

# ***The Battlefield***

## **TEACHER TO TEACHER**

**W**hile writing this series I have become more and more aware of how sinister and insidious are Satan's schemes. He is a menacing enemy. While studying for this lesson in particular, I became aware as never before that his deceptive schemes are subtle and multifaceted. These insights have deepened my gratitude for the power of God's Truth to overcome—to trump the lies of the evil one.

We begin this lesson by reviewing the three-part nature of man: body, soul, and spirit. Roger once said, "The struggle with Satan always centers on who will control our minds." This review will serve to help set the stage for recognizing that the principle battlefield upon which we engage evil or demonic spirits is our mind.

The devil's favorite scheme for "messing with our heads" is, through deception, to appeal to our sinful human nature and to plant seeds of doubt, fear, discouragement, and confusion in our minds. Once we establish where the battle takes place and figure out our enemy's tactics, we look to God's Word for the strategies and tactics He wants us to use to "resist the devil" and to make him flee from us.

Genesis 3:1-7 provides an excellent example of Satan's deceptive ways. It clearly shows how he fosters doubt in our minds and how he appeals to our flesh in order to entice us to rebel against God through disobedience. The ploys he used against Eve are the very ones he usually uses against us. As Solomon said, "There is nothing new under the sun."

Paul gives us two related principles to help us overcome evil deception. In Romans he tells us, "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is" (Rom. 12:2, NLT). And in 2 Corinthians he says, "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 (2 Cor. 10:5).

Our lesson wraps up with a detailed illustration of the process we can follow to take our thoughts captive and permit God to renew our minds. I have worked through this process many times. It keeps my thinking on track. When I become aware that I am deceiving myself or using defense mechanisms that help me avoid the truth, I turn to this process. Our pastoral counselors use a similar process when helping people who need to confront their own lies in order to experience spiritual freedom from Satan's falsehoods.

**M**ay I challenge you to be open to allow God to renew your mind in a way that the Holy Spirit might reveal to you to be needed? Go through each of the steps in order. You might begin your process with the prayer found in the last step of the Suggested Lesson Plan. Such effort on your part will give you a valuable experience upon which you can base your teaching. It is another way that you can "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish . . .with all wisdom" (Col. 3:16).



# Studying the Word Together

*The battle on planet Earth is between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of Light. This battle between the father of lies and the Spirit of truth is fought primarily in the minds of all humanity. Nobody is excluded from the battle. Even believers must choose to “take every thought captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5), and they must choose to think upon that which is true, honorable, right, pure, and lovely (Phil. 4:8).<sup>1</sup>*

—Dr. Neal T. Anderson

*The struggle with Satan always centers on who will control our minds.<sup>2</sup>*

—Dr. Roger Barrier

In the previous lesson we determined that it was essential to “know the enemy.” So we discussed some of what the Bible has to say about Satan. Specifically, we studied his name, origin, personality, purpose, position, power, and destiny.

We will expand our understanding of the enemy in this lesson by discussing the “battlefield” upon which we most often engage him—the mind. Then we will consider how we can “renew our minds” and take every thought captive. Let’s begin by focusing our attention upon Satan’s primary point of attack.

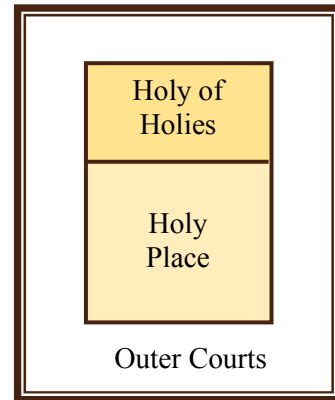
## The Battlefield of the Mind

In Lesson One of this series we pointed out that at Casas we believe the mind to be the principle battlefield in spiritual warfare. Before delving into a discussion of that battlefield upon which we often engage the demonic in ordinary life, let’s review an important related concept.

### ► **Body, Soul, and Spirit**

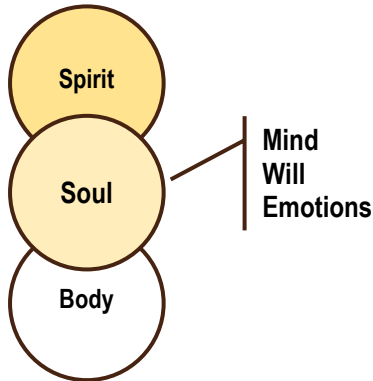
Our teaching pastors have often reminded us that man is body, soul, and spirit.<sup>3</sup> Paul wrote to the Corinthians saying, “Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” (1 Cor 3:16). He says to the Thessalonians: “May God himself...sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:23). It is significant that Paul did not compare the body to a house; he compared it to the temple. When Paul taught that the body is a

temple, he was describing the internal nature of mankind. Look at the diagram below.



The outer courts correspond to the human body which is the organ for world consciousness. This represents the outside part of us that utilizes the five senses to put us in touch with the world. The Holy place corresponds to our soul. The soul is the essence of who we are. This is my mind, “me,” my personality, my “self.” The Bible ascribes three primary dimensions to the soul: mind, will, and emotions. The soul is the organ of self-awareness and understanding—our Holy Place (diagram on next page).

# Resisting the Enemy



When Christ enters our lives at the moment of salvation, He does not come to live in our soul. He comes to live in our innermost spirit. This is our Holy of Holies. God's Holy Spirit lives deep within our spirit, just as he dwelt in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. The Bible ascribes three main responsibilities for the human spirit. It is the organ for the intuition, conscience, and communion with God.

## ► **The Battle for Our Thoughts**

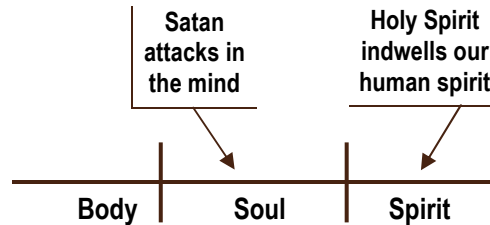
An Old Testament proverb tells us: "For as he thinks within himself, so he is" (Prov. 23:7 NASB).

What we think (in our minds) affects who we are and how we behave. The enemy wants to turn our thoughts away from spiritual things and toward the carnal in order to keep us from enjoying an intimate relationship with God. Look at what Paul told the Roman churches:

*Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. (Romans 8:5-8)*

The carnal mind always listens to the desires of the flesh while the spiritual mind

is drawn toward God. God wants us to be spiritually minded so that we can relate to Him. Satan attacks us in our minds because it is the point of control for what happens in our decisions about God, self, and others. Look at the diagram below.



This diagram is another way of depicting the threefold nature of man as body, soul, and spirit. It illustrates that the Holy Spirit indwells our human spirit and that Satan attacks in the soul—specifically, in the mind. As believers, our Holy-Spirit-filled human spirits are off-limits to Satan.

## **The Deceiving Nature of Satan**

Jesus described the evil one as a liar and the father or progenitor of lies.

*You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*

*(John 8:44)*

Satan and his army of demons seek to impact our thinking process primarily through deception or lies. The evil one is described as a deceiver and a liar. In the Revelation, John clearly points to Satan's deceiving schemes:

*He threw him [the devil] into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.*

*(Revelation 20:3)*

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Deception is basic to Satan's nature. It is through deception that he seeks to manipulate our thinking. There are other ways in which the evil one attempts to derail Christians in their pursuit of intimacy with God. However, even those other schemes usually rely on deception for their effectiveness in destroying a believer's testimony and ministry.

### ► **Satan's Deception Prompts Man to Sin**

When we succumb to Satan's deception, our behavior reflects it. We can turn to Genesis to find an excellent example of this concept. Let's look first at how the Serpent deceived Eve.

*[1] Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'"*

*[2] The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, [3] but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"*

*[4] "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. [5] "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."  
(Genesis 3:1-5)*

The crafty snake began his conversation with Eve with a question designed to engender doubt—a question posed to alter her understanding of truth. He began by saying, "Did God really say...?" I can imagine that Eve began to think to herself, "What did God really say?" Doubt began.

Now look at the Serpent's complete question. He said, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree?'" Do you see the distortion of God's instruction to Adam and Eve? They were told not to eat from one specific tree—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:16-17).

In verses 2 and 3 Eve corrects the serpent by telling him that God's actual instruction was to avoid one specific tree and that eating the fruit of the forbidden tree would lead to death.

In verses 4 and 5 the Serpent again engenders doubt by contradicting the truth spoken by God with partial truths:

1. You will not surely die (you will not die immediately, but sin leads to death)
2. When you eat of it, your eyes will be opened (gain wisdom but lose innocence)
3. You will be like God, knowing good and evil (know both good and evil, but lose intimacy with God through disobedience)

Notice the phrase "when you eat of it" in the second statement in the list. I think this is a subtle reshaping of Eve's thoughts and a coaching toward disobedience to God. Crafty!

Now let's look at how Eve's behavior was influenced by the shift in her thinking that came about through the Serpent's deceptive scheme.

*When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. (Genesis 3:6-7)*

Eve was hooked by the deceptive partial truths she heard from the serpent and she took the bait. She sinfully acted upon the devil's deception.

1. She ate the fruit
2. She offered the fruit to Adam

When God challenged Eve on her behavior, her response was succinct: "The serpent deceived me, and I ate" (Gen. 3:13). Do

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you see it? She was deceived in her mind and she acted upon the deception. Accepting Satan's lies as truth led to sin.

We are not immune to this crafty scheme proffered by the evil one. Paul highlights our vulnerability to similar deceptions, saying, "But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3). We can be directly deceived by Satan.

We also can be indirectly impacted by the evil one's deception of others. Paul warned Timothy about deceiving spirits operating in men for the purpose of seducing them away from the truth:

*The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. (1 Timothy 4:1-2)*

Paul tells us in Romans 12:2 that we can be deceived by the world—led by cultural messages, behaviors, and customs into false beliefs. We'll talk more about this later in this lesson. Scripture also teaches that we can deceive ourselves (1 Cor. 3:18).

In summary, we can say that Satan seeks to capture our mind, emotions and will through deception. We know that we need to be alert to several sources of deception.

1. Satan and his demons can directly deceive people (1 Tim. 4:1).
2. Other people can deceive us (Matt. 24:4-11).
3. We can be deceived by the culture in which we live (Rom. 12:2).
4. We can deceive ourselves (1 Cor. 3:18).

Although it often is difficult to pinpoint a direct cause-effect relationship between a lie that we believe and the source of the lie, we know that Satan's power is always in the lie, because he is the father of lies.

## God's Truth Trumps Satan's Deception

Truth is God's powerful weapon that we use to regain ground given to Satan and to demolish strongholds that he has evilly established in our minds. Scripture is clear in its teaching concerning the veracity of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. We are told in Scripture that "it is impossible for God to lie" (Heb 6:18). Jesus described himself as "the Truth" in John 14:6 and the Holy Spirit as the "Spirit of Truth" in John 14:17, 15:26, and 16:13. The Triune God speaks only what is true. Satan lies and distorts the truth of God. But God's truth always trumps Satan's deception. Jesus said:

*If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. (John 8:31-32)*

How can we use God's truth to set us free? How do we use God's Truth to trump Satan's deception? The Apostle Paul taught several principles that answer these questions.

### ► Be Renewed in Your Mind

Paul recognized that we easily can be deceived by the messages, behavior, and customs of the secular culture in which we live. Remember, it is Satan's world that we live in. He exercises great control over it. When we become believers we become citizens of heaven (Philip. 3:20). Yet we remain sojourners, aliens, or foreigners in Satan's world. Paul wrote the following to believers, encouraging them to let God transform their minds by changing the way they thought:

*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)*

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The New Living Translation (NLT) puts it this way:

*Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (Romans 12:2, NLT)*

This verse prompts us to ask the question, “What beliefs might I have developed through the influence of the non-believing culture in which I live?” Neal Anderson<sup>4</sup> offers these possibilities:

1. A materialistic culture deceives some into believing that acquiring money and things will bring lasting happiness (see Matt. 13:22; 1 Tim. 6:10).
2. The messages of our harried and hurried society lead some to believe that excessive food, alcohol, or drugs can relieve stress or emotional pain (see Prov. 20:1; 23:19-21).
3. A culture that values sexual intimacy as a right leads some to believe that there is no harm in sexual relationships outside of a committed marriage (see Eph 4:22; 1 Pet. 2:11).
4. A permissive and overly tolerant society can lead some to believe that they can sin without negative consequences (see Heb 3:12-13).

Of course, this list is incomplete—but I believe it makes the point. In Romans 12:2 Paul simply states a tactic for resisting the enemy when he tempts us to copy the behaviors and customs of the world: “Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think.” Please note that it is God who must renew our minds; He is the transformer. He must transform us by changing the way we think. In order for this to happen we must submit to and partner with the Holy Spirit in the renewal and transformation process.

### ► Take Every Thought Captive

Let's now explore the biblical process for the renewal of the mind. Read the passage below from Paul's second letter to the Corinthians.

*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.  
(2 Corinthians 10:5)*

When we challenge “arguments and every pretension (imagination) set up against the knowledge of God,” we are struggling with rebellious thoughts that draw us into disobedient behavior. We must take the rebellious thoughts captive and bring our behavior in line with the teachings and instructions of Christ. There are five steps in this process:

1. Identify the lie.
2. Determine God's truth.
3. Renounce the lie and choose to believe the truth.
4. Seek forgiveness for any sinful behavior connected to the lie.
5. Act in submissive obedience to the declared truth.

Let's illustrate the process with lie #3 from Dr. Anderson's list.

◆ **Identify the Lie:** We live in a culture that values sexual intimacy as a right. It seems like almost everything is marketed or packaged to appeal in some manner to our sexual appetites. Blockbuster movies and hit TV series feature the “good life” built around homosexual relationships. Primetime TV shows often explicitly portray sexual encounters between coworkers and friends as culturally acceptable behavior. Such open and deceptive appeals to human sexual desire inevitably lead some to believe the lie that there is no harm in sexual

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relationships outside of a committed marriage. What is too often missing from the story is the truth of the pain of betrayal, the assault on personal identity, and the resulting desensitization to genuine emotional intimacy, not to mention the threat of acquiring and passing along dangerous sexually-transmitted diseases. And I must not fail to mention that such behavior has significant impact upon one's relationship with God.

Of course, one believing a lie like the one outlined above may be caught up in sexual sin and may have his/her mind closed to truth. Therefore, this step can begin with a prayer.

- ◆ **Determine God's Truth:** A quick check of a good concordance reveals numerous verses that clearly teach truth concerning sexual immorality. For example, Paul wrote to the Ephesians, warning them not to be deceived regarding sexual sin:

*But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity.... No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words. (Ephesians 5:3-6)*

He warned the Corinthians to flee from sexual immorality:

*Flee from sexual immorality.... Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? ...Therefore honor God with your body. (1 Corinthians 6:18-20)*

Paul also taught the Thessalonians to avoid sexual immorality through self control in a way that is holy and honorable:

*It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you*

*should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother [or sister] or take advantage of him [or her].*

*(1 Thessalonians 4:3-6)*

Some will be able to discover truth from the Bible and understand it. Others may need to seek help from a Christian friend who is able to comfort, encourage, and counsel them through these steps.

- ◆ **Renounce the Lie and Choose to Believe God's Truth:** This step is accomplished through a prayer like the following:

*Heavenly Father, I agree with you that I have believed that sexual relationships outside of a committed marriage relationship harm no one. I renounce that lie and I choose to declare your truth that says that my body is your temple and that it is your desire that I flee from sexual immorality and use my body in a way that is holy and honorable to you.*

- ◆ **Seek Forgiveness for Any Sins Connected to the Lie:** It is important in this step to seek forgiveness for each offense that can be recalled. Again, we turn to prayer.

*Heavenly Father, it is my desire to walk in your light so that the darkness does not overtake me (John 12:35). I ask you, Spirit of Truth (John 14:16-17), to search my heart and bring to my mind every occasion on which I used my body as an instrument of sin (Psalm 139:23-24). Allow nothing that needs to be made known to be concealed from my memory (Luke 12:2).*

As the Holy Spirit brings individual offenses to memory, a prayer like the following can be offered:



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*Lord, I agree with you that I committed a sexual sin with \_\_\_\_\_. I ask your forgiveness for this sin. I thank you for forgiving me (1 John 1:9) and for removing this sin from me as far as the east is from the west (Psalm 103:12). I ask you now to heal my brokenness (Psalm 147:3).*

- ◆ **Act in Submissive Obedience to the Declared Truth:** Once we have renounced the lie that has been believed, chosen to believe and declare the truth of God's word, sought and accepted forgiveness and healing, it is time to humbly begin behaving in obedience to Christ's teachings. This is what Christ-followers do. This step might include a prayer like the following.

*Lord Jesus, as your disciple I submit my will to yours (Luke 22:42) and choose to be both a hearer and doer of the Word (James 1:22). It is my desire that all of my actions may lead others to glorify you and the Father (1 Pet. 2:12). Thank you for the freedom that I have in Christ. I choose to use that freedom to serve others in love rather than to gratify the desires of my own sinful nature (Gal. 5:13). Help me to live by the Spirit and to keep in step with the Spirit (Gal. 5:26). Amen*

### Application Ideas and Questions

There are three principle ideas presented in this lesson. First, we

learned that the mind (an element of the soul) is the principle battlefield upon which the Christ-follower encounters Satan. Next, we learned that Satan is a deceiver, his deception can lead Christians into sin, and sin can provide demons a foothold from which to advance or a stronghold from which evil spirits may operate unimpeded in a person's life. Finally, we learned that our best defense against Satan's deception is God's truth. By partnering with the Holy Spirit a Christian can move through a process of taking thoughts captive and renewing his or her deceived mind.

Recognizing that all Christians struggle with demonic deception at some level, you can apply the principles contained in this lesson by prayerfully asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to you lies that you have believed, discovering God's truth that dispels the lies, and partnering with the Holy Spirit in the renewing of your mind, using the step-by-step process described above.

The following questions may be helpful as you enter the process:

1. Which of my routine behaviors might be based upon a lie that I have chosen to believe?
2. What lie (or lies) seems to be motivating my sinful, hurtful, or destructive behavior(s)?
3. What truth is revealed in God's Word about a lie I have believed?
4. After renouncing the lie and declaring the truth, how might my thinking and actions be changed to reflect the new truth I have chosen to believe?

<sup>1</sup> Neal T. Anderson, *Discipleship Counseling: the Complete Guide to Helping Others Walk in Freedom and Grow in Christ*, copyright © 2003 by Neal T. Anderson, Regal Books, Ventura, CA, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Roger Barrier, from sermon titled "The Battle over Me: Satan, Job, and Deception," preached at Casas Adobes Baptist Church, Tucson, AZ, March 16, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> For a full review, see Lesson Eleven of *The Prayer God Always Answers: Lord Make Me a Spiritual Parent at Any Cost*, copyright © 2005 by Casas Adobes Baptist Church, Tucson, AZ, pp. 11-2 to 11-6.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, p. 247.



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*Please turn to the following page for Commentary.*

# Commentary

Below you will find some additional commentary on the conversation that took place in the Garden of Eden between the serpent (Satan) and Eve. It is drawn from several sources including the *United Bible Society Old Testament Handbook Series*, the *Bible Knowledge Commentary* and Keil's and Delitzsch's *Commentary on the Old Testament*.

## The Garden Temptation

God appointed man to have dominion over all of God's earthly creation. Mankind was endowed with everything needed for human and spiritual development: he had food; in the garden fields he could labor and develop his strength; in the vegetable and animal realm he had much to study in order to challenge his intellect; in his relationship with God he had what was necessary to train his moral nature; he had a suitable companion with whom he could grow relationally. In the garden, man had everything he needed to develop the physical and spiritual parts of his being. Yet when approached by the tempter he yielded to temptation and broke the commandment of God.

The serpent is said to have been the tempter. But to anyone who reads the narrative carefully in connection with the previous history of the creation (Gen. 1 and 2), it must immediately be understood that it was not from the serpent, as a sagacious and crafty animal, that the temptation proceeded—but that the serpent was simply the tool of that evil spirit who is found in the further course of the world's history under the name of Satan (the opponent) or the Devil (the slanderer or accuser).

When the serpent is shown to be speaking to Eve, we quickly realize that his words must have emanated not from the serpent

as animal, but from a superior created spirit which took possession of the serpent in order to entice or seduce mankind.

The King James Version renders Satan's opening statement to Eve in Genesis 3:1 as, "Has God said...?" The Hebrew construction shows that the expression was intended to sow doubt pertaining to what God had said. Thus the NIV more appropriately translates the same phrase from the Hebrew as "Did God really say...?" It might also be rendered "Is it actually true that God said...?" or "Is it really the fact that God has prohibited you from eating of all the trees of the garden...?" Satan is not opening the dialogue with a rhetorical question. He is attempting to lodge doubt and uncertainty in Eve's mind.

Keil and Delitzsch make this observation:

*Instead of turning away, the woman replied, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die." She was aware of the prohibition, therefore, and fully understood its meaning; but she added, "neither shall ye touch it," and proved by this very exaggeration that it appeared too stringent even to her, and therefore that her love and confidence towards God were already beginning to waver.*

*[A German theologian] has said: "...for doubt is the father of sin, and [skepticism] the mother of all transgression; and in this father and this mother, all our present knowledge has a common origin with sin." From doubt, the tempter advances to a direct denial of the truth of the divine threat, and to a malicious suspicion of the divine love (vv. 4, 5) [saying,] "Ye will by no means die."<sup>1</sup>*

The serpent goes on to say, "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God,

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knowing good and evil” (Gen. 3: 5). The implication of Satan’s words is simple. He is really saying, “It is not because the fruit of the tree will injure you that God has forbidden you to eat it, but from ill-will and envy, because He did not wish you to be like Himself.” This statement proves Satan to be the father of lies who abides not in the truth (John 8:44).

The knowledge of good and evil which Adam and Eve supposed would make them like God was obtained by doing evil. On the contrary, they would have grown into the image of God by avoiding their rebellious sin. To them, sin seemed a liberator, but actually it led them into bondage rather than into true fellowship with God.

<sup>1</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, *Commentary on The Old Testament, New Updated Addition, Electronic Database*, copyright © 1996 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., Peabody, Massachusetts; used by permission. All rights reserved.

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#### RESOURCES NEEDED:

- ◆ 2-sided copies of Lesson Notes / Take-Home pages
- ◆ Pencils or pens for each person
- ◆ Dry erase markers and marker board or felt tip markers and a flip chart

#### TIMEFRAME:

- ◆ 35 minutes

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## Suggested Lesson Plan

**NOTE TO TEACHER:** This *suggested* lesson plan contains many elements that, if employed, will help maximize learning for life-change in your Bible Fellowship. If you are an experienced teacher, you have freedom to create your own plan based upon the “Studying the Word Together” section. If you are less experienced, we suggest that you “stick to the plan.” However, even less-experienced teachers should feel free to modify the plan based upon the needs of your Bible Fellowship. This plan is designed to be presented in 35 minutes. It is important, therefore, that you carefully plan your presentation so that you communicate the main points with brevity and clarity.

#### Important Scripture References:

- ◆ Romans 8:5-8
- ◆ John 8:44
- ◆ Genesis 3:1-7
- ◆ Romans 12:2
- ◆ 2 Corinthians 10:5-6

#### Teaching Goals:

- ◆ **Learn:** Bible Fellowship members understand that the primary battlefield upon which Satan exercises his deceptive schemes is the mind
- ◆ **Learn:** Bible Fellowship members learn to us the truths of Scripture to trump the lies of Satan by working through the process of taking every though captive and letting Christ renew their minds.
- ◆ **Experience:** Experience the Holy Spirit ministering truth to battle Satan’s deceptive lies in order to have their minds renewed (John 8:31-32).

#### Before Class Begins:

- ◆ Draw on the board the complete temple diagram from p. 5-2 and the line portions only from the two body-soul-spirit diagrams on page 5-3.
- ◆ Distribute handouts.

#### STEP ONE: GETTING READY TO LEARN (5 MINUTES)

- ◆ Tell your Bible Fellowship that you are going to give them a memory test.
- ◆ Refer them to the diagram on their handout. Tell them that it represents the three-part nature of man.
- ◆ Ask them—from memory—to fill in the blanks inside the two circles.
- ◆ Next ask them to draw a line connecting the mind, will, and emotions to the appropriate circle(s) in the diagram.
- ◆ Now complete the circular diagram correctly on your marker board.

#### STEP TWO: THE BATTLEFIELD OF THE MIND (5 MINUTES)

This step provides a review of concepts presented in *The Prayer God Always Answers* taught in our Bible Fellowship in the Fall of 2005. Use information from pages 5-2 and 5-3 to prepare for this step.

- ◆ **Body, Soul, and Spirit:** Using the temple diagram and the just-completed circular diagram, briefly explain the body-soul-spirit concept.
- ◆ **The Battle for our Thoughts:** Quote Proverbs 23:7: “For as he thinks within himself, so he is.” Then tell your Bible Fellowship: “What we think (in our minds) affects who we are and how

# Resisting the Enemy

## Lesson 5 The Battlefield

Notes 

we behave. The enemy wants to turn our thoughts away from spiritual things and toward the carnal in order to keep us from enjoying an intimate relationship with God.”

1. Ask someone to read Romans 8:5-8 (on handout).
2. Complete the body-soul-spirit line drawing on the white board. Point out that the Holy Spirit indwells our human spirit and speaks to our inner man there and the indwelled spirit is off limits to Satan.
3. Then point out that Satan attacks us in our mind, which is located with our will and emotions in the soul.

### STEP THREE: THE DECEIVING NATURE OF SATAN (10 MINUTES)

Use material from pages 5-2 to 5-5 and from the Commentary to prepare for this section. It will be *very important* to have your presentation for this section well-organized because your timeframe is tight.

- ◆ Tell your group that Jesus referred to Satan as “the father of lies” (John 8:44) and that deception is basic to Satan’s nature. Mention that through deception he seeks to manipulate our thinking.
- ◆ **Satan’s Deception Prompts Man to Sin:** Inform the group that we have a good example in Genesis 3:1-5 (on handout) of how Satan uses deception to entice people to sin. Ask someone to read the passage aloud while everyone else follows along.
  1. Invite everyone to underline any phrases or sentences spoken by Satan that they believe might have appealed to Eve’s innate nature to satisfy her physical and psychological appetites. Ask them to also underline any words or phrases that Satan used to sow seeds of doubt and confusion into Eve’s mind.
  2. Briefly explain the implication of “Did God really say...from any tree...?” in verse 1.

3. Now briefly explain the half-truths found in verses 4 and 5, which Satan used to confuse Eve and further lodge doubt in her mind.

- ◆ Read verses 6 and 7 and point out that Satan’s temptations, Eve’s desire to satisfy her various appetites, and Eve’s wish to be “like God” worked together to produce disobedience.
- ◆ Mention that we need to be alert to deception from four different sources:
  1. Satan and his demons (1 Tim. 4:1)
  2. Other people (Matt. 24:4-11)
  3. The culture in which we live (Rom. 12:2)
  4. Ourselves (1 Cor. 3:18)

### STEP FOUR: GOD’S TRUTH TRUMPS SATAN’S DECEPTION (10 MINUTES)

Use material from pages 5-5—5-8 to prepare for this section. (*NOTE: If you have more than 35 minutes of teaching time, use it to elaborate on the five steps involved in taking thoughts captive.*)

- ◆ Tell everyone that Truth is God’s powerful weapon that we use to regain ground given to Satan and to demolish strongholds that he has evilly established in our minds. God speaks only what is true; Satan lies and distorts the truth. But God’s truth always trumps Satan’s deception.
- ◆ Now quote John 8:31-32 to them: “*If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*”
- ◆ **Be Renewed in Your Mind:** Explain that Paul gave two principles that help us use truth to overcome Satan’s deceptive schemes. First, he taught us to renew our minds.
  1. Ask someone to read Romans 12:2 from the handout. Point out that this verse prompts us to ask the question, “What false beliefs or lies

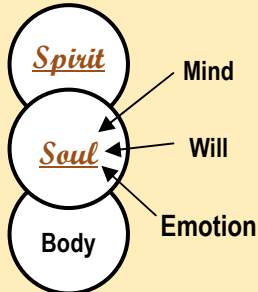
## Lesson 5

### The Battlefield

Notes 

#### LESSON NOTES

##### BLANKS:



#### The Deceiving Nature of Satan

- ◆ ...the father of lies
- ◆ Deception is basic... to manipulate our thinking
- ◆ ... prompts man to sin
- 1. By Satan and his demons
- 2. Other people
- 3. The culture
- 4. Ourselves

#### God's Truth Trumps Satan's Deception

- ◆ Truth is God's powerful weapon...to demolish strongholds
- ◆ What false beliefs or lies may I have...
- ◆ It is God who must... by changing the way we think

#### Take Every Thought Captive...

1. Identify the lie
2. Determine God's truth
3. Renounce the lie and choose to believe...
4. Seek forgiveness...
5. Act in submissive obedience...

## Resisting the Enemy

might I have developed through the influence of the non-believing culture in which I live?

2. Then review the four possibilities suggested by Neal Anderson:
  - a. A materialistic culture deceives some into believing that acquiring money and things will bring lasting happiness (see Matt. 13:22; 1 Tim. 6:10).
  - b. The messages of our harried and hurried society lead some to believe that excessive food, alcohol, or drugs can relieve stress or emotional pain (see Prov. 20:1; 23:19-21).
  - c. A culture that values sexual intimacy as a right leads some to believe that there is no harm in sexual relationships outside of a committed marriage (see Eph. 4:22; 1 Pet. 2:11).
  - d. A permissive and overly tolerant society can lead some to believe that they can sin without negative consequences (see Heb. 3:12-13).

- ◆ **Take Every Thought Captive:** Explain that Paul's second principle for using truth to trump Satan's lies is found in 2 Corinthians. Ask someone to read 2 Corinthians 10:5-6 (on handout).

1. Tell your class that the previous four deceptive messages from our culture are examples of beliefs or thoughts that we might need to take captive and that there is a step-by-step process we can go through to take a thought captive.
2. Briefly explain the five steps:
  - a. Identify the lie.
  - b. Determine God's truth.
  - c. Renounce the lie and choose to believe the truth.
  - d. Seek forgiveness for any sinful behavior connected to the lie.
  - e. Act in submissive obedience to the declared truth.

### STEP FIVE: APPLICATION & CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

- ◆ Set up the closing by reminding everyone that all Christians struggle with demonic deception at some level. They can apply the principles from this lesson by prayerfully asking the Holy Spirit to reveal to them any lies that they have believed, discovering God's truth that dispels the lies, and partnering with the Holy Spirit in the renewing of their mind. You have just described the step-by-step process they can use for that purpose.
- ◆ Invite them to silently pray the following prayer based on John 8:31-32 (on handout):

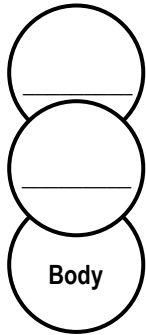
*Our Father in Heaven, I know that Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." I desire to be free from any deceptive thinking or beliefs that Satan has ministered to my mind whether through the culture in which I live, through distortions of your Word, or through false teachings. I want to renounce any false beliefs, declare your truth, confess and seek forgiveness of any sins associated with my false beliefs, and act upon your truth. I invite you, through your Holy Spirit who teaches all truth, to reveal to my mind any beliefs that I need to renounce and the truth that I need to declare.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

- ◆ After a few moments of silence, invite each person to note on their handout anything that the Holy Spirit has revealed to them. Encourage them to work through the process they have learned today for renewing their minds and taking every thought captive to the glory of Jesus.
- ◆ Close with a simple prayer, praising God for the provision of Jesus who is Truth and who makes it possible for us to overcome the deceptive schemes of the enemy by helping us renew our minds.

# Resisting the Enemy

## Today in My Bible Fellowship



Mind

Will

Emotions

### The Deceiving Nature of Satan

- ◆ Jesus referred to Satan as the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_ is basic to Satan's nature and he uses it to manipulate our \_\_\_\_\_.
- ◆ Satan's deception prompts man to \_\_\_\_\_.

- ◆ We can be deceived from four different sources:
  1. Directly by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 4:1)
  2. Other \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt. 24:4-11)
  3. The \_\_\_\_\_ in which we live (Rom. 12:2)
  4. \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 3:18)

### God's Truth Trumps Satan's Deception

- ◆ \_\_\_\_\_ is God's powerful weapon that we use to regain ground given to Satan and to demolish \_\_\_\_\_ that he has established in our minds.
- ◆ What false \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ may I have developed through the influence of the non-believing culture in which I live?
- ◆ It is \_\_\_\_\_ who must transform us by renewing our minds—by changing the way we \_\_\_\_\_.

### Take Every Thought Captive: A Step-by-Step Process

1. Identify the \_\_\_\_\_
2. Determine God's \_\_\_\_\_
3. Renounce the lie and \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ the truth
4. Seek \_\_\_\_\_ for any sinful behavior connected to the lie
5. Act in submissive \_\_\_\_\_ to the declared truth.

*Our Father in Heaven, I know that Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." I desire to be free from any deceptive thinking or beliefs that Satan has ministered to my mind whether through the culture in which I live, through distortions of your Word, or through false teachings. I want to renounce any false beliefs, declare your truth, confess and seek forgiveness of any sins associated with my false beliefs, and act upon your truth. I invite you, through your Holy Spirit who teaches all truth, to reveal to my mind any beliefs that I need to renounce and the truth that I need to declare. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

### Today's Scriptures

**Romans 8:5-8:** Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

**Genesis 3:1-5:** Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"

"You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

**Romans 12:2:** Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. (NLT)

**2 Corinthians 10:5:** 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.

**John 8:31-32:** To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

### Next Week's Lesson: The Temptations

**Daily Reflections**

**B**egin each daily reflection by meditating a few minutes on the suggested Scripture passage. Seek to listen to the Holy Spirit as He speaks to you. Then consider the comments and questions about the passage. Be aware of both your thoughts and your feelings. Respond to God through both.

**Monday:** *You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44)*

Satan's first or native language is deception. He always lies or tells half truths. Take a moment to contemplate the danger that the devil poses to Christians through his constant deception. Now thank God for His truth that trumps Satan's lies.

**Tuesday:** *Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, "You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" (Genesis 3:1)*

With the question "Did God really say...", Satan stepped onto the battlefield of Eve's mind to engender confusion and to plant a seed of doubt. Can you think of a time when it seems to you that demonic spirits entered your thinking processes, seeking to confuse you or lure you into doubt? Ask God to strengthen your faith and trust in His Word and to grow your discernment so that you can better recognized the lies of the enemy.

**Wednesday:** *When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. (Genesis 3:6)*

Eve responded to the Serpent's enticements by rebelling against God's instructions. She was tempted and she sinned. Are there recent sins that you need to confess? Demonic lies that you need to renounce? Truths you need to declare? Prayerfully take initiative to talk this over with Christ.

**Thursday:** *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)*

In what ways has your thinking been conformed to the world? Are you willing to allow God to renew your thinking with His truth? Prayerfully thank God for His truth and ask Him to renew your thinking.

**Friday:** *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. (2 Corinthians 10:5-6)*

Today you are invited to examine your thinking processes to see if there are thoughts that you need to take captive, any pretensions or arguments that set themselves up against God. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you in your human spirit in order that deceptions of the mind might be revealed. Listen carefully as He speaks to you. Are there thoughts of vengeance, thoughts of immoral acts? Is there any hatred, prejudice, or selfish, prideful thinking? Come into agreement with the Holy Spirit as He opens your spiritual eyes. Confess whatever needs to be confessed and seek God's forgiveness. Renounce whatever needs to be renounced. Declare whatever truth needs to be declared. Do it all aloud.

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