

# discipleship essentials

Essentials for Christian Living  
Leader's Guide

## GOD AND THE SPIRITUAL REALM

### LESSON 2: THE STRATEGIES OF SATAN

#### INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Disciple Essentials module entitled God and the Spiritual Realm. This series of lessons examines the reality of the spiritual world – one in which there are forces of both good and evil. This module deals with the origin of evil, the end punishment of Satan, the reality of spiritual warfare and strongholds in our everyday lives, the armor that God has provided us with, God's great battle plan against Satan, God's ultimate control over all things and the supernatural ways in which God occasionally communicates with his people through dreams, visions and angelic beings.

#### INTENDED AUDIENCE

The intended audience for these lessons is new Christians or those who would like a refresher on the basics of Christian salvation. Those who are preparing for evangelism and discipleship may benefit from discussion of these ideas. These lessons assume the participant has made a decision to follow Jesus and wants to explore Christianity further.

The Leader's Guide is intended to help the leader prepare for the lessons and can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials found on [www.discipleshipessentials.org](http://www.discipleshipessentials.org).

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# GOD AND THE SPIRITUAL REALM

## LESSON 2: THE STRATEGIES OF SATAN

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this lesson is to understand the strategies the enemy is using against God's people, and also the limitations of the enemy.

### LEADER'S NOTE

We understand from the Bible that the main goal of Satan is to destroy the relationship between God and mankind. That was his goal in the Garden of Eden and that is his goal today. While this will be an unpleasant lesson to talk about, and may even be difficult for some participants who are undergoing various trials or attacks from Satan, it is important to remember that God is waging this war, and He will be victorious. It may be helpful to remind participants of this before the lesson. The most important point is to recognize that God is at work in the world, and while Satan is the prince of this world at the moment, it won't always be so.

## INTRODUCTION

*Select two or three of the following questions.*

- ❖ What do you think of when you hear the word "evil"? What things are evil?
- ❖ What are some of the ways people around you are tempted to sin? What are some of the temptations people your age or in your stage of life struggle with?
- ❖ What do you think Satan's main goal is?
- ❖ Do you believe the world is in a spiritual battle today? What are some of the evidences of it?

## STUDY

### TEACH

- ❖ **Satan's Plan:** Satan's consuming desire is to deceive and destroy God's people. He is the enemy of all that is holy and good. God created man in His own image and likeness, to have fellowship with Him. Man was the pinnacle of God's creation and thus the object of Satan's wrath. He wanted to hurt God by tempting man to disobey God, just as he did, knowing full well that it would destroy the close relationship man had with God.

**TASK**

- ❖ Read through the following list of ways that Satan works. Read over this list and see if you can recognize Satan's work in your own life or in your community. *References are provided if you would like to go into detail about one or two of these topics with your participants.*
- ❖ What are the works of Satan and his demons?
  - Deception in heaven and on earth (Genesis 3:3-5; 2 Samuel 15:3-6).
  - Murder and torture (Mark 5:5, 9:22; Matthew 12:22; Luke 13:11-17; Acts 10:38; Luke 8:27-29).
  - Sexual uncleanness and violence (Hebrews 12:16; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20).
  - Influence in human governments (Revelation 16:14; Daniel 10:12-21; 2 Corinthians 4:4).
  - Hindrances to the work of the Gospel ( 1 Thessalonians 2:18; Ephesians 6:12).
  - Hindrances to prayer (Daniel 10:12-13; Matthew 26:38-43).
  - Harassment of the people of God (Luke 22:3).
  - Promotion of idolatry, witchcraft, and other occult practises (Psalms 106:35-37; Deuteronomy 18:9-12, 32:16-17; 1 Samuel 15:23; Revelation 18:12).
  - Working of strange occurrences and deceiving miracles (2 Thessalonians 2:9; Revelation 16:13-14).
  - Slandering and accusing Christians before God (Revelation 12:10; Romans 8:33,38-39).

**TEACH:**

- ❖ **Satan Does Not Act Alone:** Throughout Scripture, we see mention of Satan as well as demons. Demons are angels who were created by God but have chosen evil – we also refer to them as fallen angels. They serve Satan, and do his bidding in the world. Some Bible scholars suggest that one third of the angels God created rebelled and followed Satan (Revelation 12:3-4). These fallen angels are as powerful as the angels who serve God. There will be a judgement upon the fallen angels (Matthew 25:41; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6; Revelation 12:9).
- ❖ **What Satan Can Do:** It is important for a Christian to be aware of the powers Satan does have, but also his limitations. Satan can:
  - Deceive, influence, and harass people.
  - Grant supernatural powers to people in order to harm them or others.
  - Bring illness, disease, or physical misfortune.
  - His demons can possess people and animals (Matthew 8:28-34; Mark 5:1-4).
  - Rule the kingdoms of the world, and is currently the prince of this world (Matthew 4:8; John 12:31; Ephesians 2:2).
- ❖ **What Satan Cannot Do:**
  - He cannot take the redeemed away from God (Hebrews 6:17-20, 8:6, 9:15).



- He cannot make a person sin – we may be tempted by Satan, but the choice to sin is still our own (1 Corinthians 10:13; James 1:14-15).
  - He cannot overpower our free will (Joshua 24:15).
  - His power is limited and confined by God. He is limited in how he assaults people – especially those who belong to God. It sometimes appears that God grants requests from Satan, and He may do so if He sees a greater good that could come from the trial (Job 1:6-12, 2:3-6; Luke 22:31-32).
  - He cannot create – God is the author and creator of all things. Satan cannot create demons to follow him ( John 1:3; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6).
  - He cannot offer eternal rewards to his followers (John 10:9-10, 16:33; Romans 15:13).
  - Satan cannot rule over Christians, but over unbelievers only(Colossians 1:13).
  - Satan cannot be everywhere, is not all-knowing, or all powerful. He cannot know our every thought, he cannot force our will; he is not always with us.
- ❖ **God's Rescue Plan:** After the Garden of Eden, God knew if He destroyed evil at once, sinful mankind would also be destroyed. Instead, He planned a unique rescue operation that would destroy evil (1 John 3:8), but preserve mankind in the former state of purity.
- We are soldiers in God's army, receiving orders and carrying out His campaigns against the enemy. God's plan is to rescue people from the snares of Satan, and to establish His kingdom with those who will follow Him.
  - God's plan is redeeming individual people, rescuing them from darkness and bringing them into His glorious kingdom. At the end of time, Satan and his demons will be defeated once and for all, and receive punishment for their rebellion.
- ❖ **What Are Strongholds?** The word 'stronghold' is used once in the New Testament to refer to a holding place, fortress, or camp of Satan.
- **2 Corinthians 10:3-4** This verse tells us a few things about the spiritual battle we are in:
    - Our battle is not fought as the world fights.
    - Our weapons are not physical – our warfare is spiritual.
    - Our power comes from God alone.
    - God's plan is to demolish spiritual strongholds of the enemy.
- ❖ **The Focus of the Battle:** These strongholds, or fortresses of evil, are spiritual in nature, and it is against these that the Christian is at war. Through prayer we can replace these strongholds of evil with those of God.
- **Examples of Demonic Strongholds** (Anything that pulls a person away from God can be a stronghold.)
    - Forms of godliness with no power (false religion) (2 Timothy 3:5).
    - Spirit of disobedience (Colossians 3:6; 1 Thessalonians 1:8).



- Systems of the world that reject the truth of God (Romans 1:18-23).
- Idolatry of any kind (which is demon worship) (Psalm 106:33-37; Zechariah 10:2; 1 Corinthians 10:19-20).
- An incorrect perception of who God is, or an incorrect perception of who we are.
- Fear, envy, hatred, jealousy, lust, complaining, anger, etc. are behaviours in our life that allow Satan to ensnare us

➤ **Godly Strongholds**

- The name of the Lord (Psalm 9:10; 1 Samuel 17:45; Psalm 20:6-7).
- The Word of God (Psalm 18:30; Hebrews 4:12).
- The blood of the Lamb (Ephesians 1:7; Revelation 1:5).

## DISCUSSION

- ❖ What was something new you learned in this lesson? Why is it important to have correct Biblical beliefs about what Satan can and cannot do?
- ❖ How does Satan use these attacks to destroy our relationship with God (consider sexual immorality, control of governments, or occult practices)?
- ❖ Why is trying to battle evil ourselves through rituals, practices, and incantations counterproductive? What is one offensive tool we are given to destroy the attacks of Satan?
- ❖ Identify whether any of Satan's strategies mentioned above have been used to destroy your relationship with God?
- ❖ What can we do on an everyday basis to counteract Satan's attacks? How can we prevent them or avoid being deceived by Satan?

## PRAYER

*Pray that participants would be aware of the work of Satan in the world, but not fear it. Pray that they would daily put on the full armour of God (Ephesians 6:10-20). Thank God for exposing the enemy's deception and pray that evil strongholds would be destroyed. Pray that participants would realize any evil activity they may have been involved in, repent, and turn away from it. Pray for protection for the participants, and that they would be filled afresh with the Spirit of God.*