

Teaching E-mail 62
Has Satan Noticed You?

"Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

(February 28, 2012)

"The evil spirit answered them, 'Jesus I know, and I know [those who are true to Jesus], but who are you?'"
(Acts 19:15).

Just picture the devil asking you, "Who are *you*?" Now, you may be thinking, "That's a good thing that he doesn't know who I am!" But think again. A follower of our Lord Jesus possesses His indwelling Spirit, so he or she *should be known* in the spirit realm! And, we followers of Jesus *must be engaged* in an all-out struggle against a demonic enemy whose only goal is to make sure people don't spend eternity with our Lord.

The apostle Paul leaves no doubt that there's a war being waged in the heavens for the souls of mankind. The sixth chapter of his letter to the Jesus followers in Ephesus is filled with military allusions! The Bible offers so many calls to *be on guard* and *stay alert* that there's no doubt we're often in enemy crosshairs! (See for example Proverbs 22:5; 1 Thessalonians 5:6-8; Mark 13:33,34.)

Because Satan *is* a deceiver and a liar, he counts on **human rationalization** to convince people he doesn't exist. In a recent survey nearly 60% of Christians either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statement that "Satan is not a living being but is a symbol of evil." In other words, if you can't see him and can't prove his existence, he isn't real.

If Satan is able to convince people that he's just a superstitious myth, he can go about his business undetected, **enticing Christians into a life of religious complacency** that makes them oblivious to the spiritual warfare around them. Yet,

we followers of Jesus are people *sent on a mission* to reach others for His Name's sake—a mission which has eternal consequences at stake.

Knowing your enemy's tactics is a critical advantage in spiritual warfare! So we want to discuss how Satan seduces people into being unconcerned about where they or others spend eternity. By enticing people into feverishly seeking their rewards on earth, he can dull any focus on the reality of the hereafter in heaven or in hell. (Confirm this for yourself: Luke 12:30-34; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17.)

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal"

(Matthew 6:19; see also 1 Timothy 6:10)

Self-gratification and temporal values are nothing new to this age! Three thousand years ago King David lamented the danger he continually faced from those who seek satisfaction from whatever they can gain on this earth: "O LORD, by *Your hand save me from such men, from men of this world whose reward is in this life*" (Psalms 17:14).

Remember, what you treasure most in your life reveals your loyalty, even the idolatry of putting relationships or activities above your obedience to our Lord. Spiritual warfare is raging around you in dimensions you can't always see. If you and those close to you in the faith are focused on the comforts of this world, you may already be held captive in the devil's snares (2 Timothy 2:26).

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil"

(1 John 3:8)

Before He took on humanity, Jesus was an eyewitness as the devil was thrown down to the earth from heaven (Luke 10:18; Revelation 12:7-9). Our Lord was well aware that He came as a "freedom fighter" on behalf of sin-enslaved mankind. This battle against the devil's wicked schemes must continue to be carried on by ALL His followers through His Spirit at work in them.

Spiritual warfare calls for a passionate heart that's determined to follow our beloved Captain wherever He leads. Being called as His follower to *die to yourself* as would a soldier in battle isn't for the cowardly or faint-hearted. And, those who continually give way to fear discourage others (Deuteronomy 20:2-8). As Jesus warns from the throne of judgment, the cowardly and unbelieving will have no place in eternity with Him (Revelation 21:8).

"But My righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him"

(Hebrews 10:38).

Can you now understand why Jesus challenges each person who would follow Him to *weigh the cost* first (9:57-62; 14:28-35)? Following our Lord is a life-long, intentional journey of loving, obedient trust that willingly endures persecution and hardship as a soldier in His spiritual army (2 Timothy 2:3,4; Revelation 1:9). He's not recruiting those ensnared in religious complacency who enjoy fulfilling their weekly time in the pew, feeling holy because they've given Him two hours of their time. Far from it!

On the contrary, when you're **truly born again** in spirit, you've been recruited into a "**spiritual assault team**" of fellow disciples. You and they have been commissioned and armed by Him to seek out and destroy the devil's work that has enslaved others.

The *reality* of warfare, as those who have actually experienced it will tell you, doesn't hit you "unless you've been there." Just ask some of the vets from the Iraqi and Afghanistan wars. Beyond the horror of 9/11 and the ongoing apprehension of possible terrorist threats, this generation hasn't experienced the rigors of war on its home turf. The televised images are graphic, but if the bombs aren't raining down on your own city, it's a vicarious experience for you. That's why it's so hard for the "churched" to recognize the offensive nature of a spiritual "**kingdom at war against Satan.**"

Karl Marx was accurate in his appraisal that "**Religion is the opium of the people.**" Opiates dull the senses, robbing you of awareness of harsh realities and incapacitating your responses. Because the two of us love and trust in Jesus as Lord of who we are, we are compelled by His Spirit to do what He would be doing in the world around Him if He were us: by His grace standing firm and warring against a demonic foe.

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13)

Within our Lord's Kingdom, His people lay down their lives for one another out of love (1 John 3:16). The interconnectedness between *love* and *obeying His commands* is indissoluble (1 John 5:1-3). That's because *His commands* are a very real demonstration of what love for Him

and for one another looks like! Love-grounded obedience is demonstrated by your actions. And be warned. When you take up your role as a warrior for Christ in the spiritual warfare that's being waged, you will get Satan's foul attention.

In order to limit your effectiveness and extinguish your joy in Jesus as your Lord, the devil will do everything he can to hinder and oppose you. So if you're being opposed and suffering for your life in Jesus, rejoice! From our Father's perspective, you're in good company (1 Peter 4:12-14; Matthew 5:10,11).

"If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me" (Luke 9:23)

Isaiah 61:1 describes the ministry in which our Lord Jesus so lovingly and boldly walked (see Luke 4:18,19):

"The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners."

This is the same nature of ministry He gave to His first disciples and to His followers for all time! If you're to stand firm against the devil's attacks and bring freedom to those he holds captive, which part of our Lord's ministry has He recruited *you* to walk in? The ministry that has been assigned to us personally as we share the Hebraic foundations is **"to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners."**

Our own ministry helps individuals, marriages and families free themselves from demonic oppression so they can unreservedly love and serve Jesus as Lord and build up one another in Him. Most

often that means they find themselves fleeing the Hellenist, anti-Christ influence that now controls so much of self-centered, lawless Christendom.

You might say that Hellenism represents a religious opiate that separates people's "spiritual" activities from the rest of their week's worldly compromise.

The Hebraic foundations are the return to a faith-based way of life of loving and serving Jesus, resolved to battle to see His Kingdom extended on earth.

"Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test?" (2 Corinthians 13:5)

There are several important questions you should be asking yourself about whether Satan recognizes you as *one who belongs to Jesus*. Discuss these with the people close to you in your faith walk.

1. If the demons don't know me as His, will Jesus know me at the Judgment throne?

It's a fearful reality that there will be those on Judgment Day who believed they were shoo-ins for heaven because at some point in their life someone told them, "You're saved!" But the tragic words of Jesus will pierce the dismayed ears of those who lived by a religion designed for their own comfort: **"I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"** (see Matthew 7:21-23).

It's no news that so many within Christendom have been seduced by fabricated gospels that give a false security that *whatever* they believe and *however* they live is acceptable to God. Some believe that "getting saved" is all there is, and that after they're declared "saved"

they can go on living the sinful life they've always enjoyed—a way of life that brings down the holy name of Jesus.

Still others have been deceived by a lie of universal salvation: “All ‘good’ people go to heaven,” good as defined by man’s parameters. This of course negates God’s Word that *no one* is righteous before Him based on their own perceived goodness (Romans 3:10-12). If salvation *apart* from trust in Christ alone were true, Jesus sacrificed Himself needlessly!

When you are **born again**, you've been recruited in God’s mighty power to take up your part in the war being fought against Satan for the souls of mankind. This is no one-time skirmish; rather it's an all-out war you'll be fighting the rest of your life (1 Peter 5:8). You’re wrestling against an enemy that hates you because he hates the Spirit of Christ *in you!* (See Ephesians 6:10-18.) You may not always be in the battle, but you're ALWAYS AT WAR! Don’t allow yourself to ignore what Scripture has made so very clear.

2. How can I know if the demons know me?

If you’re serving the Spirit of Jesus in you, Satan will attack. And, you won’t have any doubt about it! Few of the attacks will be a **frontal assault** where the enemy is obviously recognized. Usually Satan will set a **subtle snare** that you won’t see coming; that’s why he’s called a *deceiver*. Most often he’ll use individuals he has taken captive to emotionally wear you down (see 2 Timothy 2:26).

Your enemy wants to drain you of loving trust and wholehearted commitment to your Lord and His purpose for you. If he can frustrate you enough you’ll lose your persistence in fighting the battle on behalf of your King. The devil

knows that a Jesus follower who feels sorry for himself or despairs that painful circumstances will ever change will likely lose confidence in our Sovereign Father’s keeping power. If Satan can get you to take your eyes off Jesus, he knows you’ll lose heart and will focus on your troubles instead of on the coming glory that far outweighs anything you’re going through (2 Corinthians 4:16-18).

Keep in mind that the enemy gains a foothold in your life if you give way to old inclinations and responses like lying, anger, unwholesome talk, or any sinful ways from which you’ve been redeemed (Ephesians 4:25-31). That’s why we must be diligent to submit our lives to our Father’s good purpose, resisting the lies of the devil and his appeal to any sinful cracks in our spiritual armor (James 4:7).

That said, you may indeed encounter some fierce and direct frontal attacks. Again, if your gracious Father didn’t have a mighty purpose for you to be strengthened in spirit through this, you wouldn’t be armed and equipped to do so by His Spirit. For example: Mike has been choked by a demon as he prayed on behalf of young man. The demon sneered telling Mike he would die if he continued praying. He didn’t stop praying, and Jesus delivered the man. Yet again we were warned in advance by the Spirit that Satan would try to take our lives; our car was totalled but our Lord delivered us with minor injuries.

We know that it isn't personal courage that makes us press on in fighting the war. It's a grace-given love from Him that's so compelling we can't stop. It's a love which we fully recognize as an *empowered* love that ONLY Jesus can give us for others (Romans 5:5). And authentic, biblical love is a weapon the enemy of your soul can't understand.

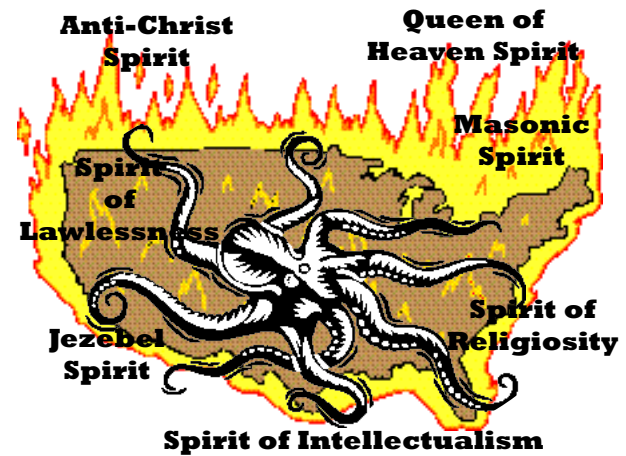
3. Are there other indicators that I'm really known by Jesus as His own?

How wonderfully the Bible affirms how you not only *belong* to your heavenly Father but that you are *in fellowship* with Him! If out of love for Him you live repentantly in obedient trust, He answers your prayers with God-sized responses (John 15:7,8). By holding your petitions and needs with outstretched hands, so to speak, you're trusting Him as your faithful and loving Father to answer according to *His* will (1 John 5:14). He listens and answers, and you're assured that you're His child by His fulfilled promises to you.

Another indicator that you belong to our Lord is the *indwelling Spirit* you received when He sealed His Covenant with you (2 Corinthians 1:21,22). And by His Spirit you're anointed, able to stand firm in Christ by His grace. Through the Spirit He uses you to bless others through the gifting(s) He apportioned to you AFTER you were born again. These giftings aren't natural talents or abilities you developed through concerted effort or study. Rather, they're SUPERNatural manifestations of the Spirit through you to bring praise and glory to God.

Still another indicator is that you and others who know you well can readily recognize the changes the Spirit of Christ within you is making in your character (see 2 Corinthians 3:17,18). In other words, they see empowered love at work in you, causing you to turn away from self-interest and readily lay your life down for others. There's no doubt you're no longer motivated by your old self. The character of Jesus is renewing your mind and transforming you from the inside out (Romans 12:2). You're a *new creation!* (2 Corinthians 5:17)

Some Identified Principalities and Powers Dominating the United States



Satan is real and his demons are real. The real life of a follower of Jesus is that the devil is waging a battle against the warriors of our King. If you haven't experienced any opposition, then determine if your faith is authentic in God's sight. Take Paul's call in 2 Corinthians 13:5 seriously! Don't wait to hear, "I never knew you."

Keep in mind that it's what you do AFTER Satan attacks you that makes all the difference to our Lord Jesus. Either you stand firm in His strength or you surrender to defeat and beat yourself up. So many gingerly step into the fray to stand up for Jesus and then receive some sort of rebuff or spiritual slap or cold shoulder from someone. They then face a choice: crying out to our Lord, appropriating His grace and strength, and pressing on with love for the next encounter. Or, they shrink back, fearful they'll be rejected again for their trust in Jesus.

Those who regularly fast or intercede on behalf of others know what we're talking about here in regard to spiritual attacks! The devil knows that our heavenly Father will answer the prayers of the repentant who call on Him (1 Peter 3:12).

And, through answered prayer, testimonies flow to His glory. So, demonic opposition is a given.

Let's illustrate this with an anecdote from our Hebraic Article, *Mutually Growing Christ-like Relationships*:

For thirty years Mike played a lot of pickup basketball. He normally perspires a lot during activity and began to notice an interesting trend regarding contemporary attitudes toward perspiration: many young men hate to get sweat on themselves, so they'll avoid body contact as much as possible. Realizing this, Mike would purposely come up and slide against them. Sure enough, they'd back off and not guard him. He was free to make any shots he wanted!

When you're walking lovingly and responsively toward God and others close to you in the faith, you're an irritant to Satan. He may retaliate through the **"sweaty body scenario"**. He agitates an aversion in you toward someone, or makes obeying God's way of doing things seem disagreeable or "legalistic" so you disregard it. Either way, your mind is being assailed with responses you know aren't from the Spirit! That's why you need to be prepared to "wage war": cast down those internal arguments and transform them into thoughts Jesus would have (see 2 Corinthians 10:3-5).

- **Is there someone our Lord is wanting you to contact or serve, or some task He's calling you to fulfill, but Satan has leaned against you so you avoid that person or resist doing our Father's will?**
- **Are there people in your life who are counting on you for God's provision or relying on you to pray and fast with them on their behalf or for others? In this light, do you live repentantly so your Father will hear you?**

- **Are there people for whom you provided Godly intervention but you fled when things got tough or didn't go as you expected?**

Any time you begin to do God's will you'll face demonic opposition in some form, whether trying to agitate or deter you or using others to oppose you. Does the quote below describe you or someone close to you in the faith?

"The man stuck between two opinions has an inclination toward Jesus, but he is cautious lest he go too far... He prays for God to reveal His will, but that the Lord will not ask too much of him."

This characterizes a **well-intentioned do-nothing**. We've sadly observed how very few Christians who *say* they'll do something on behalf of someone else or even for the Lord *ever follow through*. When you dig deeper into their lives, you find that their family and close friends don't trust their words either. Not only is their own reputation tarnished, but the precious name of Jesus is brought low as they sidestep responsibility.

Empty promises or voiced commitments without follow through are useless instruments in soiled hands—clouds without rain, fruitless and uprooted trees (Jude 1:12). And once again Satan is able to use "Christians" to discourage the hearts of others from pressing on.

"Calling the Twelve to Him, He sent them out two by two"

(Mark 6:7; see also Luke 10:1)

Let's look at one last area which engenders stiff demonic opposition: followers of Jesus learning how to cooperate together in a common endeavor as spiritual family. In our most recent Teaching E-mail, 61. ***Are You Our Lord's***

Intervener in the Life of Others? we address the need for mutual cooperation among Jesus followers as they intervene in the lives of others. Be mindful of this: Before our Lord releases people to collectively fulfill His call, He puts them through a period of mutual character development.

The much-needed *Christ-like cooperation* among those who would serve together is sorely overlooked throughout western Christendom. That's why so many people in ministry fail not long after they first set out. One organization confessed to us that over 75% of missionaries they trained didn't make it through their first term. Why? Often because of *unresolved interpersonal tension*. These men and women never learned how to cooperate to develop the character of Jesus as their core motivation.

Note too that many marriages disintegrate for the same reason—refusing to cooperate for common goals and values. In Deuteronomy 24:5, God commanded that a husband spend his first year of marriage learning how to bring happiness to his wife. A lot of things need to intentionally be worked out together if you're going to experience happiness!

For three and a half years Jesus lived with and disciplined twelve men He selected to be entrusted with His message. It took that long for the relationships to develop among them before He could leave them to collectively carry on His work. During that time He generated a special closeness with three: Peter, James and John (see Matthew 17; Mark 5). Nurturing a distinctive relationship with one or two others is the beginning of the type of sacrificial cooperation on which the Kingdom relies. (Paul describes this mutuality well in Philippians 2:3-7.)

We can take a lesson from the preparation period of King David. Samuel had anointed him to be king while he was still a youth. Yet the former shepherd was not ready to walk in this role; his character had not been fully sharpened to rule justly. In his season of preparation David spent three years running from Saul and hiding in caves. With him were three mighty men who were special to him among those who had joined his motley band. Then there were thirty others singled out by name, followed by the rest (see 2 Samuel 23). God used these years of evasion as a fugitive to not only develop David's character qualities but also to develop such loyalty among them all that they would lay down their lives for each other.

Right now our Lord may have recruited you along with somebody else for a purpose for which He wants to *jointly* use you. He may have connected you with your spouse, a believing relative, or a close friend in the faith for this assignment. It's important that you don't focus on what you think you're going to accomplish for Him. Rather, help each other cooperate with the character development our Lord wants to make in you both BEFORE He releases you to fulfill His will and purpose (Amos 3:3; 2 Corinthians 3:17,18).

A helpful way in which you and another person can understand yourselves in the initial stages of developing Christ-like character is to envision being Much-Afraid, the main character in Hannah Hurnard's book, *Hinds Feet on High Places*.

Whether you've known each other for years or you've just been brought together by our Lord, there are many similarities between Much-Afraid and both of you. In your pilgrimage to the High Places of love-grounded, obedient trust in Jesus your Shepherd, you're not traveling alone. You need to help

each other along the way; one of you can't run ahead of the other. As co-workers and family members in Christ, you need to reach the High Places together, equally yoked.

As Much-Afraid started to ascend the High Places, her relatives Craven Fear, Pride, and Dismal Foreboding tried to discourage her pilgrimage toward sacrificial, Christ-like love. For you, these "voices in your head" will be undemolished strongholds or any symptoms of past strongholds you've yet to see transformed into the character or response or attitude of Jesus. Those voices inside your mind can be your worst enemy because they can deceive you: they sound just like YOU! Refuse to listen!

If you focus on what the Spirit of Christ wants to change in each of you so you can together cooperate in serving Him, you'll definitely experience the sweaty body scenario with each other and with anyone who comes alongside to help you during this time of transformation. Keep looking to Jesus to be at work in and around and through you during these times of stress and opposition. He's greater than any and all temptations and assaults the enemy throws at you (1 John 4:4)!

The Kingdom of God is *not* task driven but *character* driven. The character and motives of Jesus are what unite you and what enable you to stick together in Spirit in the midst of the battle.

And as strange as this may seem, *while you have the opportunity, you better make sure the devil knows who you are.*

For further help concerning spiritual warfare and the all-important need for mutual Christ-like character development, we recommend these resources, all a free download at our website:

- Our book and/or video series, *Demolishing Strongholds*.
- Our video series, *Certain of What We Do Not See*.
- Our study guide, *Going to the High Places* (a companion to Hannah Hurnard's classic, *Hinds' Feet on High Places*).
- Our May, 2000 newsletter, *Taking the High Places*.