

# WEEKEND Edition 29/30 October 2022 "Demons"

## (1 John 4:1-3)

Good weekend to you my 'Walking with Jesus' friends,

*How appropriate that on Halloween weekend, in our current journey with the apostle John as he is writing his first letter, 1 John, God has led us to 1 John 4:1-3. Today we continue the study we began yesterday of the 'spirit world' and 'spirit beings'. If you have not listened to or read the study from yesterday, I urge you to do so BEFORE you work through this edition of "Walking with Jesus"... they go together as we 'unpack' these verses: **"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. This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world."** (1 John 4:1-3)*

*My friends, you'll recall I gave you four key questions yesterday about the 'spirit world' and 'spirit beings' which we began to answer. Yesterday we took a close look at holy angels as the Bible describes them and as you know there are many, many amazing stories of these glorious, holy, 'spirit beings' who reside in God's presence in heaven but are often sent here to earth on a mission from God. *That's why 'angel' means 'messenger from God'*. Almost always they come to a specific person or group of people for the purpose of declaring a specific message from God. Sometimes they come to encourage or help God's people in their accomplishment of God's purposes here on earth. When these angels come, they take on visible human form but are recognized as angels. They speak in the language of the person to whom God sent them, they usually engage in a dialogue with the person to whom they were sent, and when their mission is complete, they disappear to human sight and return to heaven as the spirit being they are.*

*Today, let's continue our study of the 'spirit world' as we consider that there is another group of these 'spirit beings'. They too are angels, in fact all the angels were created by God at the same time, before Genesis 1 and the creation of planet earth. Most Bible scholars believe they were all created to be holy and reside in God's presence, but at some point, a rebellion occurred as another of the most powerful angels, apparently of the same rank as Gabriel and Michael, *this angel named Lucifer became prideful and jealous of God and rose up in opposition to God*. Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:11-17 are two prophetic passages many scholars view as descriptive of that rebellion in heaven and God casting Lucifer out of heaven permanently.*

*Rather than destroying this rebellious angel, God evidently allowed any and all other angels to follow Lucifer in his rebellion. Many did and God also expelled them from heaven and permitted Lucifer, also known as Satan, to establish an evil kingdom fully opposed to God.* All those angels who rejected God's presence and followed Satan are referred to in the Bible as "fallen angels" or "evil spirits" or "demons". As we can tell by their titles, their character is now totally evil, they are fully and totally opposed to God and God's Truth, God's purposes, and God's people at all times in all places. Their power is unchanged since the time of their expulsion from heaven, so they are the same as the holy angels in power, *but their power is now fully focused on leading human beings away from God and toward self-harm, despair and eventually self-destruction.*

*Their leader Satan has several other descriptive titles in the Bible, a few of them are these:*

- \* **'the adversary'** (Job 1:6) means Satan leads his evil kingdom of demons in outright opposition to God at all times.
- \* **'the tempter'** (Matt. 4:3) means Satan and his demons seek to tempt people to sin in rebellion against God.
- \* **'prince of the kingdom of darkness'** (Col. 1:13; Eph. 6:12) means Satan is supreme commander of this evil kingdom.
- \* **"god of this age"** (2 Cor. 4:4) means Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers and he is revered by all wickedness as their 'god'
- \* **"father of lies"** (John 8:44) means Satan is the ultimate author of all untruth, deceit, and deception.
- \* **"the devil"** (Matt. 4:1; Eph. 4:27) means Satan is a slanderous, manipulative, powerful enemy of God and all that is good

*These evil angels who joined Satan in his rebellion against God also come here to planet earth, as the God sent holy angels do, but their mission is to tempt humans to sin, or to oppose and disrupt any good work God is doing here.* The New Testament is filled with stories of these 'demons' and when Jesus was here, He encountered them several times and always rebuked them, bound them and cast them out of the person in whom they had taken temporary residence. You'll find these demonic stories in Mark 1:23 & 5:1-20 or Matt. 9:32,33 & 12:22 and many other Scriptures. *Please note that Satan and all demons MUST submit to Jesus Christ, God the Son, who has all authority and power as creator of all including these 'spirit beings'.* Also, the 'dark kingdom' must submit to the authority of the God inspired Word of God. When Jesus was tempted by Satan three times in the desert after His baptism, Jesus only quoted Scripture in response to Satan's temptations and Satan fled each time. Satan and his demonic forces must submit to the authority of the shed blood of Jesus Christ, His atonement, sacrificial death and all Scripture which describes or explains the power of the blood of Jesus. And Satan and his demonic forces must submit to the victory of the Lord Jesus Christ in His resurrection and the fact that He reigns supreme in God's presence as Sovereign over all things. And Satan and his demonic forces hate the worship of Holy God and thus will flee from any place God's people are genuinely worshipping Holy God in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24)

*In closing today, I'd like us to understand some of the authority and resources authentic, born again, followers of Jesus have in standing firm against the very powerful forces of Satan and his demons.*

1. Ephesians 6:10-18 is a powerful Scripture explaining our real **'struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers and authorities and powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of the heavenly realms. Therefore, put on the full armor of God so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground...'**

In the verses which follow the apostle Paul describes the powerful spiritual armor available to every authentic Christian as we stand against the schemes of evil of the dark kingdom. My friends, do you live protected by that armor?

2. The apostle Peter challenges us to **"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith...and the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ...will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."** (1 Peter 5:6-11)

Oh, my friends, are you continuing to strengthen your spiritual faith relationship with God daily through time in God's Word, time in prayer, time in worship, time with other Christ followers, as you face the daily challenges of life?

3. And finally authentic Christians can celebrate that Jesus has rescued us from the dominion of the kingdom of darkness and our identity now is a new creation in Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17) We are adopted as sons and daughters by God the Father into His family, (Romans 8:14-17) and we are indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit of God!

Tomorrow we'll look at this powerful statement which John writes next in his letter: **"...the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."** (1 John 4:4)

If you are an authentic Christian, rejoice in all these glorious, wonderful truths, and stand strong and firm today against any strategies of the dark kingdom! And here's a song to help us celebrate:

**Today's Scripture is 1 John 4:1-3.**