

# **Saints at War**

By

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As long as men fail to understand the inexorable antagonism between Christ and Satan, between Christian and anti-Christ, the meaning of Christianity will be unintelligible to them. Where Christ declared that the world would necessarily oppose Christians, the popular idea is that if you are a Christian you are at peace with everyone and loved by all the world. The world's idea of a Christian is a person who promotes the "brotherhood of man", who never opposes anyone or anything and who wholeheartedly supports the general desires of the majority of people.

Such a one cannot be a follower of Christ who made enemies everywhere because He held to, certain unalterable truths and opposed Satan and all who obeyed him.

## **THE REALITY OF SATAN**

Figures lately released show that more than 65 percent of the preachers did not believe in a personal devil. This is the masterstroke of Satan, to persuade men that he does not exist, but is only a figurative term applied to evil ideas. The first mistake many Christians make is to fail to take Satan seriously. Without a personal Satan the opposition to Christian faith and action is ascribed to the natural failure and mistakes of humanity, so that instead of coming to grips with the real enemy, the believer ignores him, tolerates sin, and takes no issue with evil-doers, thinking they are simply making "human" errors.

The person of Satan is affirmed throughout the Bible. The first sin and the fall of man cannot be accounted for without the person of Satan, and without this account the entire Bible loses its significance. Satan is real. Jesus confronted him in the temptation recorded in Matthew 4:1-11. He stated that the Jews were children of the devil (John 8:44). The apostles confronted Satan. Here Peter, speaking to Ananias and Saphira: "Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?" (Acts 5:3).

Satan's power is so great that only Christ can overcome it. The purpose of preaching the gospel to the nations, Paul was told, is to "turn them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God (Acts 26:18). Satan's power is the "power of the air of the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience" (Eph. 2:2). His work is "with power and lying wonders" (2 Thess. 2:9). Jesus spoke of him as the "strong man armed" (Luke 11:21) and recognized that he is the prince and leader of all opposition to God in this world. He is a supernatural personality exercising supernatural power among all those who do not submit to the Lordship of Christ, and this certainly includes most of today's population.

## **SATAN'S AGENTS**

An angel is a messenger doing the bidding of another. Just as God has myriads of angels to serve him, Satan also commands countless numbers of fallen angels (Jude 6, 2 Pet.

2:4). Paul viewed Satan as the “god of this world” (2 Cor. 4:4) having organized a great counterfeit of the Kingdom of God. He has his own “synagogue” (Rev. 2:9); his own gospel-which is a “different gospel” (Gal.1:6), denying redemption through Christ’s death; his own ministers who “fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness” (2 Cor. 11:14-15); and his own set of doctrines (1 Tim.4:1).

There is, then, a satanic government composed of a great host of demons and men, directed by supernatural power. It is the aim of this satanic host to defeat and destroy the purpose of God. God’s express purpose is to have man in His own image, and this purpose is to be accomplished through man’s faith; that is, through man’s subjecting his mind to God by believing and obeying the Gospel.

Satan’s purpose is to defeat God’s work by subverting the truth, “exchanging the truth of God for a lie” and thus blocking the way for man to bring his mind under subjection to the Creator. The first step was to tell Adam and Eve that they would NOT die for sin, a most obvious lie, and yet one that persists until this day. Believing this lie they sinned and died, and brought death into the world (Rom. 5:12). Jesus said that the devil was “a murderer from the beginning.” “He is a liar and the father thereof. But because I say the truth, you believe me not” (John 8:44-45). The followers of Satan are readily identified as those who do not believe Jesus (See 1 John 2:22). Jesus plainly told the Jews, “you do the works of your father... you are of your father the devil” (John 8:41, 44).

### **THE WARFARE**

Christ warned his disciples that they were being sent out into the world as “sheep in the midst of wolves.” He said that the world would hate them (John 15:19). He said that He Himself came to bring a sword, that His kingdom was to be opposed by the world kingdoms and that every disciple should expect conflict and persecution as long as he remains true to the faith. The conflict is summed up in the Ephesians’ letter: “For our warfare is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).

All human activities are implicated in this warfare. In education the deceiver has persuaded the populace that the school must be “neutral”, and has thus removed God’s truth from the classroom while freely teaching anti-Christ concepts. To teach history without the God of history, to teach science without a Creator of all things, to teach social patterns and concepts without teaching the ultimate purpose of man to be conformed to God’s image, is to openly oppose God and His people. Adam was tempted with the prospect of “knowing good and evil” and thus being “as God” (Gen. 3:5). “Knowing good and evil” meant determining for himself what is lawful and what is not, to regulate his own life and make his own laws of right and wrong. In this sense modern education is Satan’s instrument to tempt young people to decide for themselves what is good and evil with no overriding law of God to govern the decision.

The effort to enforce “equality” upon all men is a direct blow to the basic law of God that condemns evil and rewards good. The socialist system is designed to give “power to the people” with no regard to God’s law and individual freedom and responsibility to Him.

Witchcraft is another battlefield in the same war. It is well known by every preacher of the gospel that people, who are involved in astrology, séances and any other form of witchcraft, whether or not they take it seriously, develop a resistance to Bible truth.

### **CHRISTIANS AWAKE!**

When will the church awaken to the fact that we are actually IN this war NOW? Satan is not playing games. When university speakers advocate lawlessness, it is all part of the stratagem of Satan. When professors present evolution as scientific, breaking down the faith which is just beginning to take root in tender minds, it is not merely a part of the academic process, but the evil work of Satan and is designed to turn the student away from Christ to follow the purpose of Satan. When the news media presents views slanted in favor of atheistic aims, it is not by accident, but part of the battle plan of the principalities and powers of the kingdom of darkness. When pornography and blasphemy are produced in the arts, whether on stage, T. V. or in literature, they are designed to corrupt and “hinder the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom.1:18). The fads and fashions which encourage immodesty and the music which suggests lusts, all are part of Satan’s arsenal.

### **WHAT CAN WE DO?**

First: we must recognize that we are engaged in warfare. We are apt to think of warfare always in terms of bloodshed, guns, bombs, military activities etc. Hence many think of a conflict that is to come in the future; the warfare is something that might happen, but, thank heavens, hasn’t happened yet, They are in the middle of it and cannot see it, because it is a war of minds, of a spiritual nature, and in many cases professing Christians have already been defeated and don’t know it. The battle may break out in violence, with massacres of believers, 3S in the massacre of Christian Arabs by the Israeli, and the persecution of Christians as in Russia and China. But these are only the outward manifestations of the larger struggle that is taking place all the time. The warfare has been going on since the Garden of Eden; it raged in fury around Jesus during His earthly ministry; it was the “good fight” made by Paul and all the apostles, and it is boiling everywhere **NOW**.

Today much of the leadership of the church participates in the very activities and organizations that are carrying out Satan’s work. Believers live and act as if the world were on their side. Churches, instead of “casting down strongholds” of Satan and “bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” ( 2 Cor. 10:4-5 ) are themselves supporting the enemy and endorsing his program rather than have it thought that they consider as an enemy a community leader, a popular organization such as a lodge or a so-called educator in the schools. Obviously, the church must recognize that we are at war, and take a stand (Eph. 6:14).

Second: We must be equipped for war. Since it is a war for the minds of men, our weapon is the truth, “the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God” (Eph. 6:17). Do not let anyone tell you that you cannot understand the Bible. God commands that we read it and know it, and the understanding will come as we grow to receive it. One is defenseless against evil if he does not seriously study God’s word. A disciple of Christ is a learner who obeys Christ to “take my yoke upon you and **LEARN** of me.” Get into a church where they all **STUDY** the Bible, and not merely things about the Bible.

Third: The truth must be put into action. “Resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). To do so we must resist his agents, his ministers and his lying Satan tempted Jesus, Jesus struck back with Scripture: “It is written In Revelation the saints are said to have overcome by the “word of their testimony” (Rev.12:10-11). Satan’s testimony is heard everywhere, on radio and TV; it saturates the printed page and the classroom. Christian, where is **YOUR** testimony?

### **THE END IN VIEW**

Thank God, the war will not go on forever. The theories of evolution notwithstanding, this whole thing began not too long ago (some modern scientists are now dating the world somewhere less than 7,500 years old) and the end of it is already determined by the Lord God. History has a beginning, middle and will have an end. Scripture teaches that we are now in the last age. Christ will descend from Heaven, will raise the dead-all the dead-and judgment will follow. The purpose of this judgment is not to determine the moral character of men. God already knows this. It will be to reveal “the righteous judgment of God” (Rom. 2:5-6), to grant immortality to faithful believers and reward them for service, to punish the unbelievers and disobedient, and put them to death in the lake of fire.

We do not know when Christ will come, but we do know that when He comes it will mean victory for His saints. “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of LIFE” (Rev. 2:10).

Christianity is warfare (2 Cor.10:4). It is a fight for life. Christian soldiers where are you?

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