

"PUT BLAME ON THE REAL SOURCE OF EVIL"

The First Century Gospel Church/Philadelphia

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When blame for a problem is put on the source of the trouble, then solution is the next step. Satan works against us every day on his game plan to mislead us, by suggesting things to our mind, and he hides his identity by approaching us disguised as an 'angel of light'.

He will use whatever will work to defeat and destroy us (anything and everything) from distractions of the world to the deceitfulness of money to tempt us to covet things of the world which should be no part of the life of a Christian. Satan has an ability to steal the true Word of God from our heart, and to sow his seed of lies (John 10:10) "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy." If (or when) we allow him to do this, we will be robbed of God's blessings. [Every day we enter serious conflict in our battle against sin, for Scripture informs us that the devil prowls 'like a lion seeking to devour'.]

Satan is the one who blocks financial blessings from flowing toward us when needed. When we understand that, we will resist in Jesus' Name, and insist on our victory over the devil's power to block out what God wants to give to us. In the Name of Jesus, the devil must flee, because he is a conquered foe through Christ's resurrection to life. We are all only human, so Jesus (the Son of God) took humanity on Himself (Hebrews 2:14) "That through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." [His sacrifice on the Cross for us, frees us from poverty.]

Since Satan is defeated and paralyzed, he has no right to disturb our peace (with money problems or any other kind). It is the devil's game plan to put wrong suggestions in our mind to rob us of atonement rights and put desires in our heart to mislead and take us off the 'path of righteousness'. An oppression in (or on) our body is from Satan; it is he who causes conflict in our home; disturbances at workplaces; or takes away our peace of mind. Jesus told His disciples (Luke 10:18-19) "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you." (With Satan cast out, our life is made anew and our personality changes, by the work of the Holy Spirit who takes the place of Satan in our heart.

Bible examples reveal that Mary Magdalene was possessed with seven devils. No doubt many people tried to control her or help her in some way. But many people would have shunned her and would want nothing to do with her. She came to Jesus during a meal and showed love and respect by washing His feet and drying them with her hair.

Other people in the house thought that He should know what kind of a person she was. Jesus did not rebuke her in any way, however, he instead, put the blame where it belonged. He rebuked the devil's power and cast the seven devils out of her. Following that deliverance from Satan's power and control, her only desire was to follow Jesus and be

one of His disciples. (She was not only forgiven, but also converted to be a follower of Jesus Christ, and one of the first people to reach the tomb of Jesus on that Resurrection morning.)

When asked by the angel why she was weeping, she replied (John 20:13) "Because they have taken away my Lord." With the change made in her heart, her only desire was to serve her Lord and Master. Before her conversion everyone blamed the woman, but Jesus blamed the one at cause for the problem (the devil), and the Lord dealt with the source of the trouble. When Satan's power was broken, her life was mended by the Holy Spirit and she was restored to a pathway of righteousness (of which she could choose to stay committed, and by God's grace not fall.

When the devil's power is dealt with in our life, God's power will take its place. For anyone controlled by a demon spirit, when that spirit is resisted in Jesus' Name and cast out, God's Holy Spirit comes in and takes its place. When the demoniac of Gadara was under the devil's control no one could come near him, for they could be seriously harmed by the legion of demons within the man. Most people would have blamed him for his wicked acts, and many did everything possible to restrain or control him (but with no success).

While in that spiritual condition the man could not help himself; for a legion of demons had taken possession of him and caused him to do every evil thing that one could imagine. Jesus did not censure nor try to restrain him, but instead, asked him his name. Jesus commanded the demons to come out of the man and to never return. After the blame was put on the source of the man's condition, he was delivered by God, (and his only desire then (like Mary Magdalene) was to follow his Lord and Master).

If we are in a tough battle and dealing with sins that we can't seem to overcome; having desires that we ought not to have; if the peace of our home is absent; or if we lack money to pay bills and expenses; ... we need to recognize and put blame on the real source of the problem (which is the devil himself).

The apostles wrote (Ephes.4:27) "Neither give place to the devil." and (James 4:7) "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." When we seek for our living God with all our heart and find Him, then by faith it will be easy to serve Him, and to do what is commanded in the New Testament concerning every person that we meet or situation we face.

When the devil was cast out of the demoniac of Gadara, he just wanted to follow Jesus and be with Him. The towns-people wanted Jesus to leave their district; (Mark 5:18-19) "As He was embarking, the man who had been possessed asked permission to accompany Him. But He would not allow it. "Go home to your family," He said, "and report to them all [great things] that the Lord has done for you, and the mercy [compassion] He has shown you."

The man was commissioned by Jesus to preach the Gospel in ten cities. What a dramatic change from living in a cemetery, screaming constantly, cutting himself with stones, and attacking people who passed by! He was a totally changed man and in his right mind, gentle

and clothed, loving and filled with the Spirit of God (and someone you may like to have come and visit at your house)

His family may have had a difficult time believing the change in him and may not have wanted to open the door for him. Instead of fighting and attacking people, he was teaching and 'preaching the Gospel' to them. God simply cast the devil out, so the Holy Spirit could dwell within his heart and bring about that enormous change.

The type of person who can have that kind of change brought about by God in their heart, would be those who put blame on the source of the trouble (which is step one); however, one also needs to make a decision to trust God alone for that change which is needed. Our life has to be given to God with no reservation for us to take it back. After placing the job in God's hands, we are then to trust Him totally to break the devil's power over the person or situation that we face.

It is God, through the Blood Atonement sacrifice of His Son on a Cross (Colos.1:13-14) "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Our part is (James 4:7) to, "Submit yourselves therefore to God." That means to place the job of bringing about the change and of breaking Satan's power, into God's hands to stay, until the job is done. When we make that final decision, the victory comes next.

When Satan makes trouble in our home to destroy our peace of mind, we must realize that it is not any person or loved one who is the cause of it, but it is the devil. We should go to God in prayer to ask Him to cast the devil out of our home so that peace can be restored.

We should not be blaming a family member when it is the devil who is to blame. We must resist Satan and insist on God's peace to abide. (James 4:7-8) "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." God promises to cleanse our heart (including any unbelief) so we can claim our Atonement rights for peace in our home.

When all wrong desires are cleansed out of our heart, our life will be what God wants it to be. Our love will not be where it should not be, it will be where or on whom it should be. When our life is placed totally into God's hands, His Holy Spirit comes to take control, then it is easy to serve and trust God as people in the Bible did.

Saul of Tarsus' main desire was to hunt down and persecute Christians. He was controlled by Satan, but he did not know it. He thought that he was very religious and belonged to a very religious church. He thought he was right, and that everyone else was wrong to believe in or to trust on, Jesus Christ.

Saul was on a very wicked mission to take the lives of people who believed in and accepted the Messiah (the Son of God). It says (Acts 9:1) "Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the

disciples of the Lord." He was acting so wickedly, that God had to convict him seriously. After being knocked to the ground (by a great light from the heavens), (Acts 9:5) "He said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads."

The Lord had exposed Satan as the cause of Saul's wicked threats and actions (against believers in Jesus Christ). After being humbled, however, Saul then asked the Lord 'what He would have him to do (which revealed that Saul had been inspired to repent, and he wanted to be done with the devil at that point and did not want to be controlled by him any longer. Saul had been converted, and such a change came over him that he was willing to give his life to God, to receive divine guidance from Him. Saul was willing to do anything for the Lord from that moment on, and he (Acts 9:6) "Trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Previous to that conversion, Satan had a grip on Saul's life, so he was actively committing crimes against God (Whom he now had the desire to serve in whatever way God wanted him to serve). The Lord Jesus did not say one word of censure concerning what Saul had previously done against Him and His disciples and others of the faith.. (Acts 9:6) "And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

As the story continues it says that God inspired a true disciple named Ananias to instruct Saul about what God wanted him to do. (Acts 9:17) "Ananias went his way and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou came here, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost."

Ananias gave a cordial greeting to a man who had been guilty of committing many serious crimes against God's people. Ananias could have (naturally speaking) been fearful and critical of Saul (and at least have mentioned the serious wrongs and persecutions that he had been involved with before that time.

Instead, however, Ananias acted from divine love, obeyed God's instructions, and delivered a message to Saul, a message of divine truth that would save his soul. (Acts 9:18) "Immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." [Saul received back his sight and he could see once more. And, with that new repentant attitude, he was inspired by the Spirit of Jesus Christ to follow through in obedience to Lord Jesus' instructions. So, he arose and got baptized, and he received the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, to lead him from that day on the pathway of faith and righteousness (just opposite to the path that he had followed while under the control of the devil).

Putting the blame on the devil, the source of Saul's terrible wrong actions, had revealed the cause of that wrong life of wicked acts; and a revengeful attitude (and it opened the way for the 'next step', which would be the solution to the problem). When the devil is

revealed and resisted in Jesus' Name, he is cast out and has to flee from a repentant and submissive person. Then the Spirit of the Lord Jesus enters in to do the sanctifying work as needed in their heart.

Because Saul had truly repented of the evil works of the self-life within, the Holy Spirit came into his heart, to transform and enable him to understand that it is not works of the flesh (good or bad works) which make a person acceptable to God. Rather, one's believing on the shed Blood of Jesus Christ is what God looks for in a person, and it is the thing that He requires (for us to receive His favor and blessing). Whether we were a saint or sinner will not matter after we put the blame on the devil where it belongs, and steadfastly resist his suggestions and lies so to have him cast out of our heart God will take the place of the devil. God will work in the heart of those who have truly repented of disobedience and their unbelief, so to transform their heart so He can fulfill His promise for believers (John 3:36) "He who believes in the Son has the Life of the Ages."

Saul of Tarsus was not doing one thing to win God's favor, ... but the Blood of Jesus Christ had been shed and our Heavenly Father had nothing in His heart against Saul. When Saul repented and was willing to be reconciled to God through His mercy and the Blood of Jesus Christ, he was transformed and became an instrument in God's hands for him to bring the story of reconciliation to both Jews and Gentiles.

The Bible story about King Manasseh's repentance (after it says that he had been guilty of filling the streets of Jerusalem with innocent blood), also clearly reveals how willing God is to fully forgive the person who will sincerely repent of following Satan's deceitful suggestions and lies.

The truth is, it was Satan from the beginning who deceived us and caused all of our troubles, ... because God's Word declares to us that the Blood of Jesus Christ reconciled the entire world to Himself. Trouble that we experience comes from Satan, because we have not believed that we are reconciled to God through the Blood of Christ. So, we are responsible to repent of unbelief, ... and, to start believing what God's Word tells us. (2 Cor. 5:17-19) "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ."

God wants to do that same work (as He did in the hearts of Saul and King Manasseh), in the heart of each one of us, and He invites the worst of sinners to come and reconcile with Him, (Isaiah 1:18) "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool."

Those words coming from God Himself, prove just how fully the Blood of Jesus Christ took away God's disapproval for every soul who will recognize Satan as the cause of their problem and put the blame on him, and who are willing to truly repent and make necessary changes in their life. A repentant person must also believe that they are

indeed "reconciled to God" through the cleansing power of Jesus' shed Blood; (which means for us to repent and reconcile ourselves with God, through "Jesus' atoning Blood"!)

In summary, to put the blame on the devil (the real evil source of the problem) instead of blaming the seen person or circumstance, then to so resist the devil in Jesus' Name so that he must flee from us and be cast out, ... will also open the door of our heart for Jesus' Spirit, (the Holy Spirit of God), to enter and guide us on the path of faith and righteousness that can lead one to Eternal Life.

Jesus informed us (John 14:6), "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Jesus then prayed for His Father to lead each repentant soul to Him (John 17:24-26) "Father, those whom Thou hast given me—I desire that where I am they also may be with me, that they may see the glory, my glory, my gift from Thee, which Thou hast given me because Thou didst love me before the creation of the world. And, righteous Father, though the world has failed to recognize Thee, I have known Thee, and these have perceived that Thou didst send me. And I have made known Thy name to them and will make it known, that the love with which Thou hast loved me may be in them, and that I may be in them."

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Some main points of the message ...

1 The theme throughout is that we should recognize that Satan is the real cause of all problems that we come to face in our life, so we put the blame on Satan, not on a person or circumstances.

2 An analogy is given about how Saul of Tarsus immediately received God's gift of the Holy Spirit, after he acknowledged that Satan was the cause of his persecution of Christians, and he sincerely repented. He was then converted by God and became an instrument un His hands. We can have that same conversion to take place in our life, upon our true repentance and a sincere willingness to do what God's Word instructs us (as the apostle did so).

3 Also, that a terribly wicked King Manasseh was fully forgiven by God, after he also acknowledged Satan's control, and he was also brought to true repentance.

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