

Satan's Strategy

Satan has already been defeated and expelled from heaven.
In his rage, he now desires to destroy that which God loves – his people.

How exactly, did Satan gain victory over the human race?

Genesis 3:1-6 (NIV)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"

² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, ³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

⁴ "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. ⁵ "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.

Satan enticed Eve and Adam to sin against God knowing that the consequence was DEATH.

Romans 6:23 (NIV)

For the wages of sin is death

Why was death such a key element of Satan's strategy?

Death separates us from God

Death traps us in our sin

If we die in our sin, we have no opportunity left to receive new life.

Death brings eternal judgment upon us

Once we die there is no way to escape judgment for our sin.

1 Corinthians 15:26 (NIV)

The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Why is death considered the final enemy that must be defeated?

Satan was defeated when he was cast out of heaven, but because he deceived us into sinning, we are now trapped in our sin and must pay the death consequence. Death now reigns over us and in order for us to be united with God, the hold of death must be broken.

When mankind sided with Satan in his rebellion, this enabled Satan to establish an earthly kingdom in opposition to the kingdom of God.

Luke 4:5-6 (NIV)

The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶ And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to."

What does Satan mean when he says the authority over kingdoms of the world was “given” to him? Jesus never challenges Satan's claim. In fact, if Satan didn't have this authority there would have been no temptation for Jesus. The fact that Satan had this authority made the offer very enticing.

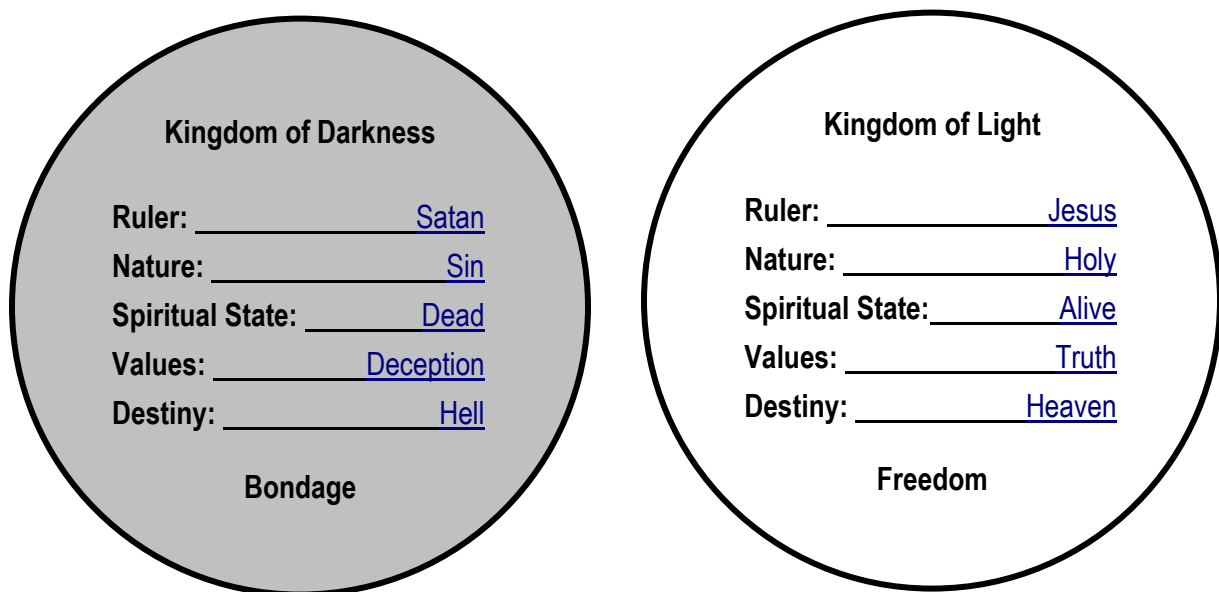
Possibly, Satan was given authority over all the kingdoms either:

- 1) Before his rebellion, as an appointed caregiver over the people of earth or,
- 2) At the time of the fall, when mankind chose to submit to his rule instead of the rule of God.

The Bible is not completely clear as to why Satan is given the “rule” that he presently has. However, the rule seems to have been given to him by God, rather than simply mankind's choice to follow him.

What are some ways you can think of to describe the difference between the Kingdom of Satan and the Kingdom of God?

Discuss as a group.



Jesus' Victory

This session may come across as a review for most of you, however, it is an extremely important review that you must thoroughly understand when dealing with spiritual warfare. These truths must be firmly embedded in your understanding if you are to have ongoing spiritual victory in your life.

How did Jesus' death defeat Satan's kingdom?

Discuss as a group.

In what way does each of the following verses show how Jesus set us free from Satan's grasp?

Teacher's Note: Though these truths are review from previous lessons, they are extremely important. Everyone needs to have them embedded in their thinking when dealing with spiritual warfare issues. These are front line truths that must be relied upon when under spiritual attack. They are also the points Satan wants us to forget because they change everything.

Colossians 1:13-14 (NIV)

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

1) Jesus provided forgiveness for our sins.

Satan is the ruler of all who rebel against God. We automatically fall under Satan's authority by embracing sin in our lives. As long as Satan can accuse us of sin, we stand condemned along with him and show our bondage to him. But forgiveness means there is no longer any accusation left against us. Satan has no basis for condemnation.

1 John 2:1-2 (NIV)

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.² He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

Psalms 103:12 (NIV)

as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

What are some practical implications for us when we start feeling convicted about past sins?

Satan will often try to condemn us for things we have done wrong in the past. Our response needs to be to declare that we are forgiven and our sins have been removed far from us. Satan has no right to accuse you. You have no right to accuse yourself.



Always remember, Jesus speaks in your defense!

All we need to do is move forward in freedom.

Colossians 1:21-22 (NIV)

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

Romans 5:6 (NIV)

You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly.

2) Jesus paid the death price on our behalf.

Satan is very legalistic. He demands that people get the same punishment he is going to receive. He asserts that the death price must be paid and God agrees! But God did something Satan could never have anticipated – God became man and died in our place.

Romans 8:1 (NIV)

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

How does Satan try to convince us otherwise?

Satan would have us believe that we are still guilty and must pay some sort of price.

We feel inclined to punish ourselves for ways we messed up in the past.

We feel we don't deserve certain things.

We feel we don't deserve love.

We inflict on ourselves the punishment we think we should deserve.

We feel we must compensate for our sin through doing good deeds.

We don't have to fear standing before God because our crimes have already been paid for. There should be no fear in our life because there is nothing for which we will be punished.

We need to take our thoughts captive and not beat ourselves up for past failings.

What are some theological problems with the concept of punishing yourself?

- a) The only appropriate consequence for whatever we do wrong (sin) is death. Any consequence we would give ourselves does not reflect the severity of our sin.
- b) Jesus already died to pay for those sins – they are dealt with, forgotten, left behind. To punish ourselves is to negate what Christ accomplished on the cross. You really are completely free from any condemnation. In the same way, trying to do good to earn our salvation also negates the work of Christ.

Romans 6:6-7 (NIV)

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin-- ⁷ because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

3) Jesus put to death our sin nature.

As long as I am alive I am under the authority of those who rule over me. But if I die, then their authority ceases. When my old self was put to death, Satan could no longer tell me what to do, sin's authority over me was broken. I am set free from his control. I can't sin when I'm dead. As far as he is concerned I am dead! Gone! Buried! Out of his reach.

Romans 6:11-12 (NIV)

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

What are some practical implications of this truth in our lives?

We don't have to sin anymore!

We are no longer controlled by a sinful nature. Satan would often have us believe we are still trapped by his sinful rule – that we must still sin. This is simply not true.

Often, evil spirits will claim a hold on a person based on some ancestral commitment, but this claim is broken as soon as a person's old life is put to death. A curse on a family, or an ancestral allegiance to Satan, is broken in your life when you "die" to your old self and are born into a new family – God's family.

We also now know we don't have to sin. No matter how compelling a sin may appear, we don't have to give into it. There is no sin addiction too strong for Jesus.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NIV)

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Romans 6:4 (NIV)

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

4) Jesus gives us New Life**2 Timothy 1:10 (NIV)**

but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.



Dying to our old self has definite benefits, but one main problem. If we die, we're still dead. By defeating death and rising to new life, Jesus can now make new life available to us. However, Satan will try to convince us to still live out the old life and make us forget we have a new life.

1 Corinthians 15:54-55 (NIV)

*When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵
"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"*

2 Corinthians 5:17-18 (NIV)

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! ¹⁸
All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:*

What are some of the practical implications of this truth for our lives?

We don't need to fear dying, because we already have new life, which is eternal.

We have a new purpose and new set of priorities.

Instead of advancing Satan's purposes, we can advance the purposes of God as his representatives.

Romans 6:13 (NIV)

Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

WHEN WE DIE...

If the Lake of Fire (what we typically mean when we say Hell) is a future destination for Satan and all who side with him (Revelation 20:12-15), then where does everyone go when they die?

Discuss as a group.

There are various words used in the Bible that we translate "Hell," but that may not be the best translation. Hell is a place of future judgment. The dead are not there yet.

Gehenna: Garbage dump outside Jerusalem perpetually on fire.

Sheol: Old Testament - Hebrew word. Place of the dead, doesn't distinguish between righteous or unrighteous.

Hades: New Testament - Greek word. Place of the dead (Substitute for Sheol)

Tartarus: Prison for demons (2 Peter 2:4)

Lake of Fire: Final Judgment (Revelation 20:14-15)

Before his death and resurrection, Jesus told the following story.

Luke 16:19-31 (NIV)

"There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. ²⁰ At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

²² "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

²⁵ "But Abraham replied, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.'

²⁷ "He answered, 'Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my father's house, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.'

²⁹ "Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'

³⁰ "'No, father Abraham,' he said, 'but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.'

³¹ "He said to him, 'If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.'"

What do we learn about the place to which the unrighteous go to?

It is a place of torment.

They are trapped in that location and cannot leave.

No one can go to them to assist them

They cannot send messages back or communicate with the living.

It is a place of great regret.

They will be held here until the time of judgment.

What do we learn about the waiting place of the righteous?

It is a place of comfort and rest.

All the saints of God throughout all the ages are there.

They cannot assist those on the other side.

At the time of Christ's death and Resurrection:

Ephesians 4:8 (NIV)

When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.

Who are the captives that Christ is leading?

There are two Possibilities

- 1) The captives are all the saints who were held in bondage by death (the holding area described above) but have now been set free by Christ's victory over death.
- 2) The captives are those enemies Christ defeated: sin, death, evil powers and he is now making a public spectacle of them. (Colossians 2:15)

Either way, the outcome is the same for the righteous dead; they are no longer held captive by death. They have been set free by Jesus Christ and may now dwell in the presence of God.
Any believer, who dies now, goes directly to be with Christ.

By dying on the cross and rising to new life, Jesus defeated Satan's hold on mankind. No one has to submit to his rule or control. There is a doorway made available for anyone who would want to leave Satan's kingdom and find life in Jesus. Satan's power is broken!

How does it make you feel as you reflect on all that Christ has done to free you from Satan and Sin's grasp?

Verses to be aware of when dealing with spiritual warfare issues:

Hebrews 2:14-15 (NIV)

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

Colossians 2:13-15 (NIV)

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins,¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.¹⁵ And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

1 John 3:8 (NIV)

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

DAY 1**Personal Quiz**

Every spiritual battle we face is a tension between truth and error. See if you can find verses from the past lesson or lessons that will counter the lies Satan tries to throw at us.

What are some verses you could rely on when:

Satan tries to make you feel guilty about past sins? _____

Satan encourages you to punish yourself for things you have done wrong? _____

You feel like you need to punish others for their sins? _____

You feel like you don't deserve God's forgiveness? _____

You fear that God may want to punish you? _____

You think you can't break free from a sinful pattern in your life? _____

An evil spirit tries to convince you that you can never break free of its grasp? _____

You are afraid of dying? _____

You feel like you don't have any purpose in life? _____

It feels like Satan is winning the war? _____

You are tempted to focus on the "rules" instead of the relationship? _____



PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
DAY 2		
Ephesians 1:3-14 (NIV)		
<i>³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. ⁴ For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, ¹⁰ to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.</i>	<p>Underline every spiritual blessing you've received in Jesus Christ according to this passage.</p> <p>Which one means the most to you?</p> <p>Do you find it hard to believe that you've actually received any of these blessings?</p> <p>How does it make you feel to hear that God has desired to lavish all this love on you?</p> <p>How does it make you feel to know that God has a purpose for your life?</p>	
<i>¹¹ In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, ¹² in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. ¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.</i>	<p>If you truly believe you've received these blessings, how would that change your life this week?</p>	

PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
DAY 3		
Ephesians 1:15-23 (NIV)		
<p><i>For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.</i></p>	What does Paul give thanks for?	
<p><i>¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.</i></p>	What does Paul pray for in this paragraph?	
<p><i>¹⁸ I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe.</i></p>	What does Paul pray for in this paragraph?	
<p><i>That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.</i></p>	How is this power available to us?	
<p><i>²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.</i></p>	Why is Jesus given responsibility for everything?	
	What does this imply about us?	

PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
DAY 4		
<p>Colossians 1:9-14 (NIV) <i>For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. ¹⁰ And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, ¹¹ being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully ¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.</i></p>	<p>What does Paul pray for the Colossian believers?</p> <p>Is your life being lived in a manner that is worthy of the Lord? If not, what areas need to change right away?</p> <p>Has your knowledge of God deepened over the past few months? Keep in mind, knowledge refers more to intimate relationship than it does information.</p> <p>Are you bearing spiritual fruit in your life and in the lives of others?</p> <p>What might need to change in your life to increase the amount of fruit you are bearing?</p> <p>Have you recently thanked God for the way in which he has rescued you?</p>	

PASSAGE	THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER	APPLY 1 POINT TODAY
DAY 5		
<p>John 14:11-14 (NIV) <i>Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. ¹² I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.</i></p>	<p>What does Jesus mean when he says we will do what he has been doing?</p> <p>What does he mean when he says we will do even greater things?</p> <p>What is Jesus saying about our authority on earth?</p> <p>Where does this authority stem from?</p> <p>What are the implications of asking for something in Jesus' name?</p> <p>Jesus declares that his people will do these things. What is keeping us from seeing this fulfilled in our own lives?</p> <p>How might we start exercising this type of authority given to us?</p>	