

# Is There A Real Spirit World?

## Part 3

**How do we recognise and resist the influence of Satan, our enemy, in our lives?**

**1 John 4:1** [NIV] *“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.”*

**We are to test the influence that the very active spirit world is seeking to have on our lives.**

This influence is very real and our future life after death depends on how well we resist Satan’s influence and yield to God’s influence.

**2 Corinthians 11:13-15** [NIV] *“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.”*

**As we saw in the last article Satan has his own ministers who are false prophets [preachers] yet seem to be ministers who have been enlightened by God.**

**1 John 4:2-3** [NIV] *“This is how you can recognise 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.”*

**Does the preacher acknowledge that the Son of God, became Jesus Christ the Son of Man and walked this earth as a human being?**

**If not that preacher is influence by the “spirit of antichrist”, that is the spirit of Satan.**

**1 John 4:4-6** [NIV] *“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. They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognise the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.”*

**Who is the “One in us” that enables us to recognise and overcome the influence of these false preachers?**

**John 14:15-18** [NIV] *“If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever, the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”*

**This is Jesus speaking, and the spirit of truth He wants to send is the Holy Spirit, which is Jesus living His life in us again, for the Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ, are both God.**

**Note: There are two levels at which the Holy Spirit and hence Jesus Christ can influence us.**

**“Lives with you”** – all Christians, those who are guided by the Holy Spirit, the spirit of truth.

**“Will be in you”** – this is a deeper relationship. We allow the Holy Spirit to direct our lives as we yield totally to His will.

**These false preachers speak from the viewpoint of human nature. They say what will please people and allow them to continue to live in a way that gratifies their natural desires.**

**Galatians 5:19-21 [NIV]** *“The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, **that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.**”*

**Do these preachers condemn all these practices? Or do they compromise such lifestyles?**

**Two attitudes of mind brought about the downfall of Satan and he seeks to cause us to follow the same path.**

**The two attitudes were pride and selfishness.**

Let us see how Satan sought to influence the first two human beings in this way.

**Genesis 3:1 [Amplified Bible]** *“Now the serpent [Satan] was more subtle and crafty than any living creature which the Lord God had made. And he [Satan] said to the woman, can it really be that God has said, you shall not eat of every tree of the garden?”*

**Note: The way Satan approaches Eve with a half-truth, that makes the situation sound unfair as far as God was concerned.**

**Satan made out that God was depriving Eve what was good for her, this was a lie.**

**Genesis 3:2-3 [Amplified Bible]** *“And the woman said to the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, except of the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden. God has said, you shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.”*

**This shows that Eve knew the truth, she knew exactly what God had said.**

**Genesis 2:9 [Amplified Bible]** *“And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow **every tree that is pleasant to the sight or to be desired, good, for food, the tree of life** [eternal life] also in the centre of the garden, and the **tree of knowledge** of, the difference between good and evil, and blessing and calamity.”*

Two trees in the centre of the garden, which one was **not** to be touched nor its fruit tasted?

**Genesis 3:4-5 [Amplified Bible]** *“But the serpent said to the woman, you shall not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be as God, knowing the difference between good and evil, and blessing and calamity.”*

**This was lie number two.**

**Note: Satan was trying to influence Eve to seek to become God.**

**This is exactly what Satan had tried to accomplish that led to his own downfall.**

**Satan was appealing to Eve’s pride and selfishness.**

**Ever since this first confrontation with Satan, humanity has, out of pride and selfishness, sought to decide for themselves what is good and what is evil, what will be a blessing and what a calamity.**

**Look what a terrible mess this has caused all humanity to make of their lives. Death and destruction has reigned throughout the generations.**

**Genesis 3:6** [Amplified Bible] *“And when the woman saw that the tree was good, suitable and pleasant for food, and that it was delightful to look at and **a tree to be desired to make one wise**, she took of its fruit and ate, and she gave some also to her husband, and he ate.”*

All the trees were “*good, suitable and pleasant for food*”, so there was nothing that made this tree more desirable, except that it was forbidden fruit.

**The forbidden fruit of sin always looks pleasant and desirable** but partaking of it influences our mind and attitude in a detrimental way.

We have an example of this in a change of mind and attitude after yielding to Satan’s temptation.

**Genesis 2:25** [NIV] *“The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.”*

No shame when naked in their intimate relationship, remember **no** other human beings yet existed.

**Genesis 3:7** [NIV] *“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”*

Same situation with no other people involved but a detrimental change of attitude in their intimate relationship, that led to shame.

**The influence of the rebellious event just multiplied into a domestic quarrel, lies, grief, suffering, loss of their inheritance and eventually physical death.**

Read this painful account in **Genesis 3:7-19** [NIV].

**Satan made Eve forget all that God had given her and instead to focus on the one thing she could not have.**

We all at times fall into trouble when we dwell on the few things we don’t have rather than on the countless things that God has given us.

**Why does such a self-pity attitude lead us into trouble?**

**Because we are allowing Satan to put doubts into our mind as to the goodness and love that God has for each one of us.**

**How then do we resist this temptation of Satan?**

**1 Peter 5:6** [NIV] *“Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.”*

**Humble ourselves before God, realising how totally dependent we are on Him for life, for the continuation of life and for a future eternal life.**

**1 Peter 5:7** [Amplified Bible] *“Casting the whole of your cares and concerns, once and for all on Him [Jesus], for He cares for you affectionately, and watchfully.”*

**Colossians 2:6-7** [NIV] *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and **overflowing with thankfulness.**”*

We receive and acknowledge Jesus as our Saviour, and continue to submit to His will.

**Constantly thank God for even the smallest of things that are a blessing to us.**

**Never take anything we have for granted.**

Daily we must thank God for eyesight, touch, taste, hearing, speech, mobility and most of all for the gift of the Indwelling Holy Spirit.

Constantly thank God for Jesus Christ and what He has done for us that would be impossible for us to accomplish.

**1 Thessalonians 5:16-22** [NIV] *“Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not put out the Spirit’s fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.”*

**Joy is one of the fruits of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.**

**Prayer doesn’t have to be only formal at special times on our knees but our sharing all that happens to us in life with our Creator.**

Even thank God when trials come for it gives us opportunities to share them with God and expect Him to strengthen us in them or take us out of them.

Do not quench the enthusiasm that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit will generate in us.

The word enthusiasm comes from three Greek words “en” – in, “theos” – God, “ism” – being dedicated to a certain way of life.

**1 John 4:4** [NIV] *“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.”*

**If the Holy Spirit is dwelling in us we have no fear of any other spirits that may try to do us harm.**

**Hebrews 2:14-15** [NIV] *“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is, the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”*

**Satan does have the power to put people to death, physically, but with the Holy Spirit in us, we have eternal life living in us and are freed from the fear of death.**

**Fear of death is a powerful tool in Satan’s hands to influence those who do not know God or have an intimate relationship with Him.**

**Matthew 4:1-3** [NIV] *“Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting for forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.”*

**Satan tried to put doubt into Christ’s mind as to whom He was.**

**Satan will try to make us doubt that we become a child of God once we have surrendered our lives to Him.**

**Matthew 4:4** [NIV] *“Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”*

**Christ responded to this doubt by putting spiritual food, God’s Word, the Christian Bible, ahead of His physical life.**

**Matthew 4:5-7** [NIV] *“Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. “If you are the Son of God,” he said, “throw yourself down. For it is written: “He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will*

*not strike your foot against a stone.” Jesus answered him, “It is also written: ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’”*

**Satan quoted God’s Word, but out of context.** We do **not** test God’s love and compassion, nor His protection by doing foolish things that cause us to sin or harm our physical body.

**Matthew 4:8-10** [NIV] *“Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. “All this I will give you,” he said, “if you will bow down and worship me.” Jesus said to him, “Away from me, Satan! For it is written: ‘Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.’”*

**Satan was tempting Jesus to focus on worldly power instead of God’s plan, for saving all humanity from sin and its consequences.**

**Today Satan offers us the world by trying to entice us with materialism and power instead of worshipping God and serving Him.**

If we find ourselves craving something that society can offer us, quote Jesus’ words to avoid falling into Satan’s trap. *“Worship the Lord God and serve Him only.”*

**Matthew 4:11** [NIV] *“Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.”*

**If we follow Jesus Christ’s example Satan will leave us knowing he cannot tempt us.**

**Luke 4:13** [NIV] *“When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.”*

**But Satan didn’t give up tempting Jesus Christ, nor will he give up tempting us, he just waits for another time of physical or spiritual weakness.**

**We need to be constantly on guard against Satan’s ongoing attacks.**

Where are we not susceptible to temptation right now?

**How are we preparing to withstand Satan’s attacks in the future?**