



Managing GOD's Money

Theme for the October: Satan Is Active

Church folks are growing more “religious” and further away from Jesus. In a June 2000 study, “Church Lay Leaders Are Different From Followers,” Barna Research Group Ltd., of Ventura, California reported 39% of lay church leaders in the USA said there is no Satan. And a 2010 PewResearch “U.S. Religious Knowledge Survey” shows even more ignorance of the Bible. It states, “on questions about Christianity – including a battery of questions about the Bible – Mormons ... show the highest levels of knowledge.”

Preachers push easy believe-ism to grow congregations so we have scores of people ignorant of the Bible in churches. This month we try to shed some light in the following areas:



October 1-7: The god of this age

October 8-14: Dress suitably

October 15-21: Wear your helmet – use your sword

October 22-31: Walk in the light

October 1- 7: The god of this age



2 Corinthians 4:4

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Apostle Paul enlightens us in the above verse that Satan, *the god of this age*, has blinded unbelievers’ minds. Unless unbelievers respond to the Holy Spirit’s call (**John 6:44**), they will remain in darkness, chase money, fame, pleasure, power, as they *look out for number one*. But they will not find lasting fulfillment.

Satan wants us to practice idolatry to honor him. He wages war; continually skirmishing with God and His people. He imitates

God’s gifts as he tries to get to our sin nature—he comes at us appealing to sexual immorality, pride, greed, and other egocentric trait. Without the Holy Spirit’s continual guidance, folks find his schemes attractive and want them. That’s why the New Age movement is so popular. Do you realize Satan is the *god of this age* as He rules the kingdom of darkness?

From the patriarchs’ time and continuing through their sojourn in Egypt, Israel worshipped idols. In **Joshua 24:14** we read:

Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

God warned Israel continually to stay away from witchcraft, the

occult and other demonic actions. In **Leviticus 20:6** God said:

‘I will set my face against the person who turns to mediums and spiritists to prostitute himself by following them, and I will cut him off from his people.’

In **verse 27**, He continued:

‘A man or woman who is a medium or spiritist among you must be put to death. You are to stone them; their blood will be on their own heads.’

Satan deceives believers by offering vile, blasphemous *enjoyment, relaxation, or fulfillment*, but not one gives the peace or joy they seek. Before I became a follower of Messiah, *Transcendental Meditation* seized

me. It seemed logical. Harvard scholars approved it with *science* supporting their claims, so it had to be good; right?

After I started to follow Messiah and reflected on my earlier *Transcendental Meditation* involvement, I realized I welcomed demons in my life. At the entry ceremony, unwittingly I exalted Guru Dev: After removing my shoes, entering a candlelit room, I placed a banana, flowers, and a white handkerchief on an altar with Guru Dev's picture. Then I watched my instructor sing and dance before this altar. But most distressing, the mantra my instructor gave me was a Hindu goddess' name. And unknowingly I spent 40 minutes daily *emptying my mind* and inviting this goddess in my life.

But there was good news: A few years later, in December 1985, my Messiah's blood, shed on the cross, cleansed me. Often quoted **John 3:16** shows this hope in Jesus that's available to everybody:

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

Regrettably, today Bible knowledge and truth do not interest many believers, so they are not alert to Satan's schemes. Besides, many churches try to raise their numbers by presenting a world-friendly message that merely appeals to *self* and unwittingly, welcomes the *god of this age*, Satan, in our lives.



Memory Verse

1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

In **Matthew 13:19**, Jesus describes what happens to unbelievers whom Satan blinds:

When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

Step back from daily busyness, ask Jesus to open your eyes and ears, then look and listen. The Holy Spirit is calling you. Jesus will accept you as you are. Just *believe*, and accept your need for Him, confess your sins, ask Him to give you a craving to turn away from sin, and then respond to His call. You will see His wonderful creation and you will hear His voice. He is waiting on your answer to His invitation to come to Him (**John 6:40**).

What about the believer in Messiah? Does Satan tempt Him too? Yes, he does. Listen to the Apostle James' vivid portrayal in **James 1:13-17**:

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. Don't be deceived..."

Application



2 Corinthians 4:1-4

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.

Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Satan is the father of lies, imitating God's gifts as he appeals to our weak areas. Be alert; hide God's Word in your heart to recognize truth. This week's memory verse is a good place to start a Scripture memorization journey.

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Are you busy *doing* ministry based on tradition or other *religion*? Do you feel fulfilled? Throw out *religion*, turn to Jesus who wants you to love Him with all your heart soul, and mind.

Busyness doing stuff other than things Jesus shows you merely keeps you distracted and available to Satan. Invest time this week sitting at Jesus' feet and receive His love, peace, and priorities. Busyness doesn't measure effectiveness in His Kingdom; obeying Him does.

Practice being still knowing He is Lord!

Satan tempted Jesus, so he will tempt each believer. But through the Holy Spirit's power, believers' don't have to give in to his temptations.

Scripture assures us *no temptation has seized you except what is common to man, and God will provide in advance, the path to escape each temptation.* Be on guard by living a Messiah-centered life. Rest assured, Messiah will lead His children through all temptations.

Jesus has the power to rescue you from Satan; it is never too late. When Saul of Tarsus met Jesus on the Damascus road, Jesus gave Him a mission to rescue folks from Satan. Jesus extends this power to each

believer today. Meditate on these words from Jesus in **Acts 26:17 – 18**:

I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Apostle Paul reminds us that because Satan tempted Jesus, Jesus can help us when Satan tempts us. Read these words from **Hebrews 2:18**: *Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.*

What a wonderful assurance for us. Commit to Jesus to invest time with Him daily. It's an excellent way to start each day: it's like adding a protective shield before entering the battlefield. The *god of this age* is waging war daily, wear proper *arms* for daily battles that will end only in heaven.

Ask Jesus to show you areas in your life that cause you to stumble. List them on paper, give them to Him and then tear up the list. As you destroy the paper, ask Jesus to help you leave these issues at the foot of the cross. He will. Remember, His love is unconditional, His forgiveness final (**1 John 1:9**).

As I reflected on this topic in July 1998, these words came to me:

The god of This Age

The God of glory shines His mercy on you,
The God of mercy shines His glory on you.

The god of this time is not the god with whom to commune,
The god of this world is the evil against which you must become immune.

Know the One who has been revealed to you by His gracious majesty,
Discernment comes from Him to whom you must bow down.

Thank Jesus for His powerful unconditional everlasting love,
Messiah Jesus the King, the only God has delivered you from bondage.

Freedom gained from His deliverance gives access to His world.

Beware; the devil prowls enticing you to his kingdom,
confident you will yield,

Stand firm; Jesus your Lord and Saviour never will desert you.

Eyes fixed on Him, take the path through His field.

Are you ready? The King is on His way to reclaim His land.

Will you get up and finally take a stand?

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Daily Reflections



October 1:
2 Corinthians
4:3-4; 1 John 1:9

October 2:
Leviticus 20:6,
20:27

October 3:
Joshua 24:14;
2 Kings 17

October 4:
John 6:44;
John 3:16-17

October 5:
Matthew 13:19;
John 6:40

October 6:
James 1:13-17;
1 Corinthians
10:13

October 7:
Acts 26:17-18

Considering
t h e
month's
theme, and
the period's
topic, daily
reflect on verses
on the left.
These questions
might help your
reflections:

1. Who is talking to whom, about what, and in what context?
2. How do these verses apply to me today?
3. What lessons from these verses can I start today?

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