***Know your Enemy – Satan

Colossians 2:18-19

COL-444***

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We direct your attention this morning to the truth of the book of Colossians, as we begin a new section in Colossians 2:18-19. The subject is "The Error of Angelic Worship," segment number one.

In Colossians 2:16-17, Paul has warned the Colossian Christians not to follow the Jews' Mosaic Law, human works way of life. This was a system of self-effort to do right and to please God. But it was a system under which the most sincere person, with the most dedicated effort, was always a failure. The sin nature always brought the person down, even when he knew what was the right thing to do.

So, the apostle Paul points out, in Romans 8:3-4, that what the Mosaic Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh (the sin nature of man) God did – sending His Own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh. He was a man, but He was a little different. He didn't have a signature. He was in the likeness of sinful flesh in it. And as offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirements of the law (all those righteous requirements of the Mosaic Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. And what Paul is saying is that by the human effort and sincerity, the Mosaic Law, a system of great righteousness and truth, could not be fulfilled.

However, along comes the Christian. And with the power of the Holy Spirit, he does all those things. He rises to the righteousness in Christ found in the Mosaic Law. And finally, there is a victory that the Jews never dreamed of. In Romans 7:12, the apostle Paul says, "So then the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy, and righteous, and good." There's no question about what the Law of Moses contained (the 613 principles that it contained). These were holy. These were righteous. These were good things. There wasn't anything wrong with the Law? People just did not have the capacity to do those things.

So, why are we trying to live by the Mosaic Law as, unfortunately, most of Christendom still does today? Why? Because they never understood the power of the Spirit of God and of the church-age power system that Christ has now given us, so that we can fulfill the Law. Instead, the Colossian Christians are told to follow a different way of life – the way of the grace of God, with the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, who involves us, working in our behalf. And we have all spiritual blessings already to our account. And they belong to us to claim.

What spiritual blessing you need today? What is the problem in your life? What is the solution from the world; the sin nature within you; and, Satan, that you need? God has already worked that out for you, and I can guarantee you that if you stay on the straight and narrow path, and you take that the humility of being able to be teachable, you'll find the way.

Now, the Lord Jesus Christ has provided, therefore, for His church body of saints (the royal family of God) a way to live a godly life, which is pleasing to God the Father, and to grow into the image of Christ in spiritual maturity. It's terrible to see Christians who are babies. It is terrible to see Christians who are so immature that they act as children. One of the characteristics of children is they make bad choices. They make bad decisions. And they have bad attitudes because their childlike.

You look at people who say, "Well, I think I'll get married." Then they go about it in a mindlessness that you cannot believe. They never look at this person and say, "Down the line, this person's going to have a great influence on my children. Down the line, this person is going to change." Look at this gal. Boy, she's really peachy now, but I was instructed a long time ago to look at her mother. That's what you're going to marry. That's how she'll be someday. She may not be so peachy. And if that's all you're looking for, you're going to be in for a big disappointment.

What on earth possesses Christians not to understand that: "I have to do it the way Jesus would do it?" That's it. I have to be Christlike. And I don't put the sex before the marriage, and I keep it within it, in its isolation and its sanctity. And I don't walk through the world as if the world is my friend, because if I'm friends with the world, the Bible tells me that I'm the enemy of God. Why do I have to get bruised and beaten to learn that God's way is the only way, and not to be so caught up in doing it my way? That's the Mosaic Law – human effort. However, Christ has given us a way to be winners. And most people, even when they know better, are choosing to be losers.

Now, along with victory that God gives us as Christians: over the sin nature; over the world system of life, with all of its temptation; and, over the devil, the Christian in the service of his Heavenly Father can receive his divine mission, and can fulfill the mission of good works, for which he will receive eternal rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ in heaven, to enjoy forever.

It comes as a great surprise to most church people, if they ever think about their mission, or if they ever think about: "Why on earth was I born, and what do I have (the capacities and abilities that I have), both on a human level and on a spiritual level?" What is it for? Well, Ephesians 2:10 says, "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, for good works." Which good works? "God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them." We have a mission. And as soldiers of Jesus Christ, we receive our marching orders, and we identify our spiritual abilities. And we know what God has called us to do. He has called us to do something more than go to work in order to buy food, so that we can eat and stay alive, and rest up and sleep, and accumulate some things, and then go to work again. There is more to it than that.

2 Corinthians 5:10 puts it this way: For we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." This is rewards for service. This is rewards for staying in temporal fellowship. If you don't stay in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ and your Heavenly Father, you're going to stay in fellowship with Satan. Those are the only two ways you can go.

1 Corinthians 3:12: "Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones (divine good works), wood, hay, or straw (human good works), each man's work will become evident. For the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire. And the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work:" "If any man's work is Christian service, which he has built upon it (salvation) remains, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work (human good) is burned up, he shall suffer loss. He himself shall be saved, yet as through fire – the fire of God's evaluating judgment."

So, what we are called to, Christians, is a superhuman way of life. And if you don't understand that, then you're going to waste the time allotted in your lifespan. And you will find that instead of an enriched heaven, you miss the boat. It is so tricky.

Please listen carefully as I read a paragraph from Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder of Dallas Seminary, in his systematic theology on the nature of the grace way of life, contrasted to the Mosaic way of life – the self-effort way of life. If you don't get this key, you will not know how to walk through the devil's world. And nobody was more effective in his presentation than Dr. Chafer.

This is from Volume 4 Systematic theology: "If the manner of life under grace is superhuman, so, also the provided enablement is supernatural. And it is limitless as the infinite power of God. Since God has proposed a humanly impossible manner of life, He has in full consistency, provided the Spirit who gives life. Too much emphasis cannot be placed on the fact that, since God had proposed the impossible rule of life, and provided the sufficient Spirit, the believer's responsibility is thereby changed from being a struggle of the flesh to being a reliance on the Spirit. Grace thus introduces a new problem for the believer's life, which is wholly foreign to every aspect of the Law. It is the problem of the adjustment of the heart to the holy presence of the Spirit, and of maintaining the unbroken attitude of dependence on Him. The new principle of achievement consists in getting things accomplished in the believer’s daily life and service by trusting the power of another, rather than by trusting the energy of the flesh.

"The revelation concerning this new problem of life under grace constitutes a major part of the teaching of the epistles, not only as a faith principal directly taught in the epistles, it is implied and assumed in every injunction under grace. The unfolding of the precise relationship between the personality of the spirit and the personality of the believer is not omitted. Experimentally, the believer, when empowered by the Spirit, will be conscious only of the exercise of his own faculties. The Spirit does not disclose his presence directly. His ministry is to reveal and glorify Christ. His presence will be evidence, however, by the victory that is wrought, which victory could only be wrought by the Spirit.

"Thus, either the 'by works' principle of the Law or the 'by faith' principle of grace may be chosen by the believer as a record of achievement within the deepest issues of Christian conduct in service. If these heaven-high demands are undertaken in the energy of the flesh, they become purely legal in character. If they are undertaken in full reliance on the provided energy of the Spirit, they are purely gracious in character. One is wholly within the scope of the covenant of the Law, which covenant is based on works. The other is wholly within the scope of the covenant of grace, which covenant is based on faith.

Thus, the teachings of grace, when attempted in the energy of the flesh, become a legal code, the demand of which are most impossible to meet. How very many Christians are under this aspect of Law, even those who give some attention to the actual precept of grace?"

So, even Christians who know better still fail to walk in dependence upon the Holy Spirit. And they walk in the cleverness of their soul – of their emotions from the sin nature, in what moves them from people around them who don't know what they're talking about. They're taking the advisement of people whom Satan has thrown in your path to point you down the wrong way. It is impossible to be a victor in the Christian life if you do not take Satan and his demon angels seriously.

They are daily a formidable opposition to the grace way of life in Christ Jesus. They fear and they hate grace Christianity. Satan and his demons are constantly seeking to divert you as a Christian from the Holy Spirit, winner, power system, to the Law, self-power, loser system – legalism in place of grace. Yes, we, under grace, have rules we keep. You betcha – lots of them. They are the commandments of the Lord. But we don't go about doing things to gain favor and merit with God. We've got all the blessings already on our account. Because we are in the royal family of God, all the riches already belong to us.

What the Christian faces is a spiritual combat with the spirit world of Satan, the objective of which is to destroy the spiritual well-being of the Christian, and to cause him to waste his life span. A chill should go through your heart and your soul at the thought of wasting your lifespan – wasting the enrichment for which you were born, that the Judgment Seat of Christ will reveal in such a magnificent way. And if you do not stay on top of it, that is exactly what will happen to you – you will waste your life span.

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul reminds us: "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, and the heavenly places." Paul says, "The problem is Satan and his agents – the demon angels.

So, the Christian faces the threat of being incapacitated in his Christian service, and silenced as God's Ambassador to the Lord to the lost – no mission accomplished; and, no rewards in heaven. The mature Christian understands that the enemy is Satan. And it is easy for us to forget who the enemy is; and, so easy, therefore, to get off-track, and to be open to a sudden attack – to be trapped in something that Satan has led us into.

**Know Your Enemy**

You have to know your enemy. In a military experience, this is constantly drilled into you. Know your enemy. And sometimes, it's very easy to be careless about that.

I remember one day at officer candidate school at Quantico, Virginia in the Marine Corps, the instructor held up a Japanese soldier's uniform. He had taken it off some Japanese soldier. It was a typical sized uniform, and it was small. It was obviously for a short person when you looked at that. It was a very small uniform. The instructor said, "Look at this. Are you going to be worried about somebody who is a shrimp like this?" And I thought to myself, "Yeah, I am, because that shrimp knows how to be my enemy. That shrimp knows how to do me a lot of damage. He is not to be discounted." And I thought it was not a good idea for the instructor to suggest that we should underestimate the enemy in any way, even if his uniforms were small. And, as was possibly demonstrated in the South Pacific, that enemy was very deadly.

So, you need to know your enemy. And before we get further into our new Colossians passage, and what we were headed for, the first thing Paul says is, "Don't let anybody take away your prize." And that's where we're headed. What is your prize in life, such that this is what the devil's after? This is what Satan wants to take away from you – your prize that you have as a member of the royal family of God.

**Satan Appears as an Angel of Light**

First of all, we need to know our enemy, and be reminded of the way he works. So, listen carefully. In 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, the apostle Paul says, "Satan will parade (he will masquerade) as an angel of light with great spiritual insight, and he uses human beings to do this:" that woman in your life, or that man in your life, that you think has some great advice and some great wisdom to you, may be mouthing the words of Satan. When Peter, in all sincerity, told the Lord that Christ would not die, and that that could not happen, Jesus said, "Get behind me, Satan. You don't know what you're talking about," because at that moment, Peter's sincerity were the words of Satan thinking.

So, you have to know that the devil does not come to you as some guy who is red with a pointed tail, and a pitchfork in his hand, and a couple of horns to boot. 2 Corinthians 11:13-15: "For such men (the false teachers) are false apostles: deceitful workers, disguising themselves as the apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore, it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their deeds."

People all over religious television are parading themselves as instruments of the voices of God. And what are they? They're mouthing the thoughts of Satan. And they are masquerading as people of light, when in fact they are people of spiritual darkness. Be prepared not to be ready to listen to anybody's advice that you have not confirmed by the Word of God. And don't put yourself in a position where you are subject to that kind of advisement.

Then there's another thing about Satan. In Isaiah 14:14, Satan is describing the nature of his rebellion against God in heaven – his final objective: "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, and I will make myself like the Most High God." You want to be aware that Satan wants to be worshiped as a supreme being. He wants you to act toward him with great respect as the one to whom you're subject. That's deity.

In Matthew 4:8-9, Satan is trying to tempt Jesus: "Again the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things (these nations) I will give you if you'll fall down and worship me. Don't go to the cross to become the King. If you'll worship me, all the kingdoms of the world will be under your authority. You'll be my adjutant.'" Satan wants to be treated as a supreme being.

We also have this pointed out in Ephesians 2:1-2: Paul says, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked, according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air." Satan is the prince of the atmosphere around the world. That's another way of saying, "He's the king of this world – of the spirit that's now working in a sense of disobedience."

So, learn this. Satan is going to come and masquerade as good advice – spiritual enlightenment. And if you are not careful, and if you are not walking in temporal fellowship, and if you don't know your doctrine, you'll be suckered in. And then you'll stand there by the side of the road, whimpering: "How did this happen to me? How do I get into this position? Look where I am? It is because you listened to someone who looked like an angel of light.

**Satan Wants to be Treated as Deity**

Secondly, he wants to be treated as God. He wants you to be in subjection to him.

**Satan Rules over the Nations of the World**

Thirdly, as we've already indicated, you should know about your enemy, that, as we've already pointed out, he does rule over the nations of the world. 1 John 5:19: "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." Yes, in the United States, Satan's power is restrained because of all the biblical, evangelical Christians who are knowledgeable in the Word of God, and especially those such as yourselves, who are trained in the deep things of church doctrine. You are a bulwark against the encroachments of Satan in this nation. And our nation is preserved from a lot of evil because of Christians like yourself. But in general, Satan controls what nations do. And for some nations, it's pretty easy (obvious) to see that that's true.

In John 12:31, Jesus says, "Now judgment has come upon this world, and now the ruler of this world shall be cast out." The cross is about ready to take place. The final confrontation between Satan and Christ is going to take place on Calvary's Hill. The promise is in Genesis 2:15 that this would happen. Now it's fulfilled. And Christ whips Satan down completely, and comes through victorious. And he (Satan), who rules all nations, is finally defeated. And that's what Jesus said: "He rules the world now, but he is on his way out."

What do unbelievers in these nations do? They follow Satan's thinking. What do carnal Christians do in these nations? They follow Satan thinking?

**Satan is a Murder and a Liar**

Next, you should also know this about Satan. He is a murderer and a liar (John 8:44). For some of you (some Christians in carnality), he doesn't care. He wants you there. You're doing his job. But if you're going about doing the Lord's work, you better know that you're under his protective custody, or Satan would do you in. He wants to silence you, and he wants you to believe his lies. That is the nature of Satan.

So, recognize that, when you listen to people who listen to Satan, they have murderous intent in their hearts, and they are liars.

**Satan Wants to Injure Christians**

Next, in Peter 5:8, is the advice of Peter to us as Christians: "Be of sober spirit. Be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, that slenderer, prowls about, like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." He is on the attack, seeking to injure Christians. A Christian who is walking in temporal fellowship is under the protective custody of the Lord Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. But if you step out of that temporal fellowship walk, the devil is going to pounce on you. He's just waiting to have a chance to hit you.

So, here you are: a Christian, walking along, enjoying your time with the Lord, fruitfully serving Him, having a great testimony, and being used in His mission of service, one day; and, the next day, you're down silent. Something happened. And in a moment of time, you gave the devil an opening, and he pounced on you, because he's always pussyfooting around, waiting for the chance. And he has all of his demons, of course, helping him do that.

1 Corinthians 10:12: "Therefore, let him who thinks he stands, take heed, lest he fall." OK, you've been a Christian a long time. You've been in the service of the Lord a long time. You've gone through a lot of Christian service. And it's something you enjoy, and something that you're honored to do.

This is the time of year in Berean Christian Academy when we ask our teachers and staff to make their commitment for service in the next school year. And they fill out this form, and it comes to me. And I opened one that came from one of our staff members, on which was written, "Yes, I'll be on the staff next year. And I appreciate the privilege of serving." That is enthusiastic to be honored by God, and to appreciate the fact that you've been called to that kind of service, which is the heart of all these people that work with us.

However, in the back of your mind, always remember that Satan can bring us down. He is a prowling lion. And about the time you think you're very stable as a Christian, one little thing can happen, and all of a sudden, all your spiritual stability goes flat down, and drained down. All you have to do is sit in church, and find one thing, boy, that you don't like to hear. Why does a person walk out of a ministry like Berean Church, which is an explanatory ministry? All you're hearing is what God thinks. That should be good. But because you hear something you don't like, all of a sudden you're gone. Have you improved your situation? No. And, of course, that's exactly what the devil wants. Once you're in trouble, the first thing the devil says is, "Don't show up," because then you don't hear anything to make him look bad.

**Satan Wants to Shoot Down our Shield of Faith**

Next: here's a threatening one, in Ephesians 6:16. You better know this about your enemy: "In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. Satan is constantly shooting flaming arrows against the Christian. And our only protection is to hold up the shield of faith. We know what the Word of God says. And we act according to it. And we know the basic principle that: "Greater is He who is in us (the Holy Spirit) than he (Satan) who is in the world." And we deflect his flaming arrows. But if you do not have that confidence in the truth (the inerrancy of the Word of God), and if you do not have your confidence that Bible doctrine is the mind of God, then you're a sitting duck for the devil. He will shoot you down.

You have to walk with the realization that you are in spiritual combat. So, don't go home and say, "Boy, I am glad I'm not in some kind of spiritual combat here, like some of these people who are in Christian service." You are in spiritual combat, and you are in Christian service. And your job is as important as anybody else who, all day long, is in Christian activity.

**Satan Blinds People to the Gospel**

There's another thing you need to know about your enemy, Satan. In 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, he blinds people to the gospel of the grace of God: "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose care the god of this world (Satan) has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." Satan is in there to blind them. God the Holy Spirit reveals concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment, to alert people to the situation. And the gospel gives them the solution that God has provided. And they make their choice.

Well, if Satan blinds people to the gospel of the grace of God, what are they going to go for in order to be saved? They're going to go to the gospel good works. They're going to go to the gospel of sacramentalism. Do you know what sacramental ism is? A sacrament is a means of getting the grace of God: "I eat the Lord's Supper, and I get credit toward going to heaven. I earn merit. I have water baptism, and I have credit to my account of earning merit. And I do good works (human good works) – works of mercy, and charity. It gives me credit with God." But God doesn't work through sacraments. Those are all human effort things. But He does work through the grace gift of believing His word. He has made the provision. And Satan is the one who blinds people to the gospel, so that some do not realize that, without it, their future is really desperate.

**Satan Propagates False Doctrines**

Then, Satan is always propagating false doctrines. 1 Timothy 4:1: "But the Spirit explicitly says that, in latter times, some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and the doctrines of demons." Yes, Christian, you too can be brought down by some aspect of the doctrines of demons. I've seen it many times in my half-century at Berean Church – a terrific, solid Christian, and all of a sudden, he gets shipwrecked spiritually, because some doctrinal principle has been introduced to him that is not the Word of God. It is the word of man, and the doctrine of demons. And he gets off into this kind of horrendous deception.

The charismatic movement is a primary example of the horrendous deception of seeking to have something more and closer with God, when in fact, it is a satanic deception that takes you far afield from where the Holy Spirit is really working. So, know this about your enemy. He will, if he can, cause you to pick up some doctrinal aberration.

Here's one expression that I notice that people use when they get into such an aberration. They say, "Boy, my eyes have been opened." No, they haven't been. A cloud has been brought over your eyes. Your eyes were open when you were with the truth of Scripture. Now you're with an alien idea that is not the Word of God.

**Satan Drives People Insane**

Then, in knowing your enemy, you should know that Satan drives people insane. In Mark 5:5, they're talking about a man that Jesus confronted. It was in a tomb area: "And constantly, night and day, among the tombs, and in the mountains, he was crying out and gashing himself with stones." Those who worship Satan, and those who are under control of Satan, are blood-letters, like the prophets of Baal, when they were trying to have their confrontation with Elijah. When they couldn't get the fire to light, they started cutting themselves, and bleeding. And here, this man was being just insane. He was as crazy as they come.

Jesus takes out the demon spirit (agent of Satan). And this man is brought to rationality. His craziness is reversed. Notice verse 15: "And they came (the herdsmen) to Jesus, and they observed the man who had been demon possessed, sitting down, clothed, and in his right mind." This was the very man who had had the Legion of Demons: "And they became frightened." When they saw what happened here, they were really frightened.

This is what Satan does to people on a human level. Our concern is to go spiritually insane. And that's what happens to Christians. The Bible calls it "carnality." We refer to it as "backsliding." But a person is out of sync with spiritual reality. And that's exactly what Satan is always going to do. And you needn't think that you're immune to it. Just be humble. If you're not sure, don't ever blow off something you hear taught from this pulpit: "I've never heard that. I don't know about that. It really makes me uncomfortable." Put it on the back burner, and let it stew a while. And if it's truth, God will make it clear to you. If it isn't, you can just pass it off, and go on with the rest. But Satan will take away your sanity.

**Satan Wants us to be Friendly with the World**

Then, is it OK to be friendly with the world? Is it OK to be friendly with the system that Satan controls? James 4:4 tells us that friendship, or indifference, toward Satan makes the Christian the enemy of God. Paul says: "You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." You need to teach your children that the world is not God's friend. The world is not going to do things like Jesus would do them. It's not going to be Christlike. The world is not our friend. It is the devil's structure all the way. If you're going to be the friend of the world, then you're going to be the enemy of God.

Rutgers University in the East had passed a rule that the Christian organization (I think it was the inter-varsity group) could no longer meet on the campus as one of the accepted clubs, because they would not permit anybody who is not a Christian to be the head of their organization of their club. And that was discriminating. If some non-Christian (some Jewish person) came along, who didn't believe in Jesus Christ, and he was automatically disqualified from being the president of that chapter of inter-varsity group, the university said: "You can't do that. That's discrimination. We don't allow that."

But if a Buddhist group said that they didn't want a Christian, they wouldn't make an issue of that. It as the Christian who is under the gun. It is the people who are the real family of God. They're the ones that the world is not friendly to. So, if you can walk through this world, and, boy, you're a hail-fellow-well-met, then there's no problem with you, and the world just loves you, you better take a look at yourself, because the world is not going to be cordial toward those who walk through it, and will not do it your way. Will you be ridiculed? Yeah.

A few years ago, as a teenager, I was invited to a party. I lived in Chicago, and there was a little church on the corner. It was a girl's birthday party, and it was all the church kids – the kids I knew. So, my mother bought a present, and I came in there with my present, with all the other kids. Then we were going to play a game. Oh, that's good. I've been with the Friday night club at church. We would into different peoples' homes, playing games. And these were the same kids.

Well, this night, now, it's in somebody's home, and it's this birthday party, and they're playing spin-the-bottle. Here you are, sitting in a circle, and the bottle spins. The girls are here, and the boys are over her. However the bottle is point to, when it stops spinning, you have to go outside and do some lovey-dovey stuff. Well, right away, I'm on guard. I'm USMC Marine Corps all the way. And there's something about this territory that seems very dangerous to me. And I'm like what? 13- or 14-years-old or something? And that offended me.

Then it got worse. They would have boy, girl, boy, girl, all around a circle, and then they would turn the lights off. Then you were supposed to kiss the girl next to you. And if you got caught, suddenly the lights come on. You got caught, and you got penalized. So, this is going on for some time. And there was a girl I never met (never knew). And I'm minding my own business, and letting her mind hers. And this is really getting offensive now.

Then somebody says, about the girl next to me, who is supposed to be my partner: "Jane is not having any fun." And Jane said, "Can I help it if I have such a poor partner?" And I'm looking around: "Who is she talking about?" Are you going to be ridiculed because you might be part of the world's crummy system of doing things? Yep. But in the back of my mind, I didn't know all that much about spiritual things. But I had been reared, even in Lutheranism, such that I had a lot of biblical knowledge. And this was not the way the Lord does things. This is not Christlike. To me, this was a thing of the world. These kids never asked to play these games when we met at the church Friday Night Club. But, here, now the pastor is not there. They're on their own, and this is what they want to do? If you're going to be Satan's friend, his system of the world is going to drag you down, and he'll turn you into dirt. Do you want to do that?

**Satan is a Loser**

Let's look at one more factor about knowing your enemy, Satan. This guy is a loser. Do you want to follow a loser? You should know that the judgment of God has already been passed against him. In Matthew 25:41, the Lord Jesus gives us an insight, and says, concerning His judgment of the gentiles, when He returns to this earth at His Second Coming: "Then He will also say to those on his left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire, which has been prepared for the devil and his angels." The lake of fire (hell) has been prepared for the devil and his angels. When he rebelled against God originally in Heaven, Satan was taken from his position of honor, being at the honor guard – one of the cherubs, honoring the throne: the holiness of God. And he was removed from his position in Heaven. And God passed judgment upon him, and upon his demon angels (about a third of them that followed him), and they were condemned, such that they were going to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

Now, the book of the Revelation gives us a picture of future things. And, lo and behold, it picks up this destiny of Satan. Revelation 20:10: "And the devil, who deceived them (the people of the world), was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also, and they will be tormented, day and night, forever and ever." Now the beast and the false prophet had been thrown in there 1,000 years earlier. And they're still alive – conscious. So, hell is not being wiped out of existence. And here, the mission that descends against Satan, is carried out.

So, the apostle Paul is warning the Colossian Christians of the greatest potential loss that they face in their lives is at the hand of Satan. So, know your enemy. These are his characteristics. This is the way he goes about doing things. If you abandon the grace spiritual power system for the legalism of the Mosaic Law, then you're playing right into the devil's hands.

That brings us to Colossians 2:18, where Paul begins with the principle: "Do not let anybody rob you of your prize." And what that prize is, we shall look at this evening.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1995

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