

# The Devil, Prince of the Power of the Air - Part 3

by Tim Conway

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*The devil is a real and personal entity who is at work in the world, seeking to keep people dead in their sins, but is subject to God's authority and power.*

**Duration:** 1:00:03

**Scripture:** Luke 4:5

**Topics:** "Satanic Influence", "Spiritual Warfare"

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## Description

This sermon delves into Ephesians chapter 2, highlighting the fallenness of man and the influence of the devil, referred to as the prince of the power of the air. It emphasizes how the devil works actively in the sons of disobedience, shaping them into rebellion against God. The sermon underscores the deceptive tactics of the devil to blind and deceive individuals, leading them to rebel against God and reject the Gospel. However, it ultimately points to the power of God, demonstrated through Christ's victory over the devil, offering salvation and victory to those who believe.

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## Transcript

You can turn in your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 2. This morning I'm going to be preaching part 3 of how dead is dead. The five-fold fallenness of man. And I get those five realities of the fallenness of man from these first three verses of Ephesians chapter 2. Ephesians 2, we'll read in verse 1 through 3. And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath like the rest of mankind.

You were. Ephesians and anyone else who is a Christian, this is what you were. If you're not a Christian, this is what you still are.

I want to deal with this prince that's spoken about here and how that fits into the picture. Christian, what you are being told here is that you were once the very workshop of the unclean spirit that is mentioned here. The foul language, the fornication, the pride, maybe it was religious pride, the lust, the hypocrisy.

You know what that was? That was the clanging of the hammers and the wrenches from the workshop. Give proof to what was at work within you down below. Think of the awful picture here.

A man dead, dead to all that's good, dead through the indwelling and the working of this very spirit that possesses all the sons of disobedience. You were dead in the trespasses and sins. Following, we dealt with the world.

We're dealing today following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience. This prince teaches us something about our dark selves, which in turn teaches us something about the Almighty exceeding greatness of God in saving us. That's the point here.

That's what this is all about. So, first, who is this? Who is this? The prince of the power of the air. Who is it? And you know what? You say, well, of course it's the devil.

It doesn't say it's the devil. Could it be somebody else? Well, listen, this word prince, archon, it starts out with A-R-C-H, arch. We use that.

It's the same word that Jesus used when He said, the ruler of this world is cast out. The ruler. The prince.

That's what we're talking about here. And there's only one arch enemy that is cast out, that doesn't find anything in Christ, who's judged and who is at work in the sons of disobedience. One ruler, one prince.

Second thing, the devil is real. So, you may say, of course. Listen, the devil is real.

And if we understand what he is, that is a serious reality. We heard about this missionary Groves in the first hour. How much do you think the devil was involved in trying to keep him out of Baghdad, send him home, discourage him, lead him not to trust the Lord? Paul doesn't seek to prove the fact, does he? He just lays it down as a matter of fact.

The prince of the power of the air is a matter of fact. Have you ever thought about this? Third chapter of Genesis, there he is. Twentieth chapter of Revelation, there he is.

And he's all the way in between. This whole world. Your Bibles beginning to end.

This history of humanity as God unpacks it for us. This whole plan of salvation. This book is about Christ.

He said, you look for eternal life in here. It speaks about Me, Christ said. But isn't it interesting? A book that speaks about Christ speaks about Satan.

It speaks about him from beginning to end. And if there's anything that's true, God shows us over and over and over and over again. The devil is active.

The devil is powerful. The devil is evil. And the devil is real.

That's here. Paul's assuming it. And I know the sophisticated elites of this world.

They like to come along. They like to look at Christians like we're some poor, pathetic, simple-minded half-wits that still believe in some superstitions from the dark ages. Well, let them mock on.

The worldly wise man, he can laugh. He can run around at Halloween in his little red suit. But we don't laugh.

And the devil didn't laugh. I don't... Or the devil. Jesus Christ did not laugh.

I never find Jesus Christ laughing at all in Scripture, but he didn't laugh at the devil. What I find is he very much recognized the existence. His ministry started.

Out into the wilderness he went. And he confronted him face-to-face. He's no fabrication.

He's no fairy tale. Jesus Christ did battle with him from the very beginning. And he succeeded.

He triumphed. And all the way through his life, he dealt with legions of demons. They were very much like us.

He saw the carnage. He saw the brokenness. He saw the ravaging effects.

No fairy tale, folks. The third thing is the devil is personal. I say that because it speaks about him as the prince of the power.

The power of the air. When Paul calls the devil the prince of the power of the air, you don't want to simply think of a power, an impersonal force, or some kind of negative influence in the world. The devil is a person.

All you've got to do is go back to Genesis 3. Listen, it wasn't just a force. There was a personal being there in the garden with Eve. He spoke to her.

He had dialogue with her. Do you remember the day when the sons of God appeared before God? And Satan was among them. And God held dialogue with this prince of the power of the air.

Where are you coming from? I've been going to and fro. Or that confrontation with Jesus Christ. There's no force out there in the wilderness.

There was a person. There was dialogue. Fall down and worship me, and I'll give all of this to you.

And Jesus responded to him. And he left, looking for a more convenient time. He's a person.

He thinks. Next, four, the devil is called the prince. Prince, as I said before, that's the same word that Jesus used the ruler of this world.

The ruler. Prince. It's our cone.

It can mean leader. It carries the idea of commander, chief, ruler, prince. I emphasize this because he's the leader.

He is over a whole structure of evil. Have you ever read in Scripture that Beelzebul he's called? Perhaps that means Lord of the flies. Jesus called him the prince, the ruler of demons.

Have you ever read there in Revelation chapter 12, when he was cast down, it says very specifically that his angels were thrown down with him. They're angels. In fact, if you read there in Revelation 13, it says his tail swept a third of the stars.

And there's very good reason to believe those stars are a picture of angels. That's where we get our doctrine concerning a third of the angels are fallen. With him.

There is a structure. There is a hierarchy here. He has forces.

In fact, right here in this same book of Ephesians, when we get to chapter 6, many of you know well the verse, we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against rulers, plural. He is the ruler, singular, but beneath him are rulers, plural. There is a hierarchy.

He goes on to say against the authorities, plural, against cosmic powers, plural, over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. What we need to recognize and realize is that we're confronted by a spirit outside of ourselves. A spirit, a person, a personal being who tracks us, who is after us.

A person who has a kingdom. He's not operating just by himself. An agenda, a hatred, who is head over all the other fallen angels.

The whole thing is highly organized there. Listen, we read in Scripture about the strategies of the devil. He's got a network.

He's got an agenda. We know full well in Scripture that he does battle against those who name the name of Jesus Christ, and those who keep the commandments of God. But listen, we're not talking about that right now.

We're talking about what he does in the sons of disobedience. We're not talking about what he does to Christians. We're talking about what he did to us when we were not a Christian.

That's what we're dealing with. Listen, those in Baghdad, those in Poland, those in Mexico, those here on the east side, that know not the Lord, you have angels. These are angels.

There's great reason to believe Satan himself, we'll look at it in a few minutes, was called a cherub. These are angels, a highly sophisticated network that keeps men dead in their sins, that is at work in them. This highly organized structure is out there keeping men entrenched in their sins.

You need to recognize what we go up against in this missionary endeavor. This is not child's play. I'll tell you what, it's not man's play.

It's God's play. If you don't have God with you, you should just sit down, go to sleep, stay in bed. If you don't have God with you, don't go.

You cannot be successful here. We're talking serious forces, cosmic powers, spiritual forces of evil, of wickedness. He's over a whole hierarchy, but I also want you to recognize this.

He is a prince by appointment. Luke's account, it's very telling. The devil himself admits this in his discourse with Jesus Christ.

Listen to it, don't turn to it. Luke 4, 5-7, the devil took Christ up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time and said to Him, to You I will give all this authority and their glory, listen to this, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If You then will worship me, it will all be Yours.

You know what I read? The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ. Christ has rights to this. You see the temptation there? Jesus is the rightful King, but He has no grounds to take possession unless He goes the way of the cross.

Don't go the way of the cross. Don't put that cup to your lips that you're going to plead with your Father not to drink. Just fall down and worship me.

It's all yours. It's all yours. You can have it without the cross.

Get behind me, Satan. And he went to the cross. And Scripture says, through death He defeated him who had power of death.

It's given to him. It is a relegated power. Don't ever forget that.

Jesus said when He was going to the cross, the ruler of this world is cast out. You can debate the meaning, but I'll tell you, when it's time for God to cast him out, He goes. Make no mistake about it.

When Jesus showed up at that shore that day, that legion of demons, they weren't there to do battle. They were screaming in terror not to be thrown into the pit. You better believe they know who has the authority.

Satan has what he has because it's granted him. Job, you put a hedge around him. Yeah, you better believe it.

And when God puts a hedge, no devil gets through. And it's only by permission. Is Peter going to be sifted? It's only by permission.

And then the upholding hand of Christ is there that He not make shipwreck. And I'll tell you when that day goes, you read it there in Scripture. He was thrown out of heaven with His angels.

He can't stay where God doesn't want Him. Some great angel grabs hold of Him and binds Him and throws Him into this pit for a thousand years. And you better believe it, He stays there until He's released.

And when that day comes, and His place is in that lake of fire that was prepared for the devil and His angels, when it's time for Him to go in there, He goes. Listen, He didn't outmaneuver or overpower God. Debate the verses what it means that He's cast out or He's bound for a thousand years.

Debate them however you want, but something ought to be clear to you. God takes the devil out whenever and wherever He wishes. That is the missionary hope.

Next, the heir. The prince of the power of the heir. Isn't that kind of strange? Those of us who know our Scriptures, it's not so strange, it's not foreign to our ears because we've read that so many times.

But just think about it. Stand back and think about it. The prince of the power of the heir.

Is that the way you would have said it? What's the heir? Basically, it's the same word used when it says that when Christ comes, we'll be caught up into the heir. We'll meet Him in the heir. The heir.

What is that? It's the upper regions. It's the atmospheric regions. But isn't it interesting right here in Ephesians later where we were already speaking about, you've got this idea of the spiritual forces of evil.

Where? Where are they? Spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. That's really an interesting concept there because when you start this letter, it says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. When you get to chapter 6, these spiritual forces are in the heavenly places.

When God spoke there in the first chapter of Job, He said that He went to and fro throughout the earth. This is His region of influence. This region.

The heir. Like it's the lanes of traffic. He's moving about.

But you need to recognize, to and fro. He's active. He's moving.

And not just Him by Himself. All this third of fallen angels. They're active.

If our eyes could be opened, I suspect we would be traumatized by what we would see if we could gaze into the spiritual realm. Brethren, I suspect there is such activity and traffic taking place around us right now. Where did the devil come from? Let's go there for a moment.

There's a text, and I want you to look at this. It is found in Ezekiel 28. Some of you know where I'm headed.

There's a lot of things said about the devil. A lot of things believed about the devil that don't specifically have biblical credibility. But sometimes you hear things about Satan, and maybe you wonder, where do they get that? Well, here's some place where a number of things that are said about the devil are gotten.

Ezekiel 28, verse 11, Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me. To Ezekiel, son of man, raise a lamentation over the king of Tyre. Now, you stop right there.

The king of Tyre. There actually was a king in Tyre. Tyre, Sidon, that region.

That's very close to where Dan is in Lebanon. It's a real place. There was a real king.

But, let me just tell you this. There are times in Scripture where David is spoken about, and you know full well that the things that are being said are not all true of David. Isn't that what Peter said when he was preaching on the day of Pentecost? He said, there are things that David said, and Peter says, but you know those weren't true.

The things that were said there by David were not true of David. They were true of the true David. There were times when the Davidic kings in the Psalms had things said about them.

It's like that cannot be just speaking about the Davidic line. There are truths there that we know go deeper. The same kind of thing is happening here.

As we read this, you'll recognize very quickly this is not simply speaking about a human king. Let's keep reading. Say this to the king of Tyre.

Thus says the Lord God, You were the signet of perfection, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God. That's not the king of Tyre, folks.

The king of Tyre was not in Eden. Every precious stone was Your covering. Sardius, Topaz, Diamond, Beryl, Onyx, and Jasper, Sapphire, Emerald, and Carbuncle.

And crafted in gold were Your settings and Your engravings. He doesn't say on the day You were born. He says on the day You were created.

They were prepared. You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed You.

You were on the holy mountain of God. In the midst of the stones of fire You walked. You were blameless in Your ways.

That's not said about any human. Men are born dead in sin. Only one exception.

Jesus Christ. Adam wasn't born. He was created without sin.

To say to a king of Tyre, You were blameless in Your ways from the day You were created. No, we're speaking about somebody else here. Till unrighteousness was found in You.

In the abundance of Your trade, You were filled with violence in Your midst and You sinned. So I cast You as a profane thing from the mountain of God. Man was never cast from the mountain of God.

Man was cast out of Eden for his sins. And I destroyed You, O guardian cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Your heart was proud because of Your beauty.

You corrupted Your wisdom for the sake of Your splendor. I cast You to the ground. I exposed You before kings to feast their eyes on You.

That gives us something of a picture. That is some of just the limited information that we have on where this angel, this guardian cherub, this fallen one came from. Now, let me tell you this before we go on.

He deserves our respect. You say, what are you talking about? Listen, Jude 8-9, listen to this. Yet in like manner, these people also, what people? Wicked people.

The people that Jude has been speaking about. Well, people who have been destined for a certain end, David looked at last week. In like manner, these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, and notice this, they reject authority.

Well, we often think reject authority. You know, there's authority in the church, there's authority in the family, there's authority in society. But he goes on to say this, they blaspheme the glorious ones.

Isn't that an interesting thing to say about wicked individuals? They blaspheme the glorious ones. Well, if we feel like we're left in the dark, about what does that mean? But notice what he says. I mean, he takes us to a confrontation between Michael the archangel and Satan himself.

He said, when the archangel Michael contending with the devil was disputing about the body of Moses, you say, what was that about? Well, you know, nobody was up there on that mountain when Moses died. Some have conjectured the devil wanted the body because the people of Israel would have worshipped it. Whatever.

I can tell you this, there was contention between Michael and Satan over the body of Moses. But the camera moves to Michael. And what Jude wants us to see is the level of respect, the manner in which he addresses Satan.

He said, Michael did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, the Lord rebuke you. We should take that to heart. Now, notice our text again.

Ephesians 2.2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air. And notice this, the spirit that is now at work. He's

not idle and he doesn't sleep.

He's at work. The devil is a worker. The devil is... Have you ever noticed this? Have you noticed when it rains? How the fire ants, they can build mounds this high.

Have you ever noticed that? Have you ever looked at an ant? It's that big. How in the world do they get this great big mound? They're tireless workers. You think there may be a million ants in there? How many of these angels do you think they are? Which do you think is stronger? A fire ant or an angel? Incessantly working.

You think with me, if a fire ants can build a mound like that, what can all the demons working together tirelessly accomplish? A lot, if God allows them. But God puts reins on the devil. He only lets him work so far, but he's working.

And God has given him a sphere to work in. And it's the sons of disobedience. That's what we find here.

Look, you know what it says? Following after. Kata. That's the Greek word.

It's that idea of according to. Some of your Bibles say that. According to.

We walked according to the Prince of the Power of the Air. We followed after Him. We followed.

But the thing is, there's something much more dark to this picture than just the fact that we followed. He's at work in the sons of disobedience. You know what it makes me think of? You remember Joseph Mengel? The Nazi doctor? It makes me think of him taking these Jews and he performed medical experiments on them.

It makes me think I can imagine the devil like this surgeon and he's got these sons of disobedience on the table and he's cutting them open and he's doing his experiments on them and he's mutilating them and making them ugly and deforming them and performing hideous operations on them. He is ever... Listen, this is what you need to recognize. He is ever working to make us into something.

That's the picture. Maybe you can liken it to the operations of a drug dealer. Have you ever seen how a drug dealer will come and they'll offer the heroin to somebody to get them addicted so that they're just consumed by it.

They've got to have it. It's the same thing with lust and with sin. Here, here, eat it.

Have it. Here, Eve, eat this. Eat this.

And it's that way. And what happens is we need more. You ever notice that? He's operating in the sons of disobedience.

Further, deeper, darker, you need more. And what happens to that drug addict? They just begin to go hollow and gaunt and their color is bad and their cheeks... You know what it's like. And that's what the sinner is like.

And the devil just drives them and drives them and drives them. And he's driven by his lust. And he just keeps enticing it and enticing it.

And they sell their souls to inject that poison in there and they just become hollow and hopeless and empty. Brethren, I've been to those countries and I've seen the Hindu that's practiced that garbage, been led by their demons for decades after decades. And you look at them.

You look at the Muslim and you look at the Hindu and you look at the Catholic and you know what you see in their eyes? Emptiness. Hollowness. They've just been dragged along by the devil.

Just empty. The sons of disobedience. But brethren, I'll tell you, it's not just the fact that they're victims in this.

They want it. They lust after it. They lust.

They want more. They're just driven after this. He is ever active.

Christian, you were once, know better that this is fodder for the workshop of the devil. I imagine like a craftsman. I imagine like a blacksmith with a hammer and he's taking the horseshoe out of the fire.

Clang! Clang! Clang! He's just molding us into something. Bang! Bang! Bang! He's ever active. It's like forming a sword or this shoehorse shaping it, hardening it.

Bang! They hit that sword. Bang! Bang! Why? To make it harder, harder, harder. Harder against God.

That's the reality. It's sons of disobedience. Hardened in their disobedience.

Just bang! Bang! Bang! Unloving. Unloving. Fill them with hate.

Clang! Lust. Clang! Covetousness. Clang! He's just crafting.

He's working. Servants. Active.

No sleep on His part. Scripture pulls back the veil for us. We don't see it when we drive these streets.

This is what's happening around us. This is it. He's on the move.

We see it in Scripture. Where have you come from? Back and forth. Back and forth.

Or Peter says, He's prowling. He is a devourer. You know what it means when a lion devours an animal? It owns it.

It has it. That's the picture. There's this traffic all around us.

Spiritual. In heavenly places. It's moving.

There's warfare. There's a battle. The devil.

The devil's a representative term for the devil and all of his angels. This whole network. This horde of devilish fiends that follow and he devours.

And here's the thing. Jesus, in speaking about casting out demons when they were accusing Him of doing it by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, you remember what he said there? In Luke's account, he talks about a strong man. And he guards his goods.

And you know who he's talking about. He's talking about the devil. He's talking about him guarding his goods.

What are his goods? The sons of disobedience. That's it. He owns them.

He guards them. When a strong man fully armed guards his own palace, his goods are safe. Bunyan portrayed it.

You remember when Apollyon came? He says to Christian, you understand that no prince worthy of the name will easily release his subjects, and so neither will I let you go. He doesn't let us. Not unless God breaks his grip.

But he protects. I mean, you talk about his goings and his comings. He keeps those sons of disobedience with all his might.

He works on them. He works on them. He crafts them.

And the thing he most furiously guards them against is the Gospel. And you see it in the pages of Scripture. And you've got that parable of the soils.

And you know full well, Jesus talks about the seed. And it's being cast. And it falls on the path.

And it's hard. And Jesus says, this is the word falling upon the heart of these birds. The devil.

He comes and he picks up the seed. You know what he's guarding? You know as he works? It's the thing he guards against most is any hope of salvation being offered to his servants, the sons of disobedience. He is a murderer.

Do you recognize what is happening? Listen to the text. In Luke 8, verse 12, the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts. Listen to this, so that they may not believe and be saved.

He means to damn every single son and daughter of Adam. If he owns you, he does not treat you well. He means to damn you and destroy you fully and completely.

His objective is to watch. And when the Gospel comes, he's there. Take it away.

As he's hammering, hammering, hammering, shaping us. He is shaping us to reject the Gospel. Reject it.

Reject it. You hear the cross preached and he's there. Don't believe it.

Christ is a hard master. Don't go that way. He'll rob you of all your joys.

He'll rob you of your pleasures. You don't want to go that way. Christians are fools.

You've got time. You've got tomorrow. Live it up now.

Bang, bang, bang. He clangs. Taking that seed away all the time.

Keeping it back. Keeping it back. And Paul says it too.

He says those who perish, you know why they perish? Because the God of this world has blinded their eyes. As he's hammering, bang, bang. You know what the sound is oftentimes that you hear? He's got a

spike in his hand and he's nailing that thing and he's pounding it straight into your eyeballs because he wants you blind.

He is constantly gouging out your eyes. He doesn't want you to see. He doesn't want you to behold because he knows if you once have a single ray pierce and penetrate as to the glory of Jesus Christ, it's all over.

It's all over. And he is determined to rip those eyeballs out of your head. And that's what you hear.

Bang, bang, bang. Keep them blind. Keep them distracted.

Because he wants you not to be saved. And it feels good. You see, we like it.

You ever read? Man loves to believe a lie. He refuses to lie. He loves the truth.

He loves to have his eyes put out. All his soul, all his fury, all his will is bent on damning the Iraqis and the Lebanese and the Chinese and the Poles and the Mexicans and the East Siders. Determined.

Do you recognize that? You actually have real, live, living, personal beings canvassing this East Side. And their objective is very singular. Damn them all.

And we've got the truth. The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation. How does he tear the eyes out? Well, he deceives.

Brethren, he was a murderer from the beginning. How did he murder? You will not surely die. He murders with his lies.

He murders with his deceptions. He deceives. The deceiver of the whole world.

That's what he's called there in Revelation 12. No wonder, Paul says, for even Satan comes across as an angel of light. He appears to be something he's not.

He's constantly pretending. He pretends to be your friend. Just like the drug dealer.

It'll make you feel good. Watch out. There's a hook in that worm.

There always is. He deceives. You know what Scripture says? We get towards the end.

It says that Satan will come out to deceive the nations that are on the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle. People all the time come up with this crazy idea, Armageddon, there's going to be a battle somewhere. Brethren, don't you recognize? Don't you recognize the battle? Do you recognize it when you see it? Where is he gathering people for the battle? As he's clanging.

You know what he's fashioning? It doesn't say he works in people. It says he works in the sons of disobedience. There's the battle.

There it is. He deceives the nations into coming together to battle. Against who? Against God.

That's his deception. The way he deceives mankind is to convince them to spit at God. And he's telling the same foul lie he's always told.

You will not surely die. Spit in God's face. You'll not surely die.

Go ahead and fornicate. Go ahead and be proud. Put yourself on the throne.

You're not going to die. Clang, clang, fashioning us. Fashioning us.

Sparks coming up. Fashioning us. Hardened, hardened.

Rebel against God. Despise His Son. Hate the Gospel.

Stay away from His people. You'll not surely die. You're not that bad.

All this fury set on damning us. You see, he deceives us into fighting. He deceives us into disobedience.

He deceives us into rebellion. That's the issue. That's what's at hand.

The devil so works in man to make us into that which is hateful to God so that God will damn us. You recognize Satan can't do that. Only God throws men and women into hell.

It's God. It's the Son of God who says, depart from Me, you workers of iniquity. Workers of lawlessness.

Sons of disobedience. You can live as though God has no authority to command you to do anything. God is too merciful.

He won't throw you into hell. He deceives us into fighting. He deceives us into attacking our only Savior.

And if you doubt that, all you have to do is watch. God take His Son, send Him into the world, and look exactly at what our brothers and sisters made of the same flesh, born of the same atom. Look what they did to Him.

And they do the same thing to Him today, and so would we as sons of disobedience. Sons of disobedience. What a title! Sons of disobedience.

That doesn't mean disobedient children. You ever read in Scripture, sons of Belial, or children of promise, or children of light? That's very common to find that kind of word usage and imagery in Scripture. What does it mean? It means disobedience is my parent.

Listen, here's what we know about parents. Jesus can look at people in His day and say, I know who your father is. How did He know? Because you do the things that your father does.

You see, you're the progeny. You're the image. That's the idea.

Why are we the way we are? Because somebody has sired us. Somebody has influenced the way we are. Somebody's behind the genes that we have.

We've been fathered in disobedience. Our bloodline is bad, bad, bad, bad. That's the idea here.

It's the source of who you are. It's the source of our distinctive character. That's the idea.

Man gets his very genetic makeup from disobedience. You see what all this is saying? Man is sired in rebellion. Man sins deliberately.

He kicks against God. This is the thing that you recognize about us. About the stock we come from.

It's not just that we miss the mark. Sin, yes, is falling short of the glory. We all have fallen short of the glory.

We sin. We fall short of the glory of God. I recognize that.

But brethren, it's not just that we fall short. It's that we specifically see the mark. We recognize God put the mark where it is.

And because we know God put the mark where it is, we intentionally do not want to go there. You may think it's a funny thing when you tell a child, he wasn't even thinking about this paper, I threw it on the floor, we all get done. All your parents, you tell your children, don't go touch those papers up there.

And exactly, that's what they want to do. You tell your child growing up, don't go in that cupboard over there. He never thought about the cupboard before.

That's exactly how we're wired. We're sired in rebellion. It's like if we're told not to do it, there is something that detests being told what to do.

We do not want God to be authority over us. And the devil is there forming this, forming this, forming this. We all want to be our own little gods.

We all want to sit. And you see, he plays on that. We want to be everything.

That's what pride is. Exalt self. Make God small.

Press Him down. We don't accept His right to rule us. And He's right there.

Right there. The devil stirs it up. Hate God.

Hate Christ. Hate His Gospel. Hate His existence.

Hate His authority. He plays us like a guitar and every note He plays is some different note of rebellion. For some of you, it was the note of religious hypocrisy.

For others, you were in the gutter. And for a lot, somewhere in between. But every note has this note of rebellion in it.

It is wanting to be everything. It is wanting to exalt self. And He's right there.

Right there. We're just a slave to it all. Slave to the devil.

Bound by the devil. Captive to the devil's power and dominion. And the thing is, we love to have it so.

We love it. Because He just feeds our lust. And He fans the flames.

And we love it. And we want it. He's constantly whispering.

He calls us to battle. Fight God. You see where the battle takes place? Not out on some field in Israel.

The battle takes place in your mind. And in your actions. And in your words.

And in your home. And in your life. That's where man gathers to the battle.

It is Satan deceiving us and gathering us to rebel against God. And it's happening up and down our streets. Not in some field out in the middle of Israel.

It's happening right here, brethren. It's happening. Some of you are out there, and right now you detest this.

You do not want to be in this church. You do not want to hear God's Word being spoken. You don't like the rules.

You don't like what seems to you to be the oppressiveness of Christianity. You hate it. Your parents have you here however you're here.

And you know it in your heart. You don't want to be here. You can't wait till it's over.

You can't wait till I finish up and you can run out that door. And what you don't recognize is there He is, just like the bird. And He's plucking out your eyeballs.

And He doesn't want you to see that there is a Christ. If we can only see. Do you know how it is? We're swinging madly in a rage at God.

That's what He's formed us into. And Christ comes and with a hand of love. Have you ever seen that? When some big guy stops, like a woman who's just out of control, and He grabs hold of her fists because she's swinging.

And He's just got the strength. It's like that. These hands of love.

We're just swinging wildly trying to... We hate Him. And He comes with love and He just holds our hands. And it's He that waves the white flag of peace.

Even though we're the weak ones, highly outnumbered, He waves the white flag of peace. Brethren, His answer to all of this is election. Chosen like we saw in chapter 1 before the foundations of the world.

His answer to it is regeneration, but God. Brethren, because of His great love with which He loved us, He stops our fists and He raises us together with Christ. His answer is the cross.

Christ came to destroy the works of the devil. And some of you that want to get out of here so bad, He bids you to come. Leave the tyranny of the devil behind.

Those of us that have come, we've found His touch is the touch of love. He is kind. It doesn't mean our lives are always easy, but it's like Christian found there in Pilgrim's Progress.

He said, your service was hard. And you know what? I love this king. I love his ways.

I love his people. Yours only lead to death. Brethren, somebody has said, look at the devil's boldness and brashness to confront the Son of God face to face out in the wilderness.

What nerve to tempt the very Son of God to bow down and worship Him. Yeah, that's true. Boldness and brashness.

But I just say, wow, what does that tell us about our God? Who would send His Son. If you've never read, especially Mark, Mark likes to use more intensive language, but he says the Spirit immediately drove

Christ out into the wilderness. Christ went out there to face the devil on purpose.

Brethren, if you want to know the character and power of our God, just remember, it was the Spirit of God that led Jesus out into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And to show us His mastery over Him. He let His Son be subjected to the worst.

You and I, powerless. Adam fell before Him. All the sons of Adam have given way.

You know, Jesus said this, ruler of this world is coming, who doesn't have anything on Me. Not a single thing. Our Champion came, squared off, and He went home with the victor's crown.

And that's what we see here. Highly exalted. Raised from the dead.

Seated at the right hand of God. And brethren, this salvation He offers us, takes us out of this pit, out of the grasp of that devil, and exalts us all the way up to be seated with Him in the heavenly places. That's the power of God.

Father, I pray that in these coming days, empower the people of this church to put their heel on the neck of Satan and crush His head. As it's spoken there in Romans 16, give us victory. May the Word of God proclaim, the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed from the lips of these brethren, truly prove to be the power of God unto salvation.

We see the Prince of the power of the air. But we also read in this book about the exceeding greatness of the power of God, the same power that was at work that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at your right hand far above all of these rulers and authorities and powers and dominions. And we know that He is above every name that is named, and He is King, and He is King of Kings, and He reigns forever.

And it is Him, it is by faith in His blood that we know that we overcome the enemy. Lord, we thank You that there is such blood that has been shed, such power that has been released, and we pray that the very power of God would be demonstrated both in the lives of Your people here, Lord, demonstrated in the spreading of this Gospel throughout this dark world. I pray this in Christ's name.

I pray it for His glory. Lord, glorify Your Son through this church, I pray. Amen.

You're dismissed.

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