



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Systematic Theology #49

“The Present Activity of Satan and His Angels”

TRANSCRIPT

Well, it's two minutes after seven and I don't see anybody on their way in, except for one. So let's go ahead and begin with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of the study of the word of God again, and we ask Thy blessing upon us now as we consider again the ministry of Satan. We pray that Thou wilt preserve us from him and enable us, Lord, to understand his devices and his stratagems and to know how to rest upon Thee for deliverance and victory. We commit the hour to Thee.

In the name of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

[Message] Now, tonight we are continuing our studies in satanology, and the subject is “The Present Activity of Satan and His Angels.” And our next meeting, which will not be next Monday but the following Monday, I have to be out of town next Monday night. We will study demonology and its relationship to our subject but tonight, “The Present Activity of Satan and His Angels.”

The history of the serpent in the life of the son of man is the history of the entry of the strong man's house by our Lord, Jesus Christ. And of his binding of the strong man

as he, himself, expresses it in the third chapter of the Gospel of Mark. If you have your Bibles turn with me and let’s read a few verses beginning with Mark chapter 3 in verse 22, Mark chapter 3 in verse 22,

“And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, ‘He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the demons casteth he out demons.’ And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, ‘How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand? And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house. Verily I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies with which they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation. Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.’”

Jesus had healed the dumb demoniac and they had said, “He is casting out demons by Beelzebub.” And Our Lord pointed them to a simple fact that if he were casting out demons by Beelzebub, Satan would be casting out Satan and such is illogical and impossible. Then he went on to say that that no man can enter into the strong man’s house and spoil his goods except he first bind the strong man then he will be able to spoil his goods and by that parable he teaches us that if he is to overcome Satan he must enter into Satan’s house and he must bind him, and then he is able to spoil Satan’s goods.

And that, of course, is what he did in his ministry here upon the earth. He entered into the house of the strong man and he bound him. He came into his domain which is this world in which we live for this whole world lieth in the wicked one. And then at the cross of Jesus Christ he bound the strong man because there he took upon

him that by which Satan holds man in captivity, man’s sin. And he took that sin away and thus he defeated the strong man, bound him, and he has plundered his house. He has spoiled his goods and as a result of the ministry of Jesus Christ it is now possible for those who put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus, to come forth from the prison house of sin.

We, of course, when we were studying the life of our Lord last time in relation to Satan did not treat of every onslaught that Satan brought against the Lord Jesus. If we were to do that, we would have to spend a great deal more time than forty-five minutes. There were many such onslaughts and, I think, perhaps there were many others which are not recorded in the word of God at all. For remember, John in the last chapter of his gospel states, “Many other things Jesus did which were not written in this book.” And John adds, “I suppose if all of the things that Jesus did were written down, the world itself could not contain the books.”

So what we have in the gospels of our Lord is not a complete account of Jesus’ ministry. There are many things that he did. And no doubt Satan made many attacks upon the Son of God which are not recorded in Scripture. But we only considered the highlights. For example, just to take one that we did not consider, which undoubtedly in my opinion was an attack of Satan, in the 4th chapter of the Gospel of Mark, we have the story of our Lord stilling the wind and the sea. We read in verse 35,

“And the same day when the evening was come he said unto them, ‘Let us pass over unto the other side.’ And when they had sent away the multitude they took him even as he was in the boat. And there were also with him other little boats. And there arose a great storm of wind and the waves beat into the boat so that it was now full. And he was in the stern of the boat asleep on a pillow. And they awake him and said unto him, ‘Master carest thou not that we perish?’ And he arose and (did you notice the word?) he rebuked the wind and said unto the sea, ‘Peace, be still.’”

It almost seems as if our Lord recognized in the wind and the sea, at this time, a hostile force. It’s almost as if he recognized that within the permissive will of God, God had permitted Satan to use the elements in order to attack our Lord. And so he rebuked the wind and the sea. It was Satan’s attempt again to physically defeat, bring about the death of our Lord before the time.

So I would gather that from this statement there were unseen inimical powers about our Lord all through his ministry. And from time to time in the events of his life, we see Satan attempting to attack him and to either lead him into sin and thus make him his property or prevent him from going to the cross by, that is, to lead him into disobedience and that represented that. Or finally, when he is definitely upon the cross seeking to snuff out his life in such a way that he might ultimately be the victim. Apparently, Satan does not understand spiritual truth. For he does not understand that in the cross of Jesus Christ, which he himself has contributed to, is his own defeat.

Now, the victory was won by our Lord, finally, of course, and the head of the serpent was crushed. Sentence was pronounced but it was not executed. Remember that while it was at the cross that the Lord Jesus won the victory Satan was not, at that time, put in the lake of fire. As a matter of fact, Satan is free at the present time. The Bible makes that very plain. He goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. His head was crushed legally. It was crushed judicially. The payment was made we’ve won the victory. But the execution of that penalty, which will ultimately lead Satan to the lake of fire, has not yet been executed. So, apparently, and we know this from other Scriptures that God has other purposes in the rebellion of Satan, and one of those purposes pertains to us in the present age.

So we want to look tonight at the work of Satan in the present age, and first of all, the work of Satan in relation to God. And if you’re looking for a Scripture text to put down, I want you to put down 2 Corinthians, chapter 11 verses 13 through 15. We want

to turn to these verses and read them because they are very important verses, 2 Corinthians chapter 11 verse 13 through verse 15.

Now, we’ve been on Satan for a long time and I know that probably some of you are saying under your breath, “He sure is full of his subject.” But we’re going to see that this is a very, very important subject and we all ought to be full of this subject if we are going to be able to protect ourselves against his wiles. While you’re finding 2 Corinthians, it’s in the New Testament for those who are still moving around and it’s right after 1 Corinthians, but many years ago at Dallas Seminary, one of the faculty members decided that it would be very nice if once or twice a semester instead of having a devotional message or a short Bible teaching message, as we usually have in chapels at the seminary, it would be very nice if we should have a scholarly lecture a couple of times a semester. It should be edifying and inspiring. And so this faculty member who suggested it was the first one to give a message in the series. And he stood up, and he was a rather comical fellow anyway, and he stood up and he announced as his topic, and he also said it would be a first in a series was “The Activities of Satan and His Demons in the Middle Ages.” And we listened to a very, very boring lecture that morning. And as we were walking out, Dr. Ryrie, who was a fellow student of mine at the time, turned to me and said, “You know, he sure was full of his subject this morning.” And I’ve thought of that often in studying Satan.

But let’s look now at 2 Corinthians chapter 11 verse 13 through verse 15. Paul writes, “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; (satanic ministry should not be a cause for wonderment) and no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.”

Now, if you remember last time we said that Satan’s angels are of two categories: There are those who sinned in Genesis chapter 6, and they are the angelic beings or the

angels who are in Tartorus. They are bound. In 2 Peter chapter 2 in verse 4, Peter speaks of them. He says, “They have been cast down to hell.” In your text, it is the word Tartorus. It is the only time it is found in the New Testament. And then there are angels that are free. These are evil angels, of course, I guess I should put, the evil angels fall into two categories, the angels that are free. So remember this, some of Satan’s angels are bound. They were guilty of that specific historical rebellion in Genesis, chapter 6, but then there are those that are free.

The work of Satan in relation to God. First of all, he counterfeits God’s word. Now let’s turn back, I’m going to talk again about this passage in the 11th chapter, but will you turn back, for just a moment to the 4th chapter of 2 Corinthians? Now I’m sorry. I have given you the wrong passage. Will you turn first to 1 Corinthians chapter 2 in verse 10, 1 Corinthians chapter 2 verse 10. First Corinthians 2 verse 10 says this, “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God.” Now, notice from this text that God has his “deep” things. These are the things that the Holy Spirit knows and which the Holy Spirit teaches to those who have believed in the Lord Jesus.

Now turn with me to Revelation chapter 2 in verse 24, Revelation chapter 2 in verse 24. Revelation 2 verse 24 reads “But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you no other burden.” Now that expression “the depths of Satan” is really the deep things of Satan. God has his deep things. Satan has his deep things. God has his truths which are known by divine revelation. Satan has his counterfeit of the truth of God. And of course, he seeks to inculcate his counterfeit of the word of God in the hearts and minds of men.

Have you ever noticed this about those who are cultists? Those who are, for example, Jehovah’s Witnesses or Seventh Day Adventists or Christian Scientists or Bahaists or Theosophists, what ever the cult may be, have you ever noticed this about

them? That they are not people who have to be aroused to an interest in religion; they are interested. They have been stirred up. You don’t have to say to them, “Now, what you ought to be is a religious man.” They are already are a religious man. They have been stirred up by Satan. And they have their false doctrines, their false truths. They are the deep things of Satan. Christian Science has its book. It has its bible. It has its “Science and Health with a Key to the Scriptures.” These are deep things of Satan. The Mormon’s have their “Books of Mormon.” These are the deep things of Satan. As a matter of fact, Satan has a much larger library of spiritual truth or falsehood, in his case, than God does. God has, of course, the word of God, the Bible. But Satan has a whole library of false doctrine. And those that are most useful to him are those that are closest to the holy Scriptures. He counterfeits God’s word.

One of my theology professors, Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, used to like to tell us a story of his own experience with Christian Science. He said that one time he was walking up and down the streets of Dallas and he went by the reading room of Christian Science. And he said, “I stopped, it was the first time that I had ever really looked at ‘Science and Health’.” And he said, “It was out in the window displayed and I stopped in and I began to try to read that text.” He said, “You know I read on for a few lines and then I read on for a few paragraphs and I must say to you, that I could not make any sense whatsoever out of it.” He said, “It was just,” and I can still remember him saying this, “It was just as if I picked up Webster’s Dictionary, turned it upside down and began to read from the end of it back towards the first. It was that difficult for me to comprehend.” And then he said, “I remembered as I looked at that text a word of Scripture which the Holy Spirit brought to me.” And this was the text, “And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they, the sheep of the Lord, know not the voice of a stranger.” And he said, “I realized that as I was reading those words that came through Mary Baker Eddy right from Satan himself that they were not getting through to me because they were ‘the voice of a stranger.’” And then he used to say to us, “So men, if you cannot understand

that kind of literature, get happy then.” That was the way he put it. And, of course, that’s true. If you cannot understand “Science and Health,” well wonderful because, you see, you don’t belong to his flock and, therefore, the language of that flock is strange to you. And if you cannot understand the Book of Mormon, I don’t see how any sane person could possibly understand it, but they apparently have some who do understand it, then get happy about it because you belong to another flock and you have a different kind of book. So, the one thing that Satan would like to do is to counterfeit God’s word.

I read today, I think it was Tertullian who said, “Satan is God’s monkey.” In other words, he tries to counterfeit everything that God does. So he seeks to counterfeit God’s word. He has his own deep things, just as God has his deep things in the Bible. But he also seeks to counterfeit God’s work.

Now, I want you to turn back to the passage, which we read in 2 Corinthians chapter 11 because it is in this particular section that we have expressed the counterfeit of God’s works. Did you realize that Satan has his own ministers? He has his own meetings. And he has his own worship. In the Book of Revelation, we read of a certain church that had become a synagogue of Satan. You know what a synagogue is? A synagogue is a gathering. So it had become a gathering of Satan. And he has his own ministry. And they proclaim truth, so called. They put it forth. They may be even ministers of Christ. Listen, speaking about the false teachers, there are false apostles. They say they are apostles, but they are false apostles. They are deceitful workers. They transform themselves into the apostles of Christ that’s what they say. Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light; therefore, it’s no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness. So they are apostles of Christ, they are ministers of Christ, and they are ministers of righteousness. But they are counterfeits. They are not true. So, he has all of the things that God has. He has a church. He has a ministry. He has meetings. And he has his own deep things and his men proclaim their deep things.

Did you read *Newsweek* this past week? Did you read of the man who is the head of the Universal Life Church, I think it is, a man by the name of Hensley. Well he has been responsible for the ordination of sixty-five thousand ministers. I think that you write in and give him a certain amount of money, it’s a dollar or something like that, and you can be reverend. So if you’d like to be reverend, doctor so and so, oh it will cost you a little more to be reverend doctor, but if you want to be reverend, he’d be glad to arrange that and send you a certificate of ordination. I think it’s for a dollar. And if you’re interested in a doctor’s degree, he will confer upon you and honorary doctor’s degree for twenty dollars. I think he has given three thousand honorary doctor’s degrees. So if you would like to be the reverend doctor so and so, and put D.D. after your name, well, you can do it for twenty-one dollars, I guess, unless inflation has caused it to go up since then. Well, now that man is a minister of Satan. He’s harmless because, of course, the average person that reads that would immediately see he’s a four-flusher. He’s not true. But the facts are that many who are very well respected are just as much a minister of Satan as he. So Satan has his own ministry. He has everything that looks like the real thing. And I think that it is very important to notice in that 14th verse that he says that, “Satan is transformed into an angel of light.”

Suppose, for example, I were to set two men before you. And let’s say that one man is dressed very poorly, he’s dressed in rags. And let’s say that he has in one hand a bottle of Old Crow and in the other he has Vat 69. And he’s staggering around here, and he probably is uttering a few words that are not uttered in polite company but generally making himself a mess, obviously an evil man, a man who is unrighteous, a man who is wicked, a man given to drink.

And then let’s stand over here a man who is very cultured looking, very nice looking, dresses well, speaks well, obviously has his senses about him. But at the same time is putting himself forth as a man of God but uttering false doctrine. He may even have a Bible in his hand but be saying such things as, “I’m not really sure that Jesus is the

Son of God. But I don’t really think it’s really necessary for a man to be acceptable to God. I’m not really sure that the virgin birth took place as it is set forth in the Bible, but it’s not essential that we believe a doctrine like that. I’m not really sure that Jesus Christ was a vicarious sacrifice for our sins but, after all, God surely overlooks the fact that it is difficult to arrive at a satisfactory theory of the atonement.”

Now, which of these men would you say would be Satan’s man? Well, I think that ninety-nine out of a hundred people would say this is Satan’s man over here. Whereas, it might really be in the sight of God this man is ten times as dangerous and ten times more a son of the devil than this man over here. But this is the way we look at things because we have already been brainwashed by Satan. If it is God who says that “I am he.” It is Satan who has convinced man that he does not exist. In fact, the very idea of a man getting into the pulpit in the ordinary church and preaching on Satan is just contrary to the twentieth century.

How many sermons on Satan did you hear before you found Jesus Christ? I didn’t hear any. As a matter of fact, when I was converted, I went into the Sunday school class in the South Highlands Presbyterian Church. I had not been into the Sunday school class until I was converted. This was my other church. I’d grown up in the First Presbyterian Church in Charleston, and I’d been in the Sunday school as long as I had to which was until I grew old enough to talk my father and mother into allowing me to play golf on Sunday morning because the course was a little more deserted then. But when I was married I was in the church once and I think I was in the church the week before just to get accustomed to it, and then I was in the church when I was married and then I didn’t come back for a couple of years, two, three years.

And then I was converted and after I was converted in the church through the preaching of Dr. Barnhouse, I appeared in Sunday school. It would seem to me that the average church would be happy over that. They weren’t really very happy over it, I must say, but anyway I went into Sunday school class that morning. And the Sunday school

teacher was a man whom I had known, and he was a godly man. And he was teaching the word to about ten or twelve people.

And in the course of the lesson, he mentioned Satan, and he mentioned Satan as if he believed in him. And I can still remember a woman raising her hand in the back of the class and saying, “Now Ron, just a minute. Now, you don’t really believe that Satan exists, do you?” He said, “I certainly do.” She said, “Well, I’ve always been taught that Satan did not exist at all. That it’s just a way of speaking of the evil principle that we find about us in human society.” And so, it has come to the place that Satan has convinced the world that he doesn’t exist. And so, he can carry on his work very well. Well, he counterfeits God’s word and he counterfeits God’s work.

Now, the work of Satan in relation to the cosmos or to the world. The first thing that Satan does with respect to the world is he deceives the nations. Let’s turn back to Revelation chapter 12 in verse 9. Remember that text which has all of those names of Satan? Revelation chapter 12 in verse 9 and we read, “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world.” That is his work. He deceives the world. Now the world itself is a foe to be feared. The reason that the world itself is a foe to be feared is because the world has been deceived by Satan and the whole world lieth in the wicked one.

That’s why we read in the Bible such things as James chapter 4 in verse 4 in which the apostle or the brother of our Lord writes in the 4th verse, “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?” If we are friends of the world we are at enmity with God. Now this, of course, does not mean, my dear Christian friend, that we can go out of the world; that we are to withdraw and have only fellowship with those who are Christians. That is not the meaning of this text. He is talking about being a “friend” of the world; he is not talking about withdrawing entirely from the world. He’s not talking about living in the world. It is impossible to keep from living in the world. And those Christians are most useful who recognize that they’re not

to withdraw from the world, but are in the power of the Holy Spirit to seek to be the instrumentality for snatching some out of the world for our Lord Jesus Christ.

But Satan deceives the world. And Satan has the world in his power and in his grasp. As John says in 1 John 5:19, “The whole world lieth in the wicked one.” That’s the meaning of that great text there. So the world is a foe to be feared, its lusts, its ambitions, its independence of God. And this expresses itself in its governments. For example, did you know that for many, many generations it was impossible for any Christian to get into the land of Tibet to preach the gospel? Why is that? Well, because the world is at enmity with God. It has been deceived by Satan.

I can remember as a student of the seminary we studied the countries that were closed and I do not think that except for one possible exception that we had at that time any historical evidence of any Christian reaching Tibet city in literally hundreds of years. The gospel has not been able to go into that place. That is a stronghold of Satan.

That’s because he blinds the world. He blinds the United States. And so what we have in the United States today is a secularistic philosophy. We, of course, in this country according to accordance with our constitution believe in the separation of church and state. That, of course, is not Scriptural. That’s what this country has set forth as its beliefs. You see, the true nation would be the nation that honored Jesus Christ and the word of God. That would be the true nation. And so, to set up a society in which there is no recognition whatsoever of the claims of God is to set up a secularistic society. It is to have as a philosophy a philosophy of secularism. That’s what we have in this country.

Now, of course, I am happy that I do not have someone who is not a Christian writing my prayers for me, telling me what to believe. I’m glad from one standpoint that that separation exists. But when our Lord has full control of things we’re going to have a theocracy in which God is king and in which the word of God is acknowledged as the truth. But our governments are blind. If you were to go to Spain today, you would find that there are laws against the propagation of the gospel in Spain because that country is

in the control of the Roman Catholic Church. That is because Satan has blinded the leadership of the country of Spain. Very difficult for the word to go forth. There are some Christians that meet in homes. There are a few little churches but they cannot propagate the faith. They cannot evangelize. If they evangelize they make themselves libel for prison. Fortunately, some obey God rather than men and the word does make some progress.

Or, if you think of the U.S.S.R. and communism, that government is blinded. Our schools are blinded. And we have this strange thing that in our universities men are free to propagate the philosophy of Herbert Marcuse. And the New Left demands a hearing. But when Christianity asks for a hearing, “Oh, no, we must not bring religion into the life of the campus.” That’s a religion. But Christianity is just as much a philosophy of the truth as is the New Left, far more so. Why should they not have the freedom to express their views? Well, it’s a religion. They are blinded you see. And being blind, they react in that way. If you go on the college campuses, you’ll see how difficult it is to get a hearing for Christianity as a viable philosophy of life. It’s classified as a religion. Everything else we can discuss but we cannot discuss that because it’s a religion. That’s blindness. That’s un-philosophical. Our Christians on the campus have made a very grave mistake in not making that an issue, too.

Or our literature. What about the literature the average person reads in the United States? Why, it is written by men who are blinded. Or the entertainment that we watch, the movies, you cannot listen; you cannot look at a movie without getting some kind of social message. Almost all of them have some kind of message which is subtly being presented and you are the recipients of that propaganda. And it’s comes from men who are blinded to spiritual truth. Everything you see, you are a product. You are a product of that type of brainwashing that is going on, every one of you. Satan blinds the world.

Well, all of these things are independent of him. Now, our churches, they are blind, too. In fact, some of the greatest blindness exists in our churches. The

Communists today do not really have to infiltrate our Christian churches. Do you know why? Because, they already have the same philosophy. They have very little need to seduce the leaders of Christianity. In fact, their pitch now is not “Let’s go into the church and let’s penetrate.” It’s not, “let’s go into the church and let’s infiltrate them.” But now, they publish, “We have the same aims that you have, freedom, democracy, the right of every man to live and express himself in freedom. You believe what we believe.” And the sad thing is, it’s true. The average Christian minister doesn’t have any more concept of what is spiritual than to ask or believe in aims and platform such as that.

Well, Satan also blinds the individual. Let’s notice 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verses 3 and 4, 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verses 3 and 4. Paul writes, “But if our gospel be hidden, it is hidden to them that are lost: In whom the god of this age.” (Who is the god of this age or the god of this world? Why it is Satan?) “In whom the god of this world or age hath blinded the minds of them who believe not.” (Have you found it? 2 Corinthians 4 verses 3 and 4.) “In whom the god of age hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” You see what that says? That says that Satan has blinded the minds of those that believe not. So he not only blinds nations, but he blinds individuals.

About fifteen years ago, and things are worse now, about fifteen years ago, a man by the name of Boynton, wrote a book called *Beyond Mythology*. And in this book he made the statement that theology is mythology. Now, that would be all right if you understood by mythology some kind of symbolic language. Now mind you, I don’t accept that. But it would not mean what it would mean to the ordinary man, if he had said theology is mythology and he meant by mythology religious language. But he went on to say that science had made it necessary now for the modern man to believe practically nothing that was written in the Bible.

And then he said that theology is mythology. And by that he meant that we could not believe the words of holy Scripture. Well, you would think that a book like that

would be banned in theological schools. But it was immediately put on the list of required reading at Harvard Divinity School. Now things are worse since then. That is the kind of literature that all of our students read and sad to say, in many of our sound schools, instead of reading something like that just to see what Satan is really teaching his ministers, many of them are feeding upon it. And then some are becoming enamored of it.

I read just last year of a student who went to Wheaton. This has been documented. He went to Wheaton College. In that school, which is a conservative school, while he was there he became interested in the inner-city ministry which was carried on in the city of Chicago. And he went down among the people who were engaged in this ministry but at the same time he began to read modern theology. And he read it and he read it and he read it, and he began to see that, as far as he was concerned, the theology upon which he had grown up was not relevant to the ministry in the 20th Century. And so, he began to abandon the theology that had brought him to the spiritual place that he was. He engaged in some social-action endeavors, engaged in a few protests and the police roughed him up someplace. And he said afterwards that was the thing that turned him against the establishment. Today, he’s a communist. If that young man was a Christian, he is, of course, under His influence. But if he was never a Christian, he has surely become a blind individual now, and Satan has pulled the wool over his eyes. He’s blinded.

Well, now we must hasten on. The work of Satan in relation to Christians. First of all, he accuses them. Will you turn back with me to Revelation chapter 12 in verse 10? Revelation chapter 12 in verse 10. Verse 9 says,

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now is come salvation, and

strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night.”

This is the ministry of Satan, which is the continual ministry. And he accuses those who have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, constantly. You know, he has his kingdom so well organized that he knows exactly where to bring the accusations, when they will do the most harm to the cause of Jesus Christ. He accuses us. He’s the accuser of the brethren. You remember how Satan came to the Lord about Job and accused him.

Now secondly, he influences them to help him. Matthew chapter 16 verse 21 through verse 23. And he doesn’t mind whom he influences. He may influence the smallest most insignificant Christian, he may influence the most important Christians. Matthew chapter 16 in verse 21 says, “From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, ‘Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.’” (What would we have said at that point? Well, probably, we would have said isn’t that nice of Peter? Isn’t that sweet of him? Doesn’t he love the Lord, Jesus? He doesn’t want him to go to the cross. How wonderful of Peter to express his affection for the Lord in that way. And you will notice how far that sentiment is from Our Lord?) He turned to Peter and he said “Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that are of God, but those that are of men.” We say, how amiable. How nice. How sweet. How loving of Peter to think of our Lord. And God says, how Satanic. You see how far we can be in our minds from the Lord?

Many Christians come under the influence of Satan and his demons, and they often say the nicest little things but contrary to the holy Scripture. And so, we often acquiesce. But our Lord didn’t hesitate to shock Peter. I’m sure that was a shock when Jesus turned on him and said “Get thee behind me, Satan.” You might even say Jesus was

not very loving to Peter. Oh, but he was. This is love to let one know that he is an instrument of Satan. It’s possible for us to be that.

So, he influences Christians. Do you think he would do that in Believers Chapel? Oh, he would be too afraid to try it here. Do you believe that? I don’t. I don’t at all. Do you think he would try it in the First Baptist Church? I think he would. I think he would try it anywhere. In fact, I think he does.

Now, capital C, he wars against them. Now there are many ways that we could speak about this but since we are going to talk about the activities of Satan and his demons next time a little more in detail, I’m just going to try to sum it up. Paul states that his warfare is with principalities and powers in heavenly places. And this warfare that exists between Satan and the individual Christian is a warfare that affects us in a variety of ways. We may be tempted as our Lord was tempted. He may seek to destroy us from without. And he may seek to destroy us from within. When a man such as Ananias offers hypocritically an offering designed to impress the saints of God. Remember Peter said to Ananias, “Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie against the Holy Ghost.” And so, he was tempted and fell to the stratagems of Satan and lied to the Holy Spirit seeking to impress the saints of God with his generosity. Then later on, Satan sought from within to disturb the Christian church through the activities of Simon Magus, for example, in Acts chapter 8, Simon the Sorcerer.

In the early Church there were all sorts of philosophies that arose which sought to lead the Christians away under the head of gnosticism, generally. There were many other little sects that were Gnostic and each one of them had its own little philosophy and they sought to draw the Christians off after them because Satan is interested in warring against the saints. But his cleverest way of warring against the saints is to bring the saints into acceptance in the world. And, I think, the cleverest stratagem that Satan exercised in the early centuries of our present history was when he caused Constantine to declare Christianity the religion of the Roman Empire. For then, the world came in the church

and the church in the world. And after that, you couldn’t tell the difference. And so today, it’s difficult to tell what is truly Christian, what is non-Christian within this great tree that we call Christendom which has been growing for so long.

Well, our time is up. We shall continue this next time. Let’s close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the revelation in the word of God of the stratagems of Satan. And, Father, help us to realize that this is a warfare that affects our very souls. And may, Lord, as we think of the evil that lurks by us along the way, oh, Father, we pray that we may lean upon Thee who alone canst deliver us.

And this we ask in Jesus’ name. Amen.