

## ***DEFEATING THE DEVIL***

**By Andy Manning**

**1 Peter 5:6-11**

The title of this sermon is “Defeating the Devil.”

**1 Peter 5:8 CSB** says, “Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour.”

From the time of Socrates in ancient Greece all the way until the French Revolution at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, just about everyone believed in the supernatural. There was disagreement the identity and nature of God, but just about everyone believed in supernatural beings – both good and evil. Everyone believed in God and the devil. That period of time is sometimes referred to the Pre-modern era. It lasted about 2,500 years.

But then at the very end of the eighteenth something happened. Some call it the Enlightenment, or the age of reason, or the modern era. The leading thinkers of the time taught that the supernatural either didn’t exist, or if it did exist, it was impossible to know anything about it. According to these modern thinkers, truth could only discovered through scientific means. Truth could only be discovered through the five senses; the only things that we could truly know are the things we could see, smell, touch, taste, or hear. The only things we could know and understand were things that were material.

As time went by, belief in the supernatural was seen more and more as superstitious and primitive and ignorant.

And since the beginning of the modern era, more and more people in the west have abandoned the belief in the supernatural.

And many of those who still claim to believe in the supernatural live as if they don’t.

And this is exactly what the devil wants.

The greatest trick of the devil is to convince people that he doesn't exist. Because if you don't believe he exists, then you won't try to defend yourself against him.

But the Bible says that the devil does exist, He is very powerful (Jesus called him the "strong man"), he is very dangerous, and he is on a mission to destroy you.

And so today I want to talk about how to defeat him.

### **Who is the devil?**

1. The devil is the one who opposes the person, purposes, and people of God.
2. The word "Satan" (Gr. *Satanos*) means adversary; it signifies one who sets himself in opposition to another. The word "devil" means slanderer.
3. The devil is a fallen angel.
4. He is of the order of angels called cherubim (Ez 28:14).
5. He held the highest rank of all the angels (Ez 28:12-14).
6. He rebelled against God, so God threw him out of heaven (Is 14:12-14; Ez 28:17).
7. He is a spirit (Eph 6:11-12).
8. Satan leads other fallen angels, called demons, or evil/unclean spirits (Mt 12:24). Apparently one third of the total number of angels created by God joined Satan in his rebellion.
9. John 8:44 (CSB) describes the devil's character. "He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies."
10. John 10:10 (CSB) describes the devil's mission statement. "A thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy."

### **The devil goes by many names.**

1. Abaddon (Heb) / Apollyon (Gr): Destroyer (Jn 10:10; Rev 9:11)
2. Accuser: Opposes believers before God. Rev 12:10
3. Adversary: Against God. 1 Pet 5:8
4. Ancient serpent. Deceiver in garden. Rev 12:9; 20:2
5. Angel of the abyss. Rev 9:11

6. Beelzebul: Lord of the fly; prince of demons. Mt 12:24
7. Belial: Worthless. 2 Cor 6:15
8. Devil: Slanderer. Mt 4:1
9. Dragon: Destructive. Rev 12:3, 7, 9.
10. Enemy: Opponent. Mt 13:28
11. Evil one. Intrinsically evil. Jn 17:15
12. God of this world: Influences think of world. 2 Cor 4:4
13. Liar, and the father of lies. Perverts the truth. Jn 8:44.
14. Lucifer: Morning star, son of the dawn. Is 14:12
15. Murderer. Leads people to eternal death. Jn 8:44
16. Prince of demons. Leader of fallen angels. Mk 3:22; Mt 12:24
17. Prince of the power of the air: Control of unbelievers. Eph 2:2
18. Prince of this world. Jn 12:31
19. Roaring lion: One who destroys. 1 Pet 5:8.
20. Ruler of this world: Rules in world system. Jn 12:31
21. Satan: The adversary and opponent of God and His people.
22. Tempter: Solicits people to sin. 1 Thess 3:5
23. The thief. Jn 10:10

### **The devil is compared to several things.**

- A roaring lion. 1 Peter 5:8
- A serpent. (Rev 12:9; 20:3)
- A fiery red dragon. (Rev 12:2-12)

### **What Can The Devil Do To Unbelievers?**

#### **1. The devil possesses and controls unbelievers.**

The Bible says in Acts 26:18 that people apart from Christ are under the power of Satan.

Ephesians 2:1-3 says that non-believers live according to the ruler of the power of the air, and that He is at work in them.

It says in 1 John 3:8 that non-believers belong to the devil.

It says in 1 John 5:18 that the non-believers are under the control of the evil one.

John 8:44 says that unbelievers carry out the devil's desires.

The devil and demons have the ability to cause people to do horrible things.

John 13:27 says that it was the devil who possessed and caused Judas to betray Jesus.

A demon possessed man attacked the seven sons of Sceva in Acts 19:13-16.

It says the demonic "jumped on them, overpowered them all, and prevailed against them, so that they ran out of that house naked and wounded."

Matthew 8:28-34 describes two demon-possessed men in the region of the Gadarenes who were so violent that no one could pass that way.

One of the problems that we're facing in America right now are these unexplainable mass shootings.

On October 1, 2017, 64-year-old Stephen Paddock fired more than 1,100 rounds onto a crowd of concertgoers, killing 58 people and injuring 851 others.

Then just last month, on February 14, 2018, 19-year-old Nikolas Cruz walked into Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, and shot and killed 17 people, and wounded 17 others.

Is it possible that the devil is possessing and controlling these individuals, and causing them to act out in violence? Absolutely it is possible.

## **2. The devil can inflict mental and physical suffering on unbelievers.**

The devil can cause mental disorders.

One man possessed by a demon had not worn clothes or lived in a house for long time; the demon drove him out to live among the tombs. He would cry out day and night (Lk 8:26-29).

The devil can cause disabilities.

Luke 13 describes a demon that caused a woman to be disabled, bent over, and unable to straighten up for 18 years.

The devil can cause muteness (Mt 9:32; Mt 12:22).

The devil can cause blindness (Mt 12:22).

The devil can cause deafness (Mk 9:25).

The devil can cause epilepsy, seizures, and convulsions.

Mark 9:18, 20 describes a demon that would throw a boy onto the ground, foam at the mouth, grind his teeth, and become rigid, and roll round.

### **3. The devil can cause unbelievers to hurt themselves.**

In Mark 5 a demon caused one man to cut himself with sharp stones (Mk 5:5).

In Mark 9 a demon possessed one boy and on many occasions threw him into the fire and into water to kill him (Mk 9:22).

Does this explain why so many people today hurt and kill themselves? Sure. Not every case, but many cases.

### **4. The devil blinds unbelievers from understanding spiritual truth.**

**2 Corinthians 4:4 (CSB)** says, “In their case, the god of this age has blinded the minds of the unbelievers to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

Notice that the devil keeps them from seeing the light of the gospel.

Unbelievers can hear the gospel; they can understand the gospel; but they don't see its light; they don't see it as truth; they don't see it as life; they don't see it as the way that they need to go (Jn 14:6).

In the Parable of the Sower in Mark 4, Jesus said that when some people hear the word of God, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word sown in them. He prevents them from seeing the light of the gospel.

This is why Jesus said in **John 6:44**, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day."

The only way that an unbeliever can turn to Christ is if God the Father draws them. God has to open their eyes and help them see the light.

Otherwise it doesn't matter how eloquent you are, how good you are at apologetics, or how skilled I am at preaching, they will not turn to Christ.

This is why you can talk to an unbeliever, and you can give plenty of evidence for the existence of God, and for the resurrection, and for the reliability of the Bible, but they just won't receive it.

## **5. The devil can give unbelievers supernatural abilities.**

This is where it gets kind of spooky.

Acts 16 describes one demon that possessed a slave girl and gave her the ability to tell the future (Acts 16:16).

Mark 5 talks about a demoniac who was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, but he broke the chains apart and smashed the shackles. No one was strong enough to subdue him (Mk 5:1-6).

And then in several places that Bible says that the devil can empower false teachers, false prophets, and false messiahs to perform miracles, signs and wonders in order to deceive people (Mk 13:21-22; 2 Th 2:8-9).

This is why you must not believe what a preacher says just because he can do miracles.

The test of true minister of the gospel are his words and his character.

Do his words line up with God's word, and do his actions match the character of Christ?

I have no doubt that many unbelievers who have superior strengths and talents and intellects get their abilities from Satan.

When they do amazing things, other unbelievers admire them and listen to their words.

**What can the devil do to believers?**

**1. The devil accuses and slanders believers.**

**Revelation 12:10 (CSB)** says, "Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say, The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have now come, because the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been thrown down."

The Bible seems to describe Satan as standing before God and accusing believers of sin and evil, and that God needs to punish us, and not bless us, and not love us, and not forgive us, and not save us.

We see this also in the book of Job when Satan goes before God and says that the only reason Job loves God is because God has blessed him.

In other words, Satan was accusing job of not being real; of not being authentic; of being a fair-weather friend to God.

The devil is always accusing us of evil and slandering us before God.

**2. The devil tempts believers to sin.**

**1 Corinthians 7:5 (CSB)** says, “Do not deprive one another—except when you agree for a time, to devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again; otherwise, Satan may tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”

This verse is addressed to husbands and wives. It says don't deprive each other of sexual relations, because if you do, Satan can use that to tempt you to engage in sexual sin.

That's what the devil does. He tempts, incites, motivates, inspires us to sin against God.

The devil tempted Eve to sin in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3). The devil tempted Jesus to sin in the wilderness (Mt 4:1-11). The devil tempted David to disobey God and take up a census (1 Ch 21:1).

### **3. The devil deceives believers to believe lies.**

This is something the devil can do to both believers and unbelievers.

The devil can put evil, foolish, and unbiblical thoughts in our heads.

And as soon as you believe a wrong idea, then that leads to wrong behaviors.

The devil persuaded Eve that disobeying God would be good for her rather than bad for her (Gen 3).

He told Peter to resist Christ's plan to die. Jesus said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan (Mt 16:23)!”

He planted the idea to lie about their donation in hearts of Ananias and Saphira (Acts 5:3).

In **2 Corinthians 11:3 (CSB)** Paul wrote, “But I fear that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your minds may be seduced from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”



Paul was writing to believers, and he was saying that he was afraid that the devil was going to deceive them and lead them away from a healthy relationship with God.

That same chapter explains that one of the ways that the devil deceives is through false teachers.

In the very next verse, right after expressing his fear that the church in Corinth would be deceived by Satan, he writes in **2 Corinthians 11:4 (CSB)**, “For if a person comes and preaches another Jesus, whom we did not preach, or you receive a different spirit, which you had not received, or a different gospel, which you had not accepted, you put up with it splendidly!”

And don’t just assume that Satan only uses religious teachers to deceive.

He uses scientists, and school teachers, and professors, and politicians, and all kinds of people.

He puts unbiblical thoughts in their heads and uses them to spread his lies.

Where do you think the religion of Islam came from? Or the theory of evolution? Those are the doctrines of demons.

#### **4. The devil can inflict physical suffering on believers.**

You might be wondering, “Can the devil physically hurt me, or does he just tempt and deceive?”

The devil can hurt you physically.

Look at the story of job. Job was a righteous, faithful man who loved and served God. But Satan inflicted great harm on him.

- Killed his ten children.
- Either killed his livestock, or caused people to steal the rest.
- Killed all of his servants except for four.

- Gave job painful boils from head to toe; severe itching/irritation; great grief; loss of appetite; agonizing discomfort; insomnia; worm and dust infested flesh; continual oozing of boils; hallucinations; decaying skin; shriveled up; severe halitosis (bad breath); relentless pain; skin turned black; raging fever; dramatic weight loss. It got so back that he wished he had never been born.

In **Luke 22:31-32 (CSB)** Jesus told his disciples, “31 “Simon, Simon, look out. Satan has asked to sift you like wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And you, when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.”

To sift essentially means that Satan was going to inflict suffering on the disciples for the purpose of getting them to fall.

The Bible also says that it is the devil who incites persecution against believers.

Whenever there are people who hate Christians and who want to hurt Christians, the devil is behind that.

**Revelation 2:10 (CSB)** says, “Don’t be afraid of what you are about to suffer. Look, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison to test you, and you will experience affliction for ten days. Be faithful to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

And then in the passage that we are looking at today, Peter associates the devil’s attacks with persecution.

Right after saying that the devil is looking for someone to devour, 1 Peter 5:9 (CSB) says, “Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.”

## **5. The devil can hinder the work of believers for Christ.**

In 1 Thessalonians 2:18 it says that Paul wanted to visit the Thessalonians to encourage them in their faith, but the devil prevented him. The devil got in his way.

You can be sure that anytime you try to do something for God, the devil is going to stand against you. He is going to fight against you. He is going to try to mess up your plans.

## **The Good News About Satan**

That's the bad news about Satan. Now let's talk about the good news. Is there good news about Satan? Sure there is.

### **1. The devil is a created being.**

Why is that good news?

Because that means that the devil is not all-powerful; he is not omniscient; he is not omnipresent.

He is finite. He is limited.

And since he is a created being, then that means that he is not as strong as the creator.

### **2. Although the devil is stronger than humans, Christ is stronger than him.**

Jesus is greater than Satan.

Jesus resisted the devil's temptations and never sinned (Mt 4:1-11).

After being tempted, Jesus commanded the devil to leave him alone, and he complied.

Jesus declared that He is stronger than Satan.

Jesus said he was strong enough to enter Satan's house, tie him up, and plunder his house (Mt 12:25-19; Mk 3:27).

Jesus had the power to cast out demons and did so on multiple occasions.

Jesus even gave His disciples the power to cast out demons (Mk 6:7).

Whenever demons encountered Jesus, they knew who He was (Mk 1:24; 5:7); and they were terrified of Jesus.

On one occasion a demon asked Jesus if he had come to destroy them (Mk 1:24).

On another occasion a demon begged Jesus not to torment him.

Jesus is greater than the devil.

This is why **1 John 4:4 (CSB)** says, “The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”

### **3. The devil can only do what God allows him to do.**

In Job 1, the devil asked God if he could sift Job.

God said he could destroy everything that Job had, but he couldn't touch Job. And the devil obeyed.

And then in Job 2 the devil came back and asked to sift Job even more.

And God said that the devil could touch job, but he could not kill him. And the devil obeyed.

The Bible teaches that God is sovereign over all. The devil cannot do anything to you unless God allows it.

### **4. The devil cannot possess and control believers.**

The devil can possess and control unbelievers, but he cannot possess and control believers.

For one thing, when you become a Christian the Spirit of God indwells you; there's no way that an evil spirit can indwell you if you have the Spirit of God.

As well, **Colossians 1:13 (CSB)** says, "He has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son he loves."

The moment you become a Christian Christ sets you free from the power of Satan.

He can oppress you, tempt you, deceive you, but he cannot control or possess you.

## **5. God will cast the devil into the lake of fire.**

Another piece of good news about Satan is that we know how the story ends.

God wins. We win. And Satan loses.

Revelation 20:10 says that in the end, God will cast Satan into the lake of fire for all eternity (Mt 13:25, 28; Lk 8:31; Rev 20:10).

## **6. The devil can be defeated.**

You can defeat the devil. You can overcome his temptations and his deceptions. You can overcome the suffering that he inflicts on you.

1 Corinthians 10:13 says that God will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear.

James 4:9 and 1 Peter 5:9 both say to resist the devil, implying that he can be resisted.

## **How can we resist the devil?**

Before we answer that question, we need to answer another question.

## **What does it mean to resist the devil?**

1 Peter 5:6-11 is talking about a particular Satanic attack. Suffering.

Sometimes suffering is caused by the devil, as in persecution, or in the case of Job. And sometimes the devil simply uses suffering.

The devil has a goal when we suffer. He wants to use our suffering to lead us away from God. To sin. To rebel against God. To backslide.

**So to resist the devil means this: Stay faithful to God.**

Stay faithful when you are tempted. Stay faithful when you suffer.

**Let's look at 1 Peter 5:6-11 (CSB), and we'll find six keys to defeat the devil.**

### **Six Keys to Defeat the Devil**

#### **1. Don't turn to sin for help.**

1 Peter 5:6 says, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you at the proper time."

When you are suffering, humble yourself.

Place yourself under God's authority. Submit to God.

Don't turn to sin for help, or for relief, or to ease the pain, or to get out of trouble. Stay faithful to God.

#### **2. Don't forget to pray.**

1 Peter 5:7 says, "casting all your cares on him, because he cares about you."

When you are suffering, pray. Pray a lot. Pray constantly. Pray without ceasing.

Cry out to God for relief, for victory, for healing, for escape, for peace, for comfort, for strength to endure.

God cares about you, and He will give you the resources to stay faithful in your suffering, but you have to pray.

### **3. Don't get swept away by your emotions.**

**1 Peter 5:8** says, "Be sober-minded."

Don't get swept away by your emotions.

Don't let yourself get depressed. Don't let yourself get overcome with worry.  
Don't lose yourself in anger.

Stay in the right frame of mind.

One of the best ways to keep your emotions in check is to surround yourself with godly people who love you and who will encourage you.

That's why God created the church.

**David Jeremiah** said, "Our faith isn't a luxury intended for periods of smooth sailing and neither is our fellowship. When trouble comes along that's when its wonderful to be a part of a faithful, bible believing body of people who will rally around you; they'll pray for you, support you with their resources, and encourage you and counsel you in tough decisions. The devil is the only one whose opinion it is that you should take a sabbatical from church in hard times."

### **4. Don't doubt God's word.**

**1 Peter 5:9** says, "Resist him, firm in the faith."

You resist the devil by standing firm in the faith.

Keep trusting in God's word and His promises.

Keep trusting that God is who He says He is, and that He will do what He says He will do.

God loves you. He is in control. He is with you. He sees your suffering. He hears your prayers. He is going to work it all out for good. This is part of his plan.

## **5. Don't think you are alone.**

**1 Peter 5:9** says, "Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world."

Don't think that God has forgotten you, or that God is picking on you, or that something unusual is happening to you.

God allows His children to suffer.

All the greatest heroes of the faith endured severe suffering.

When you think that you are the only one suffering, or that you have it worse than everyone else, it causes you to doubt God, and that leads to rebellion against God.

## **6. Don't lose sight of eternity.**

**1 Peter 5:10-11** says, "10 The God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, establish, strengthen, and support you after you have suffered a little while. 11 To him be dominion forever. Amen."

Here's the promise. Sooner or later, in this life or the next, God will deliver you from Satan's attacks. Eventually you will be victorious. Eventually you will have relief.

So stay faithful to God, and you can defeat the devil and all of his attacks against you.