 – ⁴ in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Ephesians 2:1–2 – ¹ And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.

Ephesians 6:12–13 – ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.

Colossians 1:16 – ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

2 Timothy 2:26 – ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

1 Peter 5:8 – ⁸ Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

1 John 5:19 – ¹⁹ We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

III. Deception is Satan's chief tool and weapon

Genesis 3:1–6 – ¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Indeed, has God said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?’” ² The woman said to the serpent, “From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; ³ but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” ⁴ The serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die! ⁵ “For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ 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 desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

John 8:44 – ⁴⁴ “You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

2 Corinthians 11:2–3 – ² For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. ³ But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

1 Timothy 2:14 – ¹⁴ And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.

Revelation 12:9 – ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

IV. Our Response as Christians

1. Never forget the truths in Eph 1:18-23!!! Christ is Lord and Ruler over all, not Satan. To recall this often is to restore and uphold hope. To forget this can lead to despair. Christ is Lord!
2. Realize the control Satan has over all the unsaved in our culture and the implications of this. They may not realize how wrong they are. And they will only see the light as God opens their eyes to see it – 2 Cor 4:4-6.
3. Our main enemy is not people from our culture but spiritual powers and forces of darkness, as Paul reminds us in Eph 6:12ff. How we desperately need God’s armor.
4. God is sovereign both over the accomplishment of His purposes in the end, and exactly how everything works to bring about those purposes. Eph 1:11 expresses these dual truths powerfully, and this should fill us with hope.
5. It is required of us, stewards of the mysteries of God, to be faithful, as Paul states in 1 Cor 4:2. We are not required to be successful or fruitful (God is in control of these realities), but we are required to be faithful, in every way, and in every day of our lives. When Christ comes again, may He find us, His people, faithful to Him above all else.