

## Teaching E-mail 68 Are You Known By Satan?

(March 6, 2013)

Note: Throughout the Bible from Genesis through Revelation our heavenly Father makes us aware of the demonic forces that are at work all around us. That they exist is indisputable, and Paul considers their nefarious work a material issue to address: ***“For we are not unaware of [Satan’s] schemes”*** (2Corinthians 2:11). A key reason for the spiritual impotence of so many within westernized Christendom is that they *have* given way to the schemes and tactics of the master deceiver.

In this lesson we will discuss only a few key aspects of Satan and his demonic workers as noted in God’s Word—not to fan fear or draw undue attention to them, but to arm you for service for our Lord against the ruler of this world’s sinful system. Awareness of your enemy and his tactics helps keep you from being entangled in his schemes so that you can fully press on in your purpose and pilgrimage in Lord Jesus. We strongly encourage you to use a concordance to look up “Satan”, “devil”, “evil one”, and “unclean spirit”, and explore those verses in context so you can pray effectively for people dear to you who are caught in the enemy’s grip.

***“[Jesus] replied, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven”*** (Luke 10:18).

***“The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him”***  
(Revelation 12:9).

The impact of humanism in the past century has relegated to the arena of superstition **the presence and activity of demons**. That our heavenly Father has permitted them to exist on earth within the confines of His sovereign will should motivate each follower of Jesus to be aware of how these demonic forces oper-

ate. We need to know from God’s Word what our Father allows them to do so we can overcome their evil activity and penetrate enemy lines to clear the way for the Gospel to be received.

Satan is a master of deceit (John 8:44). One of the most pervasive deceptions he has foisted upon humanity, including the vast majority of Christians, is *disbelief in his existence*. This denial gained widespread acceptance in Christendom during the Age of Reason (Enlightenment), a movement by intellectuals in Europe and in the American colonies during the 17th and 18th centuries. The aim was to reform society by relying totally on mental reasoning, dismissing any belief in the supernatural. Advancing the scientific method as the sole means of establishing truth, adherents challenged all principles and beliefs that were based on faith: ***Anything that couldn’t be proven by the scientific method was labeled “superstition” and scorned.***

### The Bible: Truth or Fiction?

The starting point for you is your own evaluation of the biblical text. If God’s Word is a mythical account of stories mixed with wise advice, then it’s a fraud. But if it indeed is the God-breathed counsel of revelation and purpose from His perspective, then every word and command must be taken seriously—and that includes the very real world of the unseen.

That demonic activity was well-known in the first century is a given within the Gospel framework. Why else would our Lord Jesus send out the Twelve with this instruction: *“As you go, preach*

*this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, **drive out demons.** Freely you have received, freely give"* (Matthew 10:7,8). These men didn't question Him about what He meant by this!

And why, if demons were a figment of the imagination, would our Lord send the seventy-two out ahead of Him into every town He was about to go so that the townsfolk might be freed from the devil's captivity and have ears to hear Him when He did come (see Luke 10:1-20)? The authority Jesus gave His disciples to overcome the power of the enemy was very real as they returned to Him proclaiming, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in Your name" (Luke 10:17).

The Hebrew Bible (Older Testament) declares the reality of Satan's deception and perversion of God's Word (Genesis 3:1-4), his incitement of David to disobedience (1Chronicles 21:1), his affliction of Job (Job 1:7-2:7), his accusation against Joshua the high priest (Zechariah 3:1,2).

In the Newer Testament demonic deliverance was a well-known activity of the Pharisees of Jesus's time, as revealed in His rejoinder to them: "And if I drive out demons by Beelzebub, **by whom do your people drive them out?** So then, they will be your judges" (Matthew 12:27). The very fact that the Pharisees would accuse Jesus of having demonic power indicates the prevalence of both devilish agitation as well as casting out unclean spirits.

Followers of Jesus today need to both recognize and counter the schemes and tactics of Satan and his demons using God's Word through the power of His Spirit. According to the Bible, the devil is real, and demons are on earth only because our heavenly Father permits them to be here.

Your ignorance of how demonic influence ensnares people who aren't fully submitted to God in union with Christ will keep you from penetrating their darkness with His light. Demons aren't invincible, nor are they "independent operators." They can do only what our Father has permitted them to do for His purposes. While the Bible discloses some of the ways they function, *how* they operate is not always so obvious. That's where *deception* comes in.

## Aspects of Satan's Role On Earth

### 1. He keeps people from the truth

"Those along the path are **the ones who hear**, and then **the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts**, so that they **may not trust and be saved**" (Luke 8:12).

"**The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers**, so that they **cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**" (2Corinthians 4:4).

How Satan is able to use demons to blind the minds of people or even rob God's truth from someone's heart is not explained in the Bible. But the end result, which our sovereign Father permits, is that there are those who will hear and even internalize the truth in their hearts and still not trust and be saved.

In our materials on demonic strongholds, such as *Certain of What We Do Not See* and *Demolishing Strongholds*, we've noted our observation that demonic strongholds are capable of blocking both God's truth and His love so that the person is unable to live in His freedom and serve His purposes. This conclusion was derived from years of talking with hundreds of people who



came to our retreat center. These were *followers of Jesus* who couldn't experience either God's truth or love until they rid themselves of the demons in their soul through the Name of Jesus.

**The Path of Truth:** Our Father wants you to *discuss* and *question* what you've been taught, *verifying it in the Scriptures for yourself* (Acts 17:11). Often, if you are willing to trust His Spirit and His Word, you'll find that you may not be wrong about a particular truth, just incomplete (Acts 18:24-28). There may be more that you need to learn.

Our pilgrimage to our salvation is very similar to the *progressive revelation* of God that's the pattern in Scripture. *This means that the sections of the Bible that were written later contain a fuller revelation of God and His commands when compared to the earlier sections.* The progression in our own spiritual lives from the early stages to maturity is compared to the transition from milk to solid food (1Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:12).

Our sanctification into increasing Christ-likeness can best be understood like an *upward spiral*. As we explore and discuss the Scriptures with others with the intent to put them into practice, we gain personal experience and understanding as we obey His commands. We're not only becoming more like our Lord by the renewing of our minds, but more effective in *determining and doing* our Father's will (Romans 12:1,2).

Never lose sight that demons can readily influence you in areas of your mind, will and emotions which you haven't fully yielded to the indwelling Holy Spirit. These are areas of disobedience your sin nature clings to, and they



need to be renounced in the Name of Jesus so that the Spirit of Christ can then do His good work in that area.

If you hold onto these deceiving or accusing "voices" which sound just like your own inner voice, you'll find yourself overcome by distractions. You'll neglect prayer time with God and pursuing the truth in His Word. And, you'll find yourself distrusting His love and purposes for you in His Kingdom. These deceiving spirits keep you from discussion and application, causing you to fear that your faith may be inadequate or misplaced. Don't just shut the door in the face of someone who is sharing a new insight from Scripture with you. Check it out in the Bible for yourself. Never let the devil use fear to snatch away a truth our Father wants you to embrace.

## 2. He tempts us to sin

*"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you"* (James 4:7).

*"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings"* (1Peter 5:8,9).

From the time Satan tempted Eve, he and his demonic hoards have continued

to tempt and lure people into disobeying God. The devil can never *make* anyone sin, but he uses our own sin nature against us: *"each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when*

### Demonic Temptation And Our Sin Nature



*it is full-grown, gives birth to death*" (James 1:13-15). Until the day you die you'll be confronted with temptation which your sin nature wants to enjoy but the Spirit in you has empowered you to resist (Galatians 5:16,17).

It's important to recognize that even people who serve in leadership are really just human beings with a sin nature. King David, a "*man after God's own heart*" (Acts 13:22), was tempted to commit adultery and murder. And as we mentioned earlier, "*Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel*" (1Chronicles 21:1).

Seventy thousand people died from a plague brought on by David's disobedience. This is one of the reasons we who follow Jesus should refrain from speaking evil against our government leaders (Exodus 22:28). Rather, we need to keep them in our prayers. When they give way to temptation, a lot of people bear the painful consequences.

### **Satan Is God's Agent To Redeem Those Trapped In Sin**

*"...hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord"* (1Corinthians 5:5).

*"Among them are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme"* (1Timothy 1:20).

It's difficult for many to realize that our Father uses Satan to deal with the sin-nature of the unrepentant. Our Father is purposing that a resistant person admit his sin, turn away from it, and humbly come to Him through the completed work of Jesus to receive forgiveness and cleansing. In a sense, satanic "torture" is a great act of mercy toward

an individual who is refusing to repent and is thereby destining himself toward hell. (See Matthew 18:32-35 for an example of God using "torturers" in the spiritual realm to bring about a changed heart.)

### **3. The devil tests people's faith**

*"Then the LORD said to Satan, 'Have you considered my servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil'"* (Job 1:8).

*"Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers"* (Luke 22:31,32).

We learn in the account of Job that even those whose hearts are set on pleasing God wholeheartedly are subject to trials of all sorts. The devil is allowed by our Father to test the veracity of our faith. Jesus warned Peter that the devil had specifically asked permission to test his faith.

Note that Jesus *didn't* say he'd do anything to prevent this testing! Instead, He assured the apostle that He had prayed for his faith to not fail in the midst of his temptation. Through that painful struggle Peter would learn not only to humbly return to the Father in repentance; he would also be equipped by his experience to compassionately and boldly bring spiritual strength to others in Christ.

Years later this same Peter who'd been tested himself would write the scattered followers of Jesus this encouragement: *"In this [promise] you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine*

*and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed” (1Peter 1:6,7).*

It’s important that you and those close to you in the faith discern if any of the trials you’re presently undergoing are our Father’s way of proving your faith in Him to be authentic rather than just intellectual awareness and assent. This is where those with gifts of prophecy, knowledge, discerning of spirits, and wisdom can prayerfully serve on your behalf so the Spirit might reveal why you are suffering.

Certainly we recognize that not all suffering is our Father’s chastisement! For your trust and patient endurance to grow, this particular classroom you’re in may be His way of refining your journey as His beloved child. Don’t be in too big a hurry for your trial to end! Rather, pray for the grace to endure; also seek the wisdom to recognize if this situation may be demonic in origin because of any known sin in your life. If your heart is clean and this is just demonic harassment, take authority over the spirit in the Name of Jesus and eject it so that you might be freed to wholly be about our Father’s will.

#### **4. The devil wars against the saints**

*“Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the **devil’s schemes**. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but **against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms**” (Ephesians 6:11,12; see also 13-18).*

*“[Satan] was given power to **make war against the saints and to conquer them**. And he was **given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation**” (Revelation 13:7).*

More than 20 years ago our Lord revealed through a number of prophets that the **principality of Jezebel** ruled this nation. Accompanying this evil spirit that destroys the influence of men is an unclean **spirit of deceit**, which is the spirit-world prince over Washington, D.C. The burgeoning domination of women in all levels of influence including public education as well as the intentional denigrating of men through the media has accelerated Jezebellic control.

Several decades ago the National Education Association deemed public education **“a totally effeminate institution”** especially in regard to the mode of passive learning that caters to girls. Soon afterward this same brand was given to describe Christianity in this nation, not only in the passive style of services but in women representing the vast majority of participants. A recent report cited women comprising 60% of current college graduating classes. What has happened to a generation of young men who have abandoned a quest for leadership and influence in this society?

With Deceit as the spirit so profoundly influencing Washington and Jezebel exercising power in so many dimensions over this nation, defeat has been pervasive—yet so many Christians are blinded to it. Any time you look to the government for answers rather than turning repentantly to our Lord, you are pursuing a demonic solution. And, you’re getting one: depression, hopelessness, cold love, and economic chaos.

We included in Lifebyte 15. *Satan’s Strategies (Part 1)* this anecdote:

In a certain congregation the pastor’s wife had a check in her spirit about a woman who’d been attending. Within a year of her arrival this woman had become head of the

Sunday School program. The pastor's wife kept praying with uneasiness about this. During a time of congregational worship one Sunday morning she perceived a grotesque demon perched on that woman's shoulder.

Horrified, she went to her husband and the elders and insisted they look into this. When they met with the woman, she admitted that she'd been sent into the congregation by satanists to water down the Sunday school curriculum.

### Demonic Imagery Destroys

When relationships on all levels of society are filled with distrust and suspicion, that nation moves toward collapse. Satan's "ambassadors of strife" create interpersonal tension and estrangement at all levels, starting within families. The pandemic number of divorces and of children raised by divorced mothers is one indicator of how deeply divisive demonic activity has agitated the sin nature of each family member. Each person draws inward in a survival mode of self-absorption, isolating themselves from interaction with the others. Any sense of the family as a united "team" who belong to one another disintegrates as each one escapes their personal pain through cyber activity, TV, or bringing their work home.

Again, this scenario is where spiritual strongholds may come into play. Strongholds are fortresses of thought in your mind that block out truth and love, often causing you to misperceive the actions, words and attitudes of others. Paul may be referring to the nature of demonic influence as a snare which captivates and deceives: "That they will come to their sens-

**Demonic Misperception Causes Relational Estrangement**

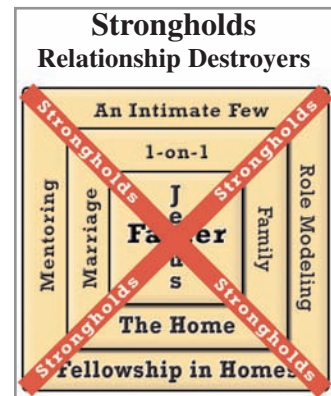


es and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will" (2Timothy 2:26; see also Revelation 13:7).

In Teaching E-mail 24. *Don't You Talk?* we discuss a scheme of the enemy which we refer to as "**The Sweaty Body Scenario**":

For thirty years Mike played a lot of pickup basketball. He normally perspires a lot during intense physical activity, and during the past few years he noticed an interesting trend regarding attitudes toward the normal bodily function of perspiration: Many young men *hate* to get sweat on themselves, so they avoid body contact as much as possible. Realizing this weakness, Mike would purposely come up and slide against them. Sure enough, they'd back off and fail to closely guard him. He was then free to make any shots he wanted!

When you're walking in grateful love with our Lord in a way in which your obedient trust translates into responsible one anothering with others in Him, you can count on being tempted to retreat by the "sweaty body scenario." Satan uses those he has taken captive through the ongoing disobedience of strongholds or habitual sin to create *relational avoidance*. He agitates an aversion in one person toward another. Sometimes he incites some behavioral or personality habit in a brother or sister in Christ to keep you from drawing near that individual. That person's one irritating flaw then colors all your thoughts or reactions toward him or her, creating a



pattern of avoidance. The solution to this division? You break out of this through *mutual discussion*—out of love for that person you confront the very issue Satan is using to divide you.

***“No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God.”*** (Luke 9:62).

The testing of your faith can also occur when our Father has given you a specific task to complete. He allows Satan to reveal your *susceptibility to distraction* and your *lack of determination* to finish the assignment. Our Father purposes that you grow and mature in responsiveness to His Spirit, focusing on being in His will out of grateful love. Often His will involves your family and/or extended spiritual family as He’s causing you to come to grips with your measure of loving commitment to them. Any tendency toward self-interest motivation will offer a foothold for demonic agitation and division to develop. Ephesians 4:22-27 offers some sound insight into living out your relational responsibilities.

At times demonic interference can be subtle, especially if you’ve become complacent in depending on the Spirit and have instead been relying on your own strength. It’s as if you encounter some relatively minor challenge and think, “That’s OK, God. I can handle this one.” But the Gibeonite ruse detailed in Joshua chapter 9 is a warning for us today to not give way to spiritual independence and self-sufficiency. The Israelites had finally reached the Promised Land, having received orders from God regarding the pagan peoples who inhabited it. Having achieved their goal, His people were vulnerable to deception. Confronted by trib-

al representatives who lied about their true identity so they could make a peace treaty, Joshua and the men of Israel *failed to ask God* about their motives. Thus they were deceived: “*The men of Israel sampled their provisions but did not inquire of the LORD*” (Joshua 9:14). When you’ve almost attained your own goal or when its fulfillment is in sight, that’s when you’re most vulnerable to *self-reliance*.

In the classic war movie *Sands of Iwo Jima*, three soldiers are surrounded by their Japanese enemy. Running out of ammunition, one of the soldiers volunteers to go back for more. Arriving at the supply depot he’s distracted by freshly brewed coffee and stops to indulge himself. By the time he finally returns with the ammunition, the other two men have been overrun by the enemy and slaughtered. Distracted from his goal and purpose, that man’s lack of commitment led to irreparable harm to others.

Living securely within your Father’s will is key to journeying onward in fruitfulness for Him. That’s one reason why ongoing meaningful prayer is so necessary: to remind yourself of what He wants you to do out of loving obedience to Him, and finish it! At the same time, be diligently aware when you find yourself tempted to misperceive the attitudes, words and actions of others around you, whether family members, fellow travelers in Christ, or anyone you encounter. The enemy of your soul wants to tempt you to become a victim of division or a source of strife. Don’t let that happen!

### **The Prayers From of the Righteous Challenge the Demons**

We mentioned earlier that our Lord Jesus and His disciples readily recognized the reality of spiritual warfare as well as

the power of trusting prayer as a weapon of warfare against the unseen demonic world. The Jews of Jesus's day knew from Daniel chapter 10 that demonic forces opposed the ministering angels who were bringing forth an answer from God as Daniel prayed. The righteous prophet cried out in trust for *21 days* before the heavenly messenger, aided by the archangel Michael who protects the Hebrew people, broke through the opposition in the heavenlies.

The kind of trust that *continues in prayer despite opposition* is commended by our Lord. The parable of the persistent widow in Luke 18:1-8 encouraged followers of Jesus to not cave in too early in their prayer: *"And will not God bring about justice for His chosen ones, who cry out to Him day and night?"* (Luke 18:7). [For more insight on the vital link between righteousness and answered prayer, see our March, 1996 Newsletter, *Righteousness and Prayer*.]

### Do You Know Who Knows You?

There's a difference between knowing a fact and knowing a person in relational interconnectedness. A married couple *knows* one another at the deepest level of intimacy in the physical realm. On a spiritual level, being *known by God* represents the deepest covenant union in Jesus: *"But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him"* (1Corinthians 8:3; Galatians 4:9). Has it ever occurred to you to question whether God even knows you as one of His own? Many self-identified Christians satisfy themselves with the thought that "I know God" when in fact they may know much *about* Him or have given way to a false gospel that perverts grace into excusing lawlessness.

But there's a more crucial issue that

each person needs to realize in their spirit: "Does God know *you*?" Don't dismiss this too lightly. *Many* who call Jesus "Lord" and do a lot of spiritual works in His Name have neglected obeying the will of the Father. They will ultimately be told by Jesus, *"I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"* (See Matthew 7:21-23.) Our Lord is warning those who think they belong to Him but are living self-deceived, captive to doing their own will and that of Satan. Sadly there will come a time when our Lord will tell them, "I never knew you."

The Book of Acts reveals that it wasn't uncommon for Jewish exorcists to travel about casting out demons. Some even impertinently proclaimed the name of the Lord Jesus over the demonized in order to deliver them. Seven sons of a chief priest named Sceva decided to exercise this sort of spiritual power and found themselves soundly beaten and routed in the process: *"The evil spirit answered them, 'Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?'"* (Acts 19:15).

Our Father has empowered those in His Son to exercise righteous authority over demonic activity when their hearts are unsullied by unrepentant sin. The aroma of Christ permeates the unseen realm as well as the visible arena of life. You can be sure that when you're known by our Lord, demonic spirits are well aware of you too. Don't be surprised or taken off-guard when sudden attacks beset you on all sides (1Peter 4:12-14)! That's evidence you're participating in the same sort of refining purification as our brothers and sisters around the world.

Perseverance in doing our Father's will is key to our pilgrimage in Jesus: *"For you*



have need of endurance, so that **after you have done the will of God**, you may receive the promise” (Hebrews 10:36). You may want to consider that if you *haven't* faced any testing or spiritual assault in a long time, then perhaps you've been ignoring or disobeying our Father's will. Please, ask Him about this! His Spirit will set your heart at rest *if* you're abiding in His will.

If complacency and shrinking back describe you, however, be warned: God takes no pleasure in those who draw back out of fear or disbelief (Habakkuk 2:3,4). Repent of this so that your earthly journey may find your ongoing trust providing a heavenly welcome. (See Hebrews 10:38,39.)

#### **Do You Know How You Know?**

*“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:2).*

You don't *renew* your mind by adding information to your head. The Greek word used by Paul literally means a renovation which *makes you different* than the way you were! The transformation in you comes as you change the pattern by which you process what comes into your mind. Biblical sanctification by the indwelling Spirit alters how we think and respond until we can truthfully say of ourselves, *“We have the **mind of Christ**”* (1Corinthians 2:16). Through the Spirit of Christ we are transformed from our pre-rebirth way of relying on our minds to trusting in His guidance and empowerment so we can fulfill our Father's will.

The Humanist Manifesto has overwhelmingly influenced public education for most of the last century through a pattern of thinking which places *man* rather than God at the center of all things. Textbooks produced by secular publishing houses and teachers indoctrinated by public universities emphasize the rights and happiness of the individual rather than personal responsibility to God or to fellow humanity. The entire invisible realm of the supernatural is discounted and denied.

The deceiving demonic principalities of **Anti-Christ** and **Lawlessness** have taken captive the minds of those in public education. Without the primacy of God and an abiding trust in Him through Christ, dependence on mental reasoning alone causes people to process information unto a God-less conclusion. Every subject which a child is taught *without* the centrality of God and the child's responsibility to Him trains that vulnerable young mind to process information by putting themselves and their own happiness first. With that as their underlying motive, their sin nature-controlled mind leads them into moral-less living.

This is the primary basis for Christians in this nation to live by the same low level of morals as do unbelievers. They may acquire more Bible knowledge, but they fail to *renew their minds* until God is at the center of their thinking processes. Your mind is the spiritual battlefield.

*“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we **take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ**” (2Corinthians 10:4,5).*

The process of renewing your mind to obey our Lord Jesus is much like the process undergone by a civilian being trained in the military. The recruit is “disciplined” by those who have experienced military camaraderie and responsibility to put aside their individuality. They are trained to see their lives in terms of the contribution they make to their comrades as they mutually obey the commands given by a higher authority.

As followers of Jesus we perceive ourselves as bringing *our thought life* into service to Him through our individual and collective obedience. Our Lord Jesus, rather than we ourselves, is now the center of our thinking process. As we live to love Him in our obedience to Him, we can cooperate for His purposes with others who live likewise. Together we can do our part to extend His Kingdom and make Him known.

***“You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the One Who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world” (1John 4:4).***

Our Lord Jesus uses the assurance of His beloved servant John to bring you confidence about His Spirit at work in you. His presence doesn’t stop the demonic assaults and testing you encounter as you walk in Father’s will. But if the Spirit of Christ abides in you and you are living in fellowship with our Lord without any unconfessed sin, you are armed with the means to overcome these assaults as you stand firm in Jesus. Don’t let yourself live in fear of demons. Your ongoing repentance, out of love for your Lord and your willingness to make your thoughts obedient to Him, leads to you developing His mind. Then your fel-

lowship with others is established on what we call a **“repentant alliance.”**

Where each of you was once motivated by sinful motives and actions, allied *together* you now respond as Jesus would. In your ongoing repentance you make sure you replace your old sinful behaviors, attitudes and the humanistic way of processing information with obedience to the attitudes and actions Jesus has made clear in the Word. This takes earnest cooperation with His Spirit so that you each can be transformed through the renewing of your mind.

Demonic principalities firmly control all public levels of this nation. As during the times of severe distress confronting the faithful in the first century, consider this to be a wake-up call: ***“And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed”*** (Romans 13:11).