

The Strategy of Satan

Ray Stedman

I. Introduction.

A. Text: Ephesians 6:10-13.

B. We will never understand what is going on in the world until we accept the biblical diagnosis of life.

C. The battle that we face is visible in conflicts with people and nature because the world has fallen into battle with satanic forces.

II. Christ has set men free from these demonic forces.

A. We have not been set free to do whatever we want.

B. We have been set free in order to battle.

III. One must know the wiles of the devil in order to do battle with him.

A. The strategy of the devil is to murder.

1. The devil is a destroyer.

2. This is why the devil has never offered anything positive.

B. The method of the devil is to lie.

1. The devil works directly and through his angels.

2. Satan uses demon possession—the outright control of a human personality by a wicked spirit.

3. The Bible is careful to distinguish between demon possession and mental illness. (Matthew 4:24, Luke 4:40-41)

4. The characteristics of demon possession do not conform to any known mental diseases.

a. There is always a debased element.

b. There is recognition of the power and authority of Jesus Christ.

c. There is always the presence of a distinct personality involved—sometimes many.

d. There is an ability to transfer or be transferred to animals.

5. Jesus described these cases as demon possession.

IV. Response to demon possession.

A. One must yield oneself to prayer.

B. One should not attribute every problem to satanic forces.

1. Christians are not supposed to bind Satan everywhere they go.

2. By far the greatest attacks of the devil are circuitous.

V. The devil works indirectly through the world and the flesh. (Ephesians 2:1-3)

A. We respond to the natural impulses of the body and are therefore following the devil's wiles.

B. The more basic of these two channels is the flesh, which is the seat of willful defiance that everyone was born with that is opposed to the beauty of God's plan. (Romans 3:23)

C. The world is the corporate collection of everyone living according to the flesh.

VI. We who are Christians are called to battle for others and ourselves as well.

Application questions:

1. What is demon possession and how are we to respond to it?

2. Is it right to blame everything on Satan? Explain your answer.

3. How does the devil employ the flesh and the world to our destruction? Why is it so important that we view our Christian lives in terms of spiritual battle?
