

LESSON 41 - THE SPIRITUAL DIVIDER

Did You Know You're Supposed To Be An Enemy Of The World?

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Are you an enemy of the world? If you're a follower of Jesus you are - at least spiritually speaking. Jesus did *not* come to *unite* the world, in fact, Jesus is the *Spiritual Divider!* He said following Him could cause division in your own house, and if you love anything else in the world more than Him then you're not worthy of Him! This lesson covers: 1) There are two spiritual kingdoms: God's and Satan's, 2) Jesus is the Spiritual Divider, 3) Lay down your life and follow Jesus.

1. There Are Two Spiritual Kingdoms: God's and Satan's. Before God created the earth He created a race of spirit beings called angels. Like humans, they have free will. One of them named Lucifer and a third of the total God created, loved themselves more, became self serving, and rebelled against God. God's faithful angels fought and defeated those in rebellion and they were cast out of Heaven down to the earth. Lucifer, also known as Satan (which means "adversary") and his other *fallen* angels, are *now* what we call *demons*. They're limited and restrained in a temporary prison in a spiritual realm called the Abyss. It's also called Hell, though it's not the eternal Hell described in the Bible, nor is it in a far away location. The Abyss overlays and interconnects with the physical realm on earth. From here, demons seek to spiritually connect to, cohabitate in, and influence humans to rebel against God too and advance their demonic kingdom. See 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6; Luke 8:31; Revelation 9:11, 20:1-3. This began in the Garden of Eden, see Genesis 3, where Satan influenced the first two humans to eat the forbidden fruit and rebel against God, and it's been happening ever since. ALL of the world's non-Christian religions, mystical spiritual practices, unbiblical beliefs, idolatrous agendas, and sinful behaviors and cultures serve Satan's purposes. Humans don't need to be satanists or worship other false gods *directly* to serve Satan or advance his kingdom's influence. Even people who don't believe in God or spirituality are still living as *their own god!* Anything sinful humans do willfully and selfishly without concern for whether it brings the one, true God glory is guilty of the same sins of idolatry and rebellion to God as the demons are. Living for yourself indirectly supports *Satan's* kingdom agenda, aligning you with demons both morally and spiritually. This is what it means to be *demonic/satanic*. Most of the world's systems and practices are corrupted in some way. This is why the Bible calls Satan the ruler of this world (John 14:30, 16:11; Ephesians 2:1-3) and the lowercase "g" - "*god of this age that has blinded the minds of unbelievers*" (2 Corinthians 4:4). 1 John 2:15-17 says, "*Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, love for the Father is not in them. For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever.*"

2. Jesus Is The Spiritual Divider. Jesus came to set Satan's captives free of sin, death, and demonic bondage. This was prophesied of Him in Isaiah 61:1-2 and He affirmed it in His first sermon in Luke 4:18-19. 1 John 3:8 says, *"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work."* Jesus is the light of the world. He came into the darkness and the darkness must flee. In John 12:31 Jesus said, *"Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out."* Many will not respond to the light, love Jesus, believe in, and receive Him as their Lord and Savior. John 3:19 says, *"Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil."* In John 8:42-47 Jesus spoke harshly to the religious leadership because they were still in the world under Satan's influence. He said, *"If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God... You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires... If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."* We must choose which of these kingdoms to dwell in. The determining factor is how we respond to the historical, biblical Jesus! We either follow Jesus and the ungodly world will hate us, or we reject Jesus and the ungodly world will love us. Jesus warns us that this division may even happen in our own families. In Matthew 10:34 He says, *"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man's enemies will be the members of his own household."* The second sentence here Jesus is quoting from the prophet Micah (Micah 7:6). He was commiserating the difficulty of faithfully following God when everyone around you isn't. However, the next verse (7) he says, *"But as for me, I watch in hope for the Lord, I wait for God my Savior; my God will hear me."* Amen! As Joshua 24:15 says, *"But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."* Again we say: Amen!

3. Lay Down Your Life and Follow Jesus. Matthew 10:37-39 Jesus continues, *"Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it."* You must love Jesus more than your sin, the world, your hobbies, parents, children, even your own life! His is the path that leads to eternal life. You must decide whether you will trust Him, give Him everything and die to yourself and the world. Jesus is asking you to pick up your own cross, which is the very device that you'd be murdered on, and follow Him with it! There are many eternal and temporal blessings that come from following Jesus, but they all require you to repent of and deny everything influenced by Satan's kingdom to advance God's kingdom. Jesus gives everyone who belongs to Him the Holy Spirit to live inside of them to help. He will give you the ability to live *in* the world but not be *of* the world. 1 John 4:4-5 says, *"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."* 1 John 5:4 gives this encouragement: *"Everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith."*

Let's pray. Jesus, I trust and love You more than anything else. I lay down my life, pick up my cross, and follow you. Protect me from Satan's influences. Help me die to the world and live for You. Amen.