



VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

Weekly Bible Study - 30:01:2013

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Study 5: SATANIC ATTACK ON THE CHURCH

Text: Jude 1:4 - **"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ".**

The Church problem that Jude addressed originated from satanic attacks through false teachers infiltrating the church (2 Corinthians 2:11). Satan attacks where he knows is the most important. A story is told of how Satan organised a conference on how to attack and destroy churches, which concluded that outright opposition will not work, therefore he sent demons to act as friends and work in churches. Our text highlight how he (the devil) went about doing this in the Churches that Jude wrote to:

1. **"For there are certain men crept in..."** - They came in the form of human beings - wolves in sheep's clothing (Matthew 7:15), angels of light (2 Corinthians 11:13-15), false brethren (2 Corinthians 11:26; Galatians 2:4), tares among wheat (Matthew 11:25), etc). Satan will always attack using 'human' agents and thoughts (e.g. Matthew 16:23; 2 Corinthians 10:3-6; Proverbs 4:23; Acts 5:28). Some of these are manifested through various laws, regulations or legislation, some of which though originally well intentioned has now been hijacked by Satan for his own objectives. Others come as 'political correctness' taken to extreme or 'political expediency' that loses touch with reality. Still a more subtle form come parading in the guise of custom's, practices, traditions, culture, fashions, lifestyles, religious systems, etc.
2. **".... crept in unawares"** - Secrecy is one of Satan's key strategies. Satan plants tares among wheat while men slept; which is why the Bible commands all to "watch and pray". We can gain valuable insights by considering what happens physically when a person sleeps and applying them to spiritual sleep:
 - a. **Drop in body temperature** - which is synonymous with loss of spiritual fires, consequently opening doorways for demonic oppression. Flies can only perch comfortably on cold stoves. Similarly, demons only perch on cold or lukewarm believers who have lost their first love, spirituality, fire and commitment, etc.
 - b. **Decrease in the rate of metabolism** - a decrease in thirst for and assimilation of the pure word of God (e.g. by becoming easily bored by the routine of daily intake of fresh manner of the Word of God). The vacuum created by this is invariably filled with activities that effectively amount to chasing after the wind such as developing itching ears for **"either to tell, or to hear some new thing"** (2 Timothy 4:3; Acts 17:21). Such people easily get tossed by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14), while at the same time avoiding true ministers whose ministry corrects them. Rather they court preachers who tingle their feelings by preaching what they want to hear rather than the wholesome truth of the Word of God.
 - c. **Unconsciousness of the physical realm** - Sleeping people are usually unaware of the immediate environment and actions. For example, some people keep their mouths open or snore while sleeping without knowing

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that they are doing so. Also while turning on the bed they can remove their coverings or even fall out of the bed unknowingly. These are comparable to what happens when a person is spiritually asleep. Often they (1) do not know what they are doing (Luke 23:34; Proverbs 4:19). Jesus underscores this point when He warned the disciple that a time will come when those who kill them will think they are doing God a service; (2) do not realize the impact of their activities on others (Proverbs 26:19); (3) can easily through their careless / carefree lifestyle and activities wander out of the edge of divine protection (i.e. remove their spiritual covering) or fall off the edge of divine protection. This result in spiritual sickness; (4) lack spiritual discernment and are unable to interpret the signs of the times; (5) they lack interest in the issues of the moment that matter, but run after exoteric / 'super-spiritual' matters; (6) they overlook serious errors under the cloak of love, unity, happiness and fellowship.

- d. **Reduction in physical activity** – resignation from active involvement in the service of winning souls and building up the body of Christ but rather becoming obsessed with endless but empty personal programmes and petty ambition.
 - e. **Sinking into full sleep is often a gradual process** rather than an instantaneous one. A curious child amazed by its size, once asked the father "How do people eat an elephant", to which the father replied "a bite at a time". Satan sometimes attack one person at a time rather than the whole group at once. Like predators do, Satan targets the 'backbenchers', loan rangers or stragglers who have dropped out of the front line of service or who merely want to keep distance from hot fiery believers / leaders (e.g. the mixed multitude in Israel who became murmurers at rear of the camp and got destroyed by the Middianites and the wrath of God).
 - f. **Replacement of physical sight with dreams / visions** – decrease of vision and increase of 'vanity'. Loss of clarity and sharpness in distinction between right and wrong. Falling into the grey zone of relativity. Double vision that produces division. Distractions that fill minds, thoughts and lives with activities that do not add value – i.e. vanity of vanities.
3. **"Turning and denying"** - They may coast along for a while but will seize every opportunity to turn things around and to deny the faith once delivered unto the saints". They easily change their convictions for the pragmatic (Proverbs 24:21). They always want the church to change to accommodate them rather than them changing to comply with Biblical requirements. They use every avenue to attack the church or bring to bear pressure on the church to achieve their aims (e.g. criticisms of the church being, dogmatic, old fashioned, bigot, stereo typed, or not being modern. They exploit every genuine failure of the church or religions as basis to intensify their diabolical attacks.

The Bible admonishes us when following others to always "consider the end of their conversation". We must be willing to ask the tough questions such as "what will be the ultimate effect of these (their doctrines, demands, lifestyles, language, etc) on God's plan / programme, Christianity, Church, Salvation and eternal destiny of the soul?" if we are to avoid the danger of being deceived. If we do not take the "long look" we can be easily deceived by the present and desires for immediate satisfaction and solution to current problems (Hebrews 11:35).