

# MONDAY 31 October 2022 "Halloween" (1 John 4:1-4)

Hello, my "Walking with Jesus" friends,

*Today, October 31st, is one of the strangest days on the calendar each year.* In some parts of the world this is "**Halloween**". Costumes, candy, ghosts, front yard cemetery displays, skeletons, 'haunted houses' and a wide variety of other strange things occur on this day, at least in America. But these are only some of the strange things on this day that we see with our eyes and in some cases, we can touch with our hands. *But what about everything happening on this day and tonight, all around us, which is unseen by human eyes but still very, very real?* In our journey with the apostle John, we've come, by no coincidence, to four verses which speak powerfully to this Halloween day.

1 John 4:1 says: "***Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world...every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.***"

Over the past two "Walking with Jesus" editions, I've gone into some depth to describe the 'spirit world' as God explains it in the Bible. In these sessions, we've looked at both holy angels and 'fallen angels' or demons. These are spirit beings, created by God, who come frequently to earth and interact with us, human beings. *Holy angels are always helpful to God's people, advancing God's purposes in this world.* "Fallen angels", or 'demons', or 'evil spirits', are almost always harmful, sent by and doing the work of Satan in our world. *The work of these 'evil spirits' is always to oppose God, God's truth, God's purposes and God's people here on earth.*

As you look at your part of the world on this 'Halloween', I wonder what evidence you see of the presence and work of this evil kingdom of 'dark spirits', the work of antichrist, among us? The destructive, evil influence of the dark kingdom all around us is not difficult to see, is it my friends?

In contrast to this wickedness, **God the Father** is Spirit (John 4:24) and omnipresent, but normally referred to as being "in heaven". **God the Son, Jesus**, is in heaven saving those who repent of their sin and trust in Him (Hebrews 7:25) and interceding for us with the Father. (Romans 8:34) **God the Holy Spirit** now resides here on earth, *IN all who are followers of Jesus*. He is very busy guiding, counseling, teaching, warning of temptation, healing, and helping all God's people. He is also doing the 'born again' work in every person who fully trusts Jesus to save them from their sin, *and the Holy Spirit is leading the people of God, all around the world, to accomplish the purpose of Jesus who is head of His global and eternal church.* **The holy angels** all reside in God's presence in heaven, unless they are sent here to earth for a specific mission and when that mission is complete, they return immediately to heaven.

In contrast to that, Satan, the devil, is a very powerful angel, totally evil and deceitful and leading his evil, kingdom of darkness. *While a spirit, he is NOT omnipresent as God is, so Satan can only be in one place at a time.* All the 'fallen angels' are 'evil spirits' and they are fully under the authority of Satan. The Bible refers to a place called 'hades' in Matt. 16:18 as what we might call the current headquarters of Satan's dark kingdom.

While some demons or evil spirits reside there, *it appears most evil spirits are here, among us here on planet earth, doing the destructive work of the evil kingdom in families, governments, universities, businesses and any place or with any person or group of people that Satan's demons can tempt to rise up in opposition to God,* God's truth, God's purposes and God's people. Do you see the contrast between heaven and 'hades', between holy angels and fallen angels or evil spirits, and the contrast between Jesus and Satan? *Do you see the evidence of this spiritual battle all around you, wherever you live?*

Now that leaves us with an important question based on what John wrote in 1 John 4:1... *are there any other 'spirits' which have interaction with humanity?* **The simple answer is NO.** The more complex answer is this: sometimes the demonic spirits manifest their dark work in the life of a human being through their attitudes or the behavior of the person. So, what is sometimes referred to as a 'spirit of fear' or 'spirit of lust' or 'spirit of anger' or a 'murderous spirit' or a 'self-destructive spirit' or a 'spirit of suicide' or a 'critical spirit' or a 'deceitful spirit' are all manifestations of the work of 'fallen angels', 'evil spirits', significantly influencing the life of normal people like you and me.

*That dark, evil influence causes people to behave in wicked ways that advance the harmful, destructive, evil work of Satan and his 'kingdom of darkness' in our world.* Paul wrote about it this way in Ephesians 2... ***"As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the evil ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature... like the rest we were by nature objects of God's wrath..."*** (Eph. 2:1-5)

Do you see Paul saying this is the natural, sinful life we all are born and grow up in. *We are enslaved in our sin, deserving of God's wrath, unless Jesus rescues us, and the Holy Spirit transforms us into God honoring people who are followers of Jesus!* But of course, we all know people in whom those dark spirits are particularly active, don't we?

My friends, there is hope in Jesus and the powerful work of the Holy Spirit. Look at what John writes next: ***"You, dear children, are from God and you have overcome them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."*** John is again referring to his fellow Christians to whom he is writing as **'dear children'** reminding them of their adoption by God the Father. John is referring to the Holy Spirit of God as he writes: ***"the One who is in you"***, reminding all Christians that *God the Holy Spirit lives within them in all His unlimited, supreme power.*

And when John writes about **'the one who is in the world.'** John is talking about Satan, the devil and all his evil spirit, 'fallen angels'. *Do you see John is calling Christians to live fearlessly and courageously, confident of their identity in Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit of God alive in them?*

Finally, when John reminds these Christians that they **'are from God and have overcome them'** he's reminding us Christians of our redemption from our sin, *our complete salvation by Jesus Christ, and that the sin nature and all work of the devil and his evil spirits in our lives has been overcome, defeated, by the power of God in Jesus. Jesus has broken the bondage of sin, delivered us from sin condemnation, and is empowering us to live victoriously over any and all schemes of the evil kingdom against us!*

So regardless of what you see or hear on this Halloween, *if you have trusted Jesus to be your Savior you are an OVERCOMER and need not fear anything of the dark kingdom!!*

Here's a powerful closing thought for all of us on this Halloween... the final chapter of history is already written, and Revelation 20 gives us a glimpse. Satan and all his evil spirits will be condemned by Jesus and thrown into the inescapable lake of fire called hell! While all the holy angels and all God's people will spend eternity in glorious heaven with Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit! And here's a glorious song to help us celebrate these great truths, my friends!

**Today's Scripture is 1 John 4:1-4.**