

# LESSON ESSENTIALS

## GOD AND THE SPIRITUAL REALM

### LESSON 4: GOD IS VICTORIOUS

It is important for us to know that as we are engaged in spiritual warfare God already knows the end result. The book of Revelations shows us that in the end of time, God will be victorious once and for all over evil! This is tremendous news – we already know the outcome of the battle, and God is sovereign. We must still daily fight against Satan – it is the work God has called us to, but we can rest assured that nothing that happens is outside the control or knowledge of God.

People have often wrestled with the question of whether God is truly in control of all things – and if so, how can it be that we are responsible for our own actions, and have free will? The Bible has an answer to every question, although sometimes it is difficult to understand.

The Lord exercises His sovereign control through His praying people. Thus a Christian is a powerful force if he prays according to the will of God. A Christian fights on the side of the Creator of the universe. Those who pray are actually warriors fighting the battle along with Christ.

## LOOKING DEEPER

These verses look at the paradox of the Sovereignty of God and the free will of His people:

Psalms 103:19

Genesis 50: 19-21

Proverbs 16:33

Romans 8:28

Proverbs 16:1

1 Chronicles 29:11-12

Isaiah 14:24

Acts 2:21

James 4:1-8

You cannot win the war simply with prayers. You may win a few battles but to topple Satan's kingdom we must be transformed into Christ's likeness and we must remain in that position of Christ-likeness. This requires action on our part, and work. The Amazing thing is that God has revealed to us through the prophets who wrote the Bible what will happen at the end of time. The war will be won – and many will be saved to God's Kingdom.

We all long to see justice done, and to see evil punished. Take a look to see what the Bible says will happen at the end of time: Revelations 19-21. To summarize, the war against Satan will end with the return of the King (Jesus), where Satan will be punished. Satan will receive punishment, and those who belong to Satan will receive punishment. Those who belong to Christ will reign with Him and be with Him forever. God is able to promise these amazing things because there is no one else more powerful than Him, He answers to no one, and nothing that happens surprises Him. It is important for us to know that while we fight against the evil in the world, although we may have questions.

For instance – if God is good, why is evil allowed to exist? Why does it take so long for God to win His victory? Why does He choose to work through his people rather than act alone? This is an important series of questions, one with a complex answer.

Do you believe that God is sovereign – that nothing is more powerful than Him? Do you know that God has given us free will to make choices and decisions? The word of God says that Jesus stands at the door of your heart and knocks – and waits for us to choose Him. Another passage talks about how we love God because He first loved us. This dilemma between the sovereignty of God and free will of man has been a source of debate among Christians, non- Christians, agnostics and atheists.

When we look at Isaiah 59:15-21, God speaks about the disobedience of Israel, His chosen people. Israel had committed many sins which displeased the Lord immensely. This portion throws light on how God demonstrates His sovereignty. Yes, God gave Israel free will but Israel took that gift and disobeyed God. The consequences of this disobedience led to God showing His sovereignty by changing His strategy of dealing with Israel. In the final verses we read that God has promised to send a Redeemer not to rescue them from their enemies but to rescue them from their own sins. God's plan all along was to restore the relationship He had with His people. God is definitely in control of everything

that happens. God's will is done in spite of our rebellious nature that results from our freewill, and yet we experience the ability to choose one way or another.

From our perspective, it may seem like we are making our own choices free from anyone's control. However each of us is made up of a series of experiences that God has been a part of. God holds us responsible for our sins, and allows us to come to Him on our own accord. This may seem like a paradox that is unsolvable, but the truth is both sides are correct even though we are limited in our ability to understand it.

How does God exercise control over the people in the world?. The Lord exercises His sovereign control through His praying people. Thus a Christian is a powerful force if he prays according to the will of God. A Christian fights on the side of the Creator of the universe. Those who pray are actually warriors fighting the battle along with Christ.

Let us review what we have learned in previous lessons about spiritual warfare. You and I know that evil did not originate from God. God created what is good but one of His creations, the most significant angel – Lucifer became so consumed with pride that he wanted to take the place of God himself. Because of this, he was cast out from Heaven and has been trying to turn mankind (God's creation) against God Himself. The Devil was successful in his mission in the Garden of Eden. He tempted man and women by deceiving and lying to them. God had placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden but when man and woman ate the forbidden fruit, evil made entry and the fellowship and intimate relationship that mankind had with God was broken.

God in His mercy and infinite love sent His Son Jesus Christ to die once and for all for our sins. Jesus conquered death and rose again and for those of us who have hearkened and accepted this free gift of salvation, we are able to stand justified in the presence of God.

However even after Jesus repaired our relationship with God, the Devil constantly works to deceive and destroy us. The Bible says that he is like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. So then are we defenceless against the constant attack of the Devil? No! God has provided us spiritual weapons by which we can stand against the principalities of the world. He has also provided us prayer and word of God as tools to help to obey and do His will.

How can we stand victorious against the Devil?

First and foremost, we should cleanse ourselves from all wickedness by confessing our sins to God and repent. Then, through prayer and the word of God, we should resist the Devil, and He will flee from us.

We know that the Devil is already defeated when Jesus Christ rose again from the death; however we as Christians cannot completely destroy the Devil yet. This will happen in the final battle between the forces of God and the Devil!

## IN REVIEW

- God is in control of everything.
- God did not create evil. Evil arose because of pride. The result was the Devil was cast off from heaven, and has been spreading his evil since then.
- Man also has been deceived by the Devil, and was drawn into sin. He has been born in sin since then.
- Because of this sinful nature, man cannot have that relationship that he once had with God.
- But God sent His Son, Jesus Christ to die for our sins. Through his death and resurrection we have been justified, and now we can once again have that close relationship with God.
- We as believers must resist the Devil in order to prevent ourselves from back-sliding, and falling into sin again.

## HAVE YOUR SAY

- How can you maintain Christ-like nature in your daily walk with God?
  
- What are your thoughts on the question of how God's Sovereignty and our free will work together? Have you experienced these two truths in your own life?
  
- How does it change the way we face spiritual battles every day to know that God is in control and we are not outside His rescue at any time?
  
- What are your feelings about spending eternity with Christ? What are you looking forward to? How should this fuel your evangelism efforts?

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