

# The Reality of the Spirit World

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May 22, 2010

I had a conversation with Gary Flatt, who lives in Ohio, a couple weeks ago. And we were discussing various subjects. And we both were moved—the conversation moved into an area that we began talking about how many of God's people—and I mean the Greater Church of God—these days seem to underestimate the influence of Satan, to underestimate the influence of the evil spirit world in our lives, in the lives of those who are unconverted, not called, the life of our country and other countries. And it is true.

And when you look back on it, particularly when Mr. Armstrong was alive, Mr. Armstrong never underestimated or ignored the reality of Satan. Mr. Armstrong always—in every sermon that I can remember—mentioned Satan, the influence of Satan, and encouraged God's people to be aware of that.

But in the Church, balance sometimes is hard to come by. And sometimes the pendulum swings from one wall to the other wall or one ditch to the other ditch because when I came in the Church in the 1960's, it seemed like Satan was blamed for everything. And we'd gone to one extreme.

I'll give you an example. I know a young man who went to Ambassador College in the mid-1960's at Big Sandy. He went as a freshman and there's a lot of pressure, away from home for the first time, new environment, a lot of expectations and that regard. And he began to have anxiety attacks where he would hyperventilate, almost pass out, heart rate would go up, breathing rate would go up, blood pressure would go up. And he had several of those attacks.

And he went to an evangelist to counsel about that as people did in those days, counseled for just about everything. And the minister's diagnosis was that he had a demon. And he was a freshman in college. That was devastating to this young man! Just to think—and fairly new in the Church—a year or two in the Church, a year or two after he was baptized to think that you are possessed or influenced by a demon. And the reality was that he was just having an anxiety attack because of the conditions that he found himself in. And yet this diagnosis haunted him for years and years and years after that.

But, as I said, the pendulum swings both ways. And from the 1980's on, certainly after Mr. Armstrong's death, Satan has been largely ignored, I think, by the Church. Not thought about, not discussed very much.

Now the fact is you see the world today barely, barely believes that God exists. In fact, probably the majority of the world doesn't believe God exists. And they certainly don't believe there is a Satan. They certainly don't believe there are demons that influence us in our daily lives.

Now the Greater Church of God does believe God exists, obviously. But I think today a large number of God's people barely believe that Satan and demons exist or it doesn't come to their minds or it's not in the forefront of their minds as it was with Mr. Armstrong when he was alive. And for that reason for most people in the Greater Church, I think, on a day-to-day basis Satan and demons are not relevant. They're not thought of. They're not even in our minds.

Now that was not the case when the Bible was written. And that's important to understand. That was not the case when the Bible was written. The Bible is filled with references to that spirit realm, that spirit world—the evil spirit world. And, at the time of Christ, the general populace knew of the demon world. That was very obvious. You read through the New Testament. You read through the gospels. It was very obvious.

Let's turn to Mark chapter 7 and we're going to read verses 25 through 30 by way of introduction just to see that the common day person, man/woman, fully understood the fact that there was a spirit world. Mark chapter 7 verse 25:

**Mark 7:25.** For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him [referring to Christ], and came and fell at his feet:  
(KJV)

Verse 26 of Mark 7:

**Mark 7:26.** The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation; and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil (KJV)

Now I'm reading out of the King James.

The Greek word translated *devil* here is the Greek word *daimonion* (*dahee-mon'-ee-on*). And it means: "Evil spirits or messengers and ministers of the Devil."

And it's unfortunate that it's translated *devil*. It really should be translated *demon* because *daimonion* is the Greek word that we derive the English word of *demon* from. And so when I read through as we come to the Greek word *daimonion*, I'll just translate it or say it as *demon* rather than *devil*.

So this woman besought Christ that he would cast out this demon out of her daughter. This was in a young girl.

Verse 27:

**Mark 7:27.** But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled: for it is not [suitable] to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.  
(KJV)

He was referring to the fact that she was a Gentile and this was the nation of Judah and he was referring to that. And I believe—it's my belief that this was a test for this woman to see what she would say and see what she would do. And in verse 28:

**Mark 7:28.** And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs. 29) And he said unto her, For this saying (KJV)

Because of the fact of the wisdom of what she said and the humility of what she said:

**Mark 7:28b.** For this saying go [your] way; the [demon] is gone out of [your] daughter. 30) And when she was come to her house, she found the [demon] gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed. (KJV)

Now this, as you read through the gospels, this was a common occurrence. Very common occurrence!

But the problem is in the Greater Church today is that many Brethren don't want to hear about the subject. Some people get afraid or the hairs on the back of their neck stand up or they just don't want to go there and want to ignore it, thinking that if you don't acknowledge they exist, they will go away and not bother you. But that's not the case. And sometimes people have the thought of "Well, it's a bogeyman and I don't want to go there in my thoughts or in my study or in discussions."

The point I want to make is that we need to have a balanced view of reality because Satan exists. He does exist. That's real! The demon world exists. That is real. And their goal, as we've said before, is to kill, to steal, and to destroy. John 10 verse 10, we won't go there. We've read it many times talking about The Parable of the Sheepfold. It says, "The thief comes in," referring to Satan, "to kill and to steal and to destroy."

So what we want to talk about today is *Understanding the Reality of the Spirit World*. That's the title:

*Understanding the Reality of the Spirit World.*

Now to start off with what we want to do is establish the fact that today in today's world if you go to a doctor, a physician, they concentrate on the physical, obviously, what they can measure. They poke you. They draw blood. They measure your blood pressure and temperature. And if you talk to a physician today and got into a discussion of the subject today, they would look at you a little crazily, I think, to say the least.

But in the New Testament, there was a physician who wrote and I want you to see what this physician said. Let's turn to Colossians 4 and verse 14 to identify this writer and the fact that he was indeed a physician. Now obviously physicians back then and physicians today are totally different. But the fact is he still concentrated as a physician on physical ailments and remedies, but he also understood the reality of spiritual forces in the lives of people. Colossians 4 verse 14:

**Colossians 4:14.** Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you. (KJV)

Luke, who wrote the gospel, he was a physician. And I want to go through now by way of setting the stage, I want to go through a few Scriptures in Luke to establish the fact that this physician fully understood the reality of the demon world. This physician fully understood the influence that they can have on the health, mental and physical health of the people. So, let's go back to the Book of Luke now and start in Luke chapter 4. And we're going to read a few Scriptures. For sure not every one, but we want to come away with the understanding that Luke as a writer, Luke as a converted man fully appreciated and fully understood the reality of the spirit world and was not afraid to write about it and to speak about it. Luke 4 verse 31, it says:

**Luke 4:31.** And [Christ] came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath days. 32) And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power. (KJV)

Verse 33 of Luke 4:

**Luke 4:33.** And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil [*daimonion*, a demon], and cried out with a loud voice, 34) Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with [You, You] Jesus of Nazareth? [Are You] come to destroy us? I know who [You are]; the Holy One of God. (KJV)

This is the demon speaking through the voice of a human being.

**Luke 4:35.** And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold [your] peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst [thrown him down, writhing around], he came out of him, and [didn't] hurt him. (KJV)

Verse 36:

**Luke 4:36.** And they were all amazed, and [spoke] among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! [And] with [what] authority and power he [commanded these] unclean spirits, (KJV)

They had never seen that before.

**Luke 4:36b.** and they came out. (KJV)

They obeyed Jesus Christ.

Verse 37:

**Luke 4:37.** And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about. 38) And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. 39) And he stood over her, and rebuked

the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and [she served them] ministered unto them. 40) Now when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with [different] diseases brought them unto him; and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. (KJV)

Verse 41:

**Luke 4:41.** And [demons] also came out of many, crying out, saying, [You are] the Son of God. And he [rebuked] *them*, not [allowing them] to speak: for they knew that he was Christ. (KJV)

So here we have a situation in a home and prior to that where Christ cast out demons. And Luke was very open about this and understood the reality of a lot of ailments that beset human beings.

Let's go to chapter 7 and read verse 21. We're told:

**Luke 7:21.** And in that same hour he [referring to Christ] cured many of *their* infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight. (KJV)

Many evil spirits He cast out.

The next chapter Luke chapter 8, look at the first three verses.

**Luke 8:1.** And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve *were* with him, 2) And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven [demons], 3) And Joanna the wife of Chuza Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance. (KJV)

These women had infirmities. My suspicion is because of problems with demons. And they were cast out. And they were so thankful they began to follow Christ and minister to Him and to serve in any way they could.

Look at verse 27.

**Luke 8:27.** And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had [demons a] long time, and [he didn't wear any] clothes, neither [did he abide] in *any* house, but in the tombs. (KJV)

Now that's interesting that this would be brought out because remember what John 10 verse 10 says? "To kill, to steal, and to destroy"! And demons tend to congregate—it's been my experience—around graveyards, things involving death. It is well known for any ministers back in the Worldwide days that served in Massachusetts, particularly near Salem, where the witch trials. There were a lot of communities around that area that had excessive problems in that area.

And so here we see a man possessed by demons—not just one, but more than one—was congregating, loitering, hanging around a graveyard.

Verse 28:

**Luke 8:28.** When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with [You], Jesus, [You] Son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not. 29) (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains and in fetters; and he [broke] the bands, and was driven of the [demons] into the wilderness.) (KJV)

Now we're going to see a little later that demons inside a human being can cause them to have super-human strength. And that obviously can be a danger.

Verse 30:

**Luke 8:30.** And Jesus asked him, saying, What is [your] name? And he said, Legion: because many [demons] were entered into him. 31) And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep. (KJV)

Now the Greek word for *the deep* is *abyss*. And that is the same word that is translated *bottomless pit* in Revelation 20 and verse 3. And so they knew ultimately what their fate was and they were beseeching Christ not to do it right now. "Please don't send us into the bottomless pit or the abyss!"

Verse 32:

**Luke 8:32.** And there was there a herd of many [pigs] feeding on the mountain: and they besought him that he would [allow] them to enter into [the pigs]. And [so, Christ allowed] them. (KJV)

Verse 33:

**Luke 8:33.** Then went the [demons] out of the man, entered into the [pigs]: (KJV)

And guess what the pigs did?

**Luke 8:33b.** the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and [they] were choked. (KJV)

Now remember John 10 verse 10 again. "To kill, to steal, and to destroy"! Whatever they go into that is their motive. And here in this case, they just killed a herd of pigs because they want to kill.

Now look at Luke 9. Almost every chapter has a reference to this subject, to this demon world. Verse 37 through 42:

**Luke 9:37.** And it came to pass on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, [many] people met him. 38) And, behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech [You], look upon my son: for he is [my] only child. (KJV)

What a sad thing!

**Luke 9:39.** And, lo, a spirit [takes] him, and he suddenly [cries] out; and it [tears] him that he [foams—meaning foaming at the mouth], bruising him [he said, he] hardly [leaves him alone. He hardly departs] from him. (KJV)

He gives him no peace. Verse 40:

**Luke 9:40.** And I besought [your] disciples to cast him out; and they could not. (KJV)

And we'll get into that a little bit later too.

**Luke 9:41.** And Jesus [answered and He said], O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring [your] son [here]. 42) And as he was yet a coming, the [demon] threw him down, and [tore at] him. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father. (KJV)

Now these are just a sampling of the Scriptures in Luke. And we don't have time to go through the other gospels, but my point is here is a physician, a beloved physician, a converted man, and the reality of that world is right there! You go through the gospels and it is right there. And the people understood it. The disciples understood it and Christ dealt with it. It was common knowledge in the day of Jesus Christ. And even a physician acknowledged the reality of the spirit world and their influence in the lives of the average human being.

But today, if you go to a doctor today, as I said earlier, and you mention that, they would think you're absolutely out of your mind. Scientists, educators, medical professionals believe that the only remedy is something you can touch, you can feel, that you can measure, you can put a thermometer on or whatever, and so they deal with that. And they scoff at the fact that there are spiritual forces at work influencing this world and the people that are in this world.

And if you doubt that, all you have to do really is to go to certain parts of any major city. I've traveled all over the country. I've been in all fifty states. I've been in every major city in the United States and you go to certain parts of any major city and you see the reality of the demon world. You see people that are obviously possessed.

A lot of street people, a lot of people that have had drug problems or alcohol problems, and they have the most bizarre behavior, violent behavior, occult behavior. And to look at that, the reality of the demon world is there.

You go to mentalist institutions and you see that. We'll talk about that a little bit later. You see people, as we just read, foaming at the mouth. You see people with bizarre behavior.

Look at the number of people involved in the occult today. You look at the advertisements for some of the video games that are advertised on television and it's scary. Look at the advertisements for the movies that are common. It is scary. And I hope none of God's people ever participate in those or allow their children to participate in those. Many people involved in the occult today. The content of the movies, the content of novels, of video games, it is everywhere! And we can definitely see if we have eyes to look that demon influence and evil spirit influence permeates our society. In the third world it permeates their society through worshiping of demons and worshiping of Satan.

So what is the point? Let's establish some points now. We've established the fact that in the Bible, the reality of the spirit world was ever there and ever before them. But let's carry on here and understand the reality of the spirit world.

The First Point we want to make is that the Bible tells us that:

Satan and demons can cause mental illness and physical illness.

The Bible is very clear about that. James Smyda had an excellent sermon on Job. Let's go back to Job 2 and see the obvious. Let's read the first seven verses of Job chapter 2. You see this is reality! What we're going to read is reality. Even though we can't see it, even though scientists can't measure it, it's reality. Job chapter 2 verse 1:

**Job 2:1.** Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the [Eternal], and Satan came also among them to present himself before [God]. (KJV)

Verse 2 of Job 2:

**Job 2:2.** And God said unto Satan, [Where have you come from]? And Satan answered, and [he] said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 3) And God said unto Satan, [Have you] considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, [he's] perfect and [he's] an upright man, one that [fears] God, and [he turns away from] evil? and still he [holds] fast [to] his integrity, although [you moved] me against him, to destroy him without cause. 4) And Satan answered the [Eternal, answered God], and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man [has] will he give for his life. (KJV)

You understand the story—what happened in chapter 1. Then in verse 5 of chapter 2, Satan says:

**Job 2:5.** But put forth [Your] hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse [You] to [Your] face. 6) And God said unto Satan,

Behold, he *is* in [your] hand; but [you can't take] his life. 7) Satan [went] forth, and [he] smote Job with sore boils from the [soles] of his foot unto [the] crown [of his head]. (KJV)

Very obvious that if God allows it, Satan can do it and will do it because he wants to kill, to steal, and to destroy.

Now let's go to Matthew chapter 12 and we're going to read verses 22 and 23. We're going to end up seeing here that Satan caused or a demon caused blindness and caused deafness. Matthew 12 verse 22:

**Matthew 12:22.** Then was brought unto him one possessed with [it says] a devil, (KJV)

It's *daimonion* again, a demon.

**Matthew 12:22b.** [He was] blind, and [he was] dumb [meaning mute]: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and [the mute] both [spoke] and saw. 23) And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David? (KJV)

So we see here very clearly that that spirit influence can cease somebody from talking or cease somebody from seeing.

I went to graduate school at Baylor University in Clinical Psychology. And we toured a number of mental institutions in the State of Texas as part of our training and curriculum.

And I wasn't converted at the time, but going through those mental institutions, it was a creepy thing. They weren't maybe as sophisticated as they are today, but I saw people foaming at the mouth. And I saw people screaming at the top of their lungs things about the spirit world. And I went into padded rooms where there were individuals in straight jackets, banging their heads against the wall, running from wall to wall. I saw people strapped down, screaming obscene and occult things.

And, at the time, it was a marvel to me. I had never in one of those before. But I've been in several and looking back on it, obviously you understand where the influence—I'm not saying in every case—but in many cases, it came from the spirit world. We read earlier in Luke chapter 9 about somebody foaming at the mouth. And many of them were doing that, drooling and foaming at the mouth, and had tics and twitches like there was something else inside their body.

And that is the reality today. It simply is that Satan and demons can cause mental illness, can cause physical illness. I'm not saying in every case, but it can be.

But that is not the major way Satan and his demons cause humans to suffer. Yes, those individuals who have those problems suffer greatly. But Satan wants the whole world to suffer, wants every individual to suffer because he knows

potentially, ultimately every one that has ever been born is a potential child of God. And he wants to steal, to kill, and to destroy.

You know in Revelation 12 and verse 9 Satan deceives the entire world. So what does he do to cause suffering and pain? He provokes men to pollute the air. He provokes men to pollute the land, the ground, the earth, the water. He provokes people to make things that pollute our homes, our cars, our places of work, all the plastics, all the synthetic carbons, all the synthetic clothes, all the synthetic foods, all the synthetic drugs that ultimately take their toll on the human race.

A recent study has shown—this was just in the paper a couple of weeks ago—that the average American has traces of over two hundred chemicals in their blood! Two hundred! Now they're minute; they're small, but nobody knows the cumulative effect of all those coming together and how it would alter our DNA and open a door for a cancer or some other disease.

Another way that Satan is provoking pain and suffering and ultimate hurt is—most people don't think about this—is through radio frequency interference. Every computer that you have broadcasts radio frequencies like Chernobyl sent out radiation. Every cell phone up to the ear blasts through the brain radio frequencies. RF are the radio frequencies that some in the narrow band width we get television sound and radio sound. But there is a broad spectrum of radio frequencies. And wireless internet—virtually downtown Spokane has wireless internet throughout the whole town. Many of us have wireless internet in our homes. And that's all done by radio frequencies that obviously can go through walls. Otherwise we couldn't listen to a cell phone or have a conversation inside a building or an automobile. And so those are passing through our bodies all the time.

And nobody knows what the ultimate result of that is. My suspicion is "It can cause disease. It can cause problems." But because Satan has provoked people for greed and for selfish reasons, there's no way that's going to get shut down. Nothing's going to happen there.

We've just touched the surface on the damage of genetically modified foods. Had a study here in Russia about a month ago that a control group of rats were fed regular grain and then another group of rats were fed genetically modified food and they died within a short period of time—developed all kinds of tumors and such! And we're just on the cusp of that. And Satan knows this, I believe, and provokes this to see all of humankind suffer.

Drugs, alcohol, and what I've just mentioned, that's why we have so many cancers. And he takes perverse pleasure in seeing people, human beings, God's potential children be hurt and to suffer all their lives. And it's going to get worse and worse and worse.

So the First Point is:

Satan can cause mental illness and physical illness, both directly but also through his influence of society.

Point Number Two:

Demons can cause physical harm to us and to others.

It is obvious when you read the Bible! Look at Matthew chapter 17. We've read some already where the demon tore at an individual or he was rolling around on the ground. Matthew 17, we're going to read verses 14 through 18.

**Matthew 17:14.** And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a *certain* man, kneeling down to him, and saying, 15) Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is [a lunatic], and sore vexed: for [he oftentimes falls] into the fire, and [often] into the water. (KJV)

Can you imagine watching your child do that? Verse 16:

**Matthew 17:16.** And I brought him to [your] disciples, and they could not cure him. 17) Then Jesus answered and said, (KJV)

We read an account of this earlier.

**Matthew 17:17b.** O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him to me. 18) And Jesus rebuked the [demon]; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. (KJV)

But again, what is the motivation? To steal, to kill, and to destroy. And this poor kid threw himself—you would think it was the demon behind him throwing him into the fire, into the water to try to kill this poor boy or make him suffer with burns.

Look at Acts chapter 19. This is a situation where there were some Jews who were self-described exorcists, were not converted, did not have God's holy spirit, and look what happened to them! Acts 19, we'll read verses 13 through 16.

**Acts 19:13.** Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them (KJV)

They took this upon themselves, this authority upon themselves.

**Acts 19:13b.** to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, (KJV)

God didn't command them to do that. They weren't converted. They just took it on themselves.

**Acts 19:13 continued:** saying, We adjure you by [the] Jesus whom Paul [preaches]. 14) And there were seven sons of *one* Sceva, a Jew, *and* chief of the priests, which did [this, which did] so. (KJV)

They took it upon themselves. They took on authority they didn't have. Verse 15:

**Acts 19:15.** And the evil spirit answered and said, [Hey,] Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are [you]? (KJV)

And you see they didn't have the spirit of God in them. And notice what happened in verse 16!

**Acts 19:16.** And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, (KJV)

This is a bunch of people, seven of them!

**Acts 19:16.** overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. (KJV)

Beat them all up! Super-human strength!

And so we see here that somebody that has a spirit like that can be dangerous. You have to be very, very careful about that.

And the fact is that drugs today, particularly drugs and certain kinds of drugs, seem to open a door, seem to remove a defense that God designed into the human being that keeps the spirit beings away from us because the average human being doesn't have a lot of interaction with the spirit world. And I think God designed it that way. But when drugs are taken somehow this barrier or this wall is reduced or lowered or crumbles because I can't tell you the number of times that you deal with demon problems drugs have been part of that—and no problem before the taking of drugs. And sometimes, particularly for our young people, it can occur with one time! One episode of taking the wrong drug and they have problems in that area for the rest of their lives. And demons can provoke violence and all manner of perversion among people who take drugs or who, as we're going to see in a little bit, involve themselves in the occult, because that's another way of opening that door.

So that is why we do not want to play or be around anybody that we suspect has that kind of influence. Super-human strength can bring problems, serious problems. So why on earth do we want to be around people who are influenced by demons? We should run away from them. We should stay away from them and we should stay away from any of the influences as we'll see in a little bit later.

So, as I said, Point Number Two is that:

Demons can cause physical harm to us and to others.

A Third Point, and frankly, this is the major point for God's people.

Satan and demons can cause wrong thoughts, wrong emotions,  
and wrong feelings.

Now we know in Ephesians 2 and verse 2—Mr. Armstrong quoted this regularly—Satan is called the prince of the power of the air. And Mr. Armstrong grew up in a time when there was no radio.

And then radio came. And it was like a miracle because you plugged this box into the wall—Dorothy's mom was telling us of this—and all of a sudden a voice comes out of this box. And somebody can be—she was in the State of Washington—and somebody can be in New York City and you're hearing them instantaneously. And that comes through airwaves across the air, through the air and all of a sudden, you hear a voice.

Well, Mr. Armstrong drew that very clear analogy with Satan being the prince of the power of the air to radio waves or television waves. And the fact is that those waves—and we know this is spiritual and it's not physical—but the analogy is true that they can come into our heads just like they come into a receiver of a radio and we hear the noise or the music or the voice. The same thing happens to us with thoughts, feelings, and emotions.

And I can tell you from personal experience I've been say driving along in my car and happy and everything's fine. And all of a sudden, bam—something comes into my head. It could be one of many things. And you think, "Well where did that come from? Where did I get that feeling? Thirty seconds ago I was fine. Now I got a problem! Or I have to deal with something."

And what Satan does, or demons do, is provoke us with thoughts and feelings. It could be anger. And you know this whole thing of road rage. Well, where does that come from? Somebody does something fairly innocuous in a car and somebody just goes postal. Pull out a gun and shoot somebody or ram somebody's car. Well, where does that anger come from?

What about pride, the feelings of self-importance and pride? Hurt feelings, dwelling on what somebody said or what somebody did or what somebody didn't do?

Depression—demons are depressed because they know their fate. And there are many, many demons that broadcast depressed feelings, depressed spirits. And sometimes I've had those—thankfully not very often—but sometimes you're depressed and there's no reason for it. You know we have so many blessings in the United States, as Bob was bringing out in his sermonette. We have so many blessings to be thankful for and yet, you can just have a depressed feeling. Where did that come from?

Bitterness, a root of bitterness, we're told in the Bible that's very, very bad. And sometimes people can have that and it just overtakes them. It overcomes them, a root of bitterness. Where does that come from?

Resentment, just being resentful about other people or circumstances or our own circumstances and that resentment is something that's part and parcel of the demon world because they know their ultimate fate!

Selfishness, "me," Satan is the ultimate, the originator of selfishness. Love is outgoing, but Satan is about coming in. Everything is "me and about me and mine." Where do those feelings come from?

And in this Laodicean Era, the Laodicean attitude of blindness to our sins just blinds us to the reality of how we come across to others, how we treat others. And people can talk about the Bible, get up in front of the pulpit, and speak about the Bible, but their own conduct belies what's in the Bible. And they are totally blind to that! Where does that come from?

What Satan wants to do and what the demons want us to do is to provoke us to sin in any form or any fashion. Whatever our weakness is, they will provoke us to sin because if we sin and we don't repent, guess what? We are stolen; we are killed; and we are destroyed.

And so let's understand that these wrong thoughts, wrong emotions, and wrong feelings are there to destroy us. And they come from outside us. And we have to deal with it.

Now Satan did this with the disciples. Let's look at Mark chapter 8 and see that Satan planted thoughts—in this case, Peter. And Christ did an unusual thing. Mark 8 and we're going to read verses 31 through 33. Christ is now beginning to teach the disciples that this is not a bed of roses and certain things are going to happen. Mark 8 verse 31:

**Mark 8:31.** And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. 32) And he [spoke] that openly [saying it openly]. (KJV)

But notice Peter's attitude! Where did this come from?

**Mark 8:32b.** And Peter took him, (KJV)

The implication is Peter grabbed Him or put his hands on Him.

**Mark 8:33 continued.** and began to rebuke him. (KJV)

Saying, "No. This isn't going to happen. You're not going to do this. This isn't going to happen to you."

Verse 33:

**Mark 8:33.** But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, (KJV)

Guess what He said? He could have said, "Peter, you're in a wrong attitude," or "Peter, you don't understand." But what He said was:

**Mark 8:33b.** Get [you] behind me, Satan: (KJV)

Why did He say that? Well, guess where that spirit came from, that attitude of saying, "Christ, you don't know what you're talking about," or "this isn't going to happen. I know better." Where did that come from? Christ clearly says it came from Satan. He says:

**Mark 8:33 continued.** for [you savor] not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men. (KJV)

And so, let's understand that in this case Satan probably himself, or certainly a powerful demon, put that thought in Peter's head. And those demons provoke wrong attitudes among particularly God's people.

Look at Matthew 26 and see another example. We'll read verses 6 through 15. And this is the case where Christ was in Bethany in verse 6. He was in the house of Simon the Leper. Matthew 26 verse 7:

**Matthew 26:7.** There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat [having a meal]. 8) But when his disciples saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste? 9) For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. (KJV)

In other accounts, we understand that Judas was behind this.

**Matthew 26:10.** When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why [do you] trouble [this] woman? [He's says, she's brought] a good work upon me. 11) [You're going to] the poor always with you; but [you won't] have [Me] always. (KJV)

Verse 12:

**Matthew 26:12.** For in that she [has] poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial. 13) [Truly] I say unto you, [Wherever] this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman [has] done, be told for a memorial of her. (KJV)

But then notice what happens right after this.

**Matthew 26:14.** Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests, 15) And [he] said *unto them*, What will [you] give me, and I will deliver him unto you? (KJV)

And we know in John 12 and verse 6 Judas was called a *thief*, because he had the bag. He was the treasurer and he was stealing from the tithes and offerings that were given to Christ. He was stealing from it. And obviously, he was the one leading this indignation because this money was coming out of his pocket. This money was coming out of his bag. He had no concern at all for the poor, but he had concern for his own pocket to the point that now he got so offended that he went at this time to the priests and cut this deal.

**Matthew 26:15b.** And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.  
(KJV)

Well, where did this attitude come from? And we know that it came from Satan. We know at one point Satan entered into Judas.

And so this is how Satan influences God's people. And this is far more dangerous than the bogeyman things that might cause hair to stand up on people's necks. I mean things moving around, strange sounds. Those are the things that can disturb us, yes. But the fact is that wrong attitudes, wrong thoughts, and wrong emotions are far more dangerous to God's people than any of these others.

Things moving around and all, I can remember traveling once. I was in another part of the country. I was tired. I got some study and prayer in and I went to sleep or I was trying to go to sleep. And I heard a click. And the light right beside the bed came on. Now it didn't take much to get me out of that bed and over quickly on my knees praying to God that whatever this thing is, is playing around and to rebuke him. And we'll talk a little bit about that later. But you see that gets our adrenalin going and drives us to our knees. Or if we're in the car and an emotion comes in, road rage or something, we pray right then. And the fact is that we would run away from that. It drives us to prayer in a flash!

But these wrong thoughts and emotions and feelings, they're a different story. They're far more dangerous to us. And God allows this to happen. God allows these thoughts and emotions and feelings to come into us as a test because He wants to know what we're going to do with those thoughts and what we're going to do with those emotions and what we're going to do with those feelings.

We won't turn there, but 1 Chronicles 12. Satan, we are told, stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel. Well, a thought came into David's head that "Hey, it'd be a good idea to number Israel," and all the reasons why he should; forgetting that God said, "Not to do that." And then he started the ball rolling. And then down the road, thousands of people died because of his sin. But it started with a thought or a feeling.

And so when these thoughts and feelings come in, God watches us to see: Are we going to entertain them? Are we going to cultivate them and feed them? And let it grow and grow and grow—feelings of pride or bitterness or resentment or anger or whatever? Or are we going to reject them?

The minute that feeling comes in, just stop what you're doing and pray and ask God, as Christ did, "Rebuke these thoughts. Rebuke this feeling. I don't want this!"

So let's understand that Satan and demons plant thoughts and emotions and feelings to test us to see if we will run with them and thereby, lead us to sin. That is the biggest way he can influence God's people. And he has been very successful at it. Witness the state of the Church today. So that is something that we have to be very, very careful about!

A Fourth Point is that:

Messing with the spirit world is not something we want to do!

It is not something that we want to do! Remember we read in Acts 9 about the vagabond Jews that were self-proclaimed exorcists. And they wound up beaten and naked and run away. They were messing with something they shouldn't be messing with! And we don't want to do that either because it can happen to us.

There was a student at Ambassador College in the mid-sixties who was studying the Bible and learning at college, and he was learning about this spirit world. And he told one of his fellow students that he wanted to see for himself if this was real because he kind of doubted it. And he went outside the campus upon a little hill, opened his arms up, and appealed to Satan to appear to him, appealed to Satan to show him if he was real. And he came down from that hill a different person. He came down from that hill, left Ambassador College, and was completely different because he got his wish. He messed with something that he shouldn't have messed with! And that's why we don't want to have anything to do with any of that.

Notice what God says in Deuteronomy 18 verses 10 through 12. Deuteronomy 18 beginning in verse 10, I'm going to read it out of the New King James. It's a little more clear. Deuteronomy 18 verse 10, notice what we're told. It applies today! God was trying to protect the nation of Israel and He's trying to protect His people today.

**Deuteronomy 18:10.** "There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, (NKJ)

Middle of verse 10:

**Deuteronomy 18:10b.** *or one* who practices witchcraft, *or* a soothsayer, *or* one who interprets omens, *or* a sorcerer, (NKJ)

Verse 11:

**Deuteronomy 18:11.** "Or one who conjures spells, *or* a medium, (NKJ)

Meaning: one that is in between a human being and the spirit world.

**Deuteronomy 18:11b.** or a spiritist, or one that calls up the dead. (NKJ)

Verse 12 now:

**Deuteronomy 18:12.** For all who do these things *are* an abomination unto the [Eternal], and because of these abominations the [Eternal] your God drives them out from before you. (NKJ)

We are not to have anything to do with that. That's why we should stay away from any occult influence.

My dad, when I was—I don't know—seven, eight-years-old, bought us a Ouija Board. And so there were two or three friends in the neighborhood that were all about the same age. And so we got this board out and played with it. We put our hands on the device that moves. It goes "yes," "no," or "toward numbers." And we asked a question and our fingers were on it. And I'm here to tell you: That thing moved! Nobody was pushing it. It moved! And scared the pants off of me! And that was the last time I had anything to do with that.

I was talking with a Church member here last week about a situation and he said, "Yea, when I was a kid, we had a Ouija Board. And it moved too. And so I took it out and threw it in the trash." And he said, "The next day it was on the same shelf where it was before." He said, "I did it again." The next day it was back on the shelf. He said, "So what I did is I took it to a trash can all the way across town." It was a little town. "All the way across town, put it in the trash can." And the next day, it was back in his room. Why? To get him to work on that, to open a door! And so what they did is they burned it. And that stopped the problem. But it is amazing!

Movies and video games are there to open doors. The Ouija Board opens a door into the spirit world. And you play with it and you get in deeper and deeper and deeper and then all of a sudden, you have an influence that you don't want. Books, drugs, are all ways that this influence can come into the lives of God's people or any human being for that matter.

So let's understand we want nothing to do with that. You don't want to watch commercials. You don't want to read books. You don't want video games, anything that has anything to do with it. And don't kid yourselves saying—particularly our young people—don't kid yourselves: "Well, I can handle this. I understand the difference." These beings are far more powerful than any human being. We need to respect that.

That leads us directly to the Fifth Point.

Christ gave the ministry power over demons.

Let's go to Luke chapter 10 and read verse 17, again the physician talking. Christ sent them out and gave them His power over the demons and also to heal. Luke 10 verse 17:

**Luke 10:17.** And the seventy returned again with joy, (KJV)

After they made this trip and notice they were excited and they were enthusiastic

**Luke 10:17b.** even the [demons (*daimonion*)] are subject unto us through [Your] name. (KJV)

Now here's the key: Through the name of Jesus Christ.

And so, here they are; they hadn't even really received God's holy spirit, but they called on the name of Jesus Christ and God gave them the ability, the power through His name (Christ did) to rebuke demons.

Notice Acts chapter 19 and we're going to read verses 11 and 12. This is the Scripture that we use and understand for anointed cloths. And we send out anointed cloths based on these two verses, Acts 19 verses 11 and 12. Referring to Paul:

**Acts 19:11.** And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: 12) So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them. (KJV)

So people can be anointed for mental problems, emotional problems. And you don't know if they're caused by demons or some other problem, but God hears that prayer and that anointing and He honors that.

Now sometimes, as we've seen before, it doesn't work. Let's go to Matthew 17. And some of the disciples tried to cast out a demon and it didn't work. And Christ had some advice for them. Matthew chapter 17 and we're going to read verses 19 through 21.

**Matthew 17:19.** Then came the disciples to Jesus apart [meaning privately and separately], and said, [We couldn't cast this demon] out? (KJV)

Christ had just cast him out. And they said, "Why couldn't we do it? What was the problem?" because before, as we just read, they were able to. Verse 20:

**Matthew 17:20.** [Christ] said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for [truly] I say unto you, If [you] have faith as [the] grain of [a] mustard seed, [you] shall say unto this mountain, Remove [here to some other] place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. (KJV)

Verse 21, He says:

**Matthew 17:21.** Howbeit this kind [of *daimonion* goes] not out but by prayer and fasting. (KJV)

Some are very powerful. Some are very strong. And it takes prayer and it takes fasting on the part of the individuals involved and particularly the minister involved to draw close to God to have that prayer answered.

But let's understand here in Point Five, the power doesn't come from any human being. It comes from God. It comes from Jesus Christ. And not a man! That is very important to understand. That is why we're going to see in a minute that even an archangel didn't use his power against a very powerful demon, but used the name of Jesus Christ.

That leads us to the Sixth Point.

God and Christ are more powerful than Satan.

And this is something we have to have faith in and confidence in. We don't have to be fearful of demons or evil spirits because God is more powerful. Look at 1 John 4 and verse 4. Let's understand this. There's no reason to fear the bogeyman. There's no reason to walk around in fear as we see here in 1 John 4 and verse 4. Notice what he says! Very plain speaking!

**1 John 4:4.** [You] are of God, little children, (KJV)

And we are. We're just little kids.

**1 John 4:4b.** [you] have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world [referring to Satan]. (KJV)

So the power through God's holy spirit in us is greater than any demonic power or any satanic power. Now that doesn't mean we go looking for trouble. That doesn't mean we walk down the main street with our six-gun and want to have a shoot-out because apart from God, we have no power at all. But with the spirit of God, it is more powerful than any evil spirit. But we do need to respect their power. And we do need to stay away from anything that could open a door, out of respect of that power—any involvement with the occult.

Now look at Jude verse 9. This is what I was referring to. Michael the archangel had a contention with Satan. And notice what Michael did, Jude verse 9.

**Jude 1:9.** Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, [did] not bring against him a railing accusation, but [he] said, The Lord rebuke [you]. (KJV)

And so there is a very simple answer.

Now in my life, I've had half a dozen times probably where I've had a situation like that.

One time when we were living in Lubbock, Texas, I was sound asleep. Dorothy was right beside me. And I felt something come through the wall above my head and it was like a blanket. It was like a cloud. But it was cold and it was evil and it

was scary. And it just came over the top of me. I was laying on my back and it just kind of started settling down before me.

And I'll tell you, you knew you were in the presence of something evil. And I came out of the bed, got down on my knees, and prayed immediately. And I said this; I said, "The Lord rebuke you," because I had no power at all. And it was something that for a few seconds was really scary. And yet, you go to God and God rebuked it and it went away just like that (sound of snapping fingers)! And you sit there and you think, "People who deny the spirit world they ought to experience that once or twice and there won't be any doubt."

And that's happened a few times, but every time, every time when you pray to God and ask God to take care of it, look to God—not a man—look to God, not to anything else and what we just read in 1 John 4 and verse 4 is absolutely true! It just goes away because demons and Satan himself have to obey God. They must obey God. And if you rebuke them in the name of Jesus Christ or ask God to rebuke them in the name of Jesus Christ, they must obey.

Look at Matthew chapter 7 and verses 7 through 11. This applies when we get into a situation whether it's an evil thought, an evil emotion, or a situation where you have some kind of encounter. And that is very rare by the way. And people should not be afraid about that because Matthew 7 gives us a promise. Matthew 7 verse 7:

**Matthew 7:7.** Ask, and it shall be given you; (KJV)

That's a promise!

**Matthew 7:7b.** seek, and [you] shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: 8) For every one that [asks receives]; and he that [seeks finds]; and to him that [knocks] it shall be opened. (KJV)

And then He gives an analogy of a human family, a father and children. Verse 9:

**Matthew 7:9.** Or what man is there of you, whom if his son [asks] bread, will he give him a stone? 10) Or if [his son asks] a fish, will he give him a [snake]? 11) If [you] then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to [him] that [asks]? (KJV)

And what greater thing is to be out of the clutches of this world, of this spirit force?

And if we go in earnestness and ask God to rebuke this thought, or rebuke this emotion, this thing that's eating me up, or rebuke a presence, this is clear: A loving Father is not going to reject that request! Our loving Father is not going to turn us over to that force if we don't want to be turned over to that force. Now that kid on the hill opened the door. We don't want to open that door. And God knows that and so, He will honor that request.

God and Christ are more powerful than any demon and certainly Satan himself.

That leads us to the Last Point and the one that we need to come away from this with is:

The spirit world is real! And we ignore it to our own peril!

If we ignore it, we're just open season. If we ignore wrong thoughts and emotions and feelings and don't look at the source, then shame on us! Because if we don't understand the spirit world, if we don't understand who our Adversary is, then when we are bombarded with feelings and emotions and thoughts, then we'll run with them. We'll let those thoughts and emotions eat us up.

Remember their goal—John 10 verse 10.

**John 10:10.** The thief [comes] not, but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: (KJV)

And if we ignore that and we ignore that force, then we're blind to that force! And we don't want to be blind to that.

When circumstances come to tempt us, if we get in a situation where we're tempted to do something we know is wrong or to say something that we know is wrong, it helps us to realize and think, "Well, what's behind this thought? What's behind this urge to say something or do something? What's behind this emotion?" And if we analyze it in that context, then it's a lot easier to get our thoughts and emotions and feelings under control because we realize who's behind it. And then we can go to God and ask Him to rebuke it.

Look at 1 Peter 5 and verse 8. We know this is the verse that talks about Satan as a roaring lion, but we want to emphasize the first part of this verse. 1 Peter 5 and verse 8, we talk about:

**1 Peter 5:8b.** the devil, as a roaring lion, [walks] about, seeking whom he may devour: (KJV)

But notice the very first part! It says:

**1 Peter 5:8.** Be sober, (KJV)

Now the Greek means *to be calm* or it can mean *to be collected in spirit*. Collected in spirit! That means, we're not rattled. We're not upset. We're not afraid. We're not having the hackles on our neck come up and all of that.

He says:

**1 Peter 5:8.** Be calm and collected in spirit, be vigilant; (KJV)

The Greek there means *cautious* or *take heed*.

When the thought comes in our head, take heed, when the desire to say something out of anger or emotion—then, be cautious. "Be careful" is what he's saying. So:

**1 Peter 5:8.** Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary (KJV)

Our enemy, the one who wants us stolen, killed and destroyed:

**1 Peter 5:8b.** as a roaring lion, [he walks] about, seeking whom (KJV)

It says:

**1 Peter 5:8 continued.** he may devour: (KJV)

In other words, has the potential to devour. And those that have the potential are those that are not close to God, that are allowing these thoughts and emotions and feelings to come in and not doing anything about it, running with it, or who are playing footsy with the occult. Those are ones he may devour. He cannot devour those that are close to God that rely on God. And at the first sign of some kind of problem like this, they're down on their knees. Or if in their car or wherever they are, they're praying mightily for God to rebuke these thoughts and feelings and emotions.

And we need to realize that this thought or emotion can't come from God. It's got to have some other source.

Let's go to 1 Corinthians 12, the last Scripture under Point Number Seven. 1 Corinthians 12, we know that 1 Corinthians 12 is talking about spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 13, of course, we call The Love Chapter because that is the better way. But let's understand spiritual gifts, we want to have. 1 Corinthians 12 verse 1 to set the context:

**1 Corinthians 12:1.** Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. (KJV)

Paul says, "I want you to understand that there are spiritual gifts given by God. And he goes on to list them. The one we're talking about today is found in verse 10.

**1 Corinthians 12:10.** To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; (KJV)

Notice this. We don't often talk about this.

**1 Corinthians 12:10b.** to another discerning of spirits; (KJV)

Discerning of spirits! That means the ability to recognize that this thought isn't from God, that this emotion is something that God condemns. This feeling is not a feeling that Christ would have. Discerning of spirits—where they come from. And we should all want to be able to discern when there is an evil spirit present in

our thoughts or our emotions or our feelings. And we should pray for that gift to understand when something's coming into our head that shouldn't be there. And then we reject it. We ask God to rebuke it and to fill the vacuum with His holy spirit.

So, let's conclude now. We have established that the spirit world is real. It was real in the times of ancient Israel. It was real to the people at the time of Jesus Christ that Satan exists. The demon world exists and that their goal is to steal and to kill and to destroy.

But we also—let's understand—we don't have to be afraid. But we have to do our part! We don't run around in fear because we're told that God's spirit is not a spirit of fear. But we have to do our part. We have to have faith that God is in control. We have to have faith that God is more powerful than any demon. And we have to do our part in staying away from any influence. Any influence at all! Television, books, games, discussions, whatever, any influence!

And we need to have the discernment through that spirit that we just talked about, the gift that we just talked about, to discern when we feel moody or when we have wrong thoughts or we have wrong attitudes that are not godly and something that Christ wouldn't have. We need to ask God to give us that spirit of discernment and that discerning of spirits to know that.

And we do our part by analyzing what's going through our head. Some people just go through life and this stuff comes in their head and they just follow along like a puppet on a string. And we have to have the discernment to be able to pull the reins up and say, "What a minute! This thought, this feeling, this emotion is not from God and I can't allow this to go on." And then that drives us to do our part in prayer and staying close to God. That's why we need to pray daily.

Let's go to two Scriptures in closing. Matthew chapter 6 verse 13. Christ in the outline for the prayer said that we should pray about this every single time we pray—our morning prayer, our evening prayer, if we get a prayer in, in the middle of the day. I'm going to read it out of the New King James. The NIV says the same thing. Matthew 6 verse 13, it says:

**Matthew 6:13.** And do not lead us into temptation [or testing], but deliver us from the evil one. (NKJ)

King James says "evil." It should be translated "the evil one."

**Matthew 6:13b.** For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. (KJV)

We should pray for that deliverance every day because Satan doesn't take a day off. His demons don't take a day off. They want to steal, to kill, and to destroy and they're going to do everything in their power to make that happen. So we have to pray every day to be delivered from those forces. And if we're close to God and have God's holy spirit and have that spirit of discernment, we will do what we need to do to protect ourselves from that, but we need to be aware of it.

And above all, we need to stay close to God. If we get apart from God, we let up; if we stop praying and studying the way we should; if we're not involved or committed to the Church and what the Church is doing and what God is doing through the Church; and we kind of drift off, then we open those doors. So let's be careful about that.

One final Scripture we should take away and remember this always is Romans 8 and verse 31. Let's not let the reality of the spirit world make us afraid or have us lose sleep. We don't have to do that. Romans 8 and verse 31 tells the reality of where we are. Paul says:

**Romans 8:31.** What shall we then say to these things? (KJV)

Well, here's what he says:

**Romans 8:31b.** If God *[is]* for us, who can be against us? (KJV)

No human being can stand against us. No demonic spirit can stand against us. Not even Satan himself, if God is with us. And if God through His spirit is in us and if we are close to Him and we have faith in Him and we do what we need to be doing, then nothing can stand against us. Nothing at all!

So let's understand the reality of the spirit world and let's stay close to God in these end times.