**TITLE: “ASSESSING THE ENEMY”**

**TEXT: ISAIAH 14:12-19, 2 CORINTHIANS 2:11**

**Isaiah 14:12-14**

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north. 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. KJV

**2 Corinthians 2:11**

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices

**Ephesians 6:10-18**

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints

**INTRODUCTION:** One of the sad truths that has many sincere Christian people living in constant bondage is that too many people are trying to fight an enemy that they know nothing about. We are like a professional fighter going into the ring without knowing the strengths, weaknesses, weight and measurements of his opponent. No fighter that is wise, whether you watch boxing or the new Ultimate fighting will get into the ring without studying his opponents tendencies, strengths and weaknesses. Do they have good footwork? Are they a right-hander or a left-hander. Are they fast or are they slow? What’s their best punch and best move? We are also like an army going into battle against an enemy who we have not studied and we have no clue as to what kind of weaponry they possess, the size of their army, the common tactics they are known to use and the direction from which they will most likely attack from. And because of that many of us who have been empowered by Christ to live victoriously are losing battle after battle and living in defeat because we neither know our enemy or the rules of engagement when it comes to battle. And I say this because if we are going to engage in spiritual warfare in an effective and mature manner, we simply cannot run out onto the battle field without knowing our enemy and what we are up against. We cannot go out based upon old sayings and someone’s witty testimony. We must find out clearly from the Word of God what we are up against. **DO YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE UP AGAINST?**

**“A good General must penetrate the brain of his enemy.” (Victor Hugo)**

**“If you know yourself and your enemy clearly, then in a hundred battles you will win a hundred times” (Chinese Literature)**

While these quotes may appear to be simple and will even be glossed over by many in the house today we need to understand that their principles are extremely important to we who desire to live the Christian live as it is intended. You see, God has always wanted us to be victors and not victims, to live triumphantly and not tragically, to be free and not bound and to walk in favor and not foolishness and I dare say to the church today that this will never be possible until we come to an understanding of who our enemy is, what his tactics are and what are our spiritual rights as believers that will enable us to walk in victory. As Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinthians in one of our chosen text, we are not to be ignorant concerning his devices.

 For most the term spiritual warfare introduces a new and not necessarily welcomed dimension in their Christian experience. The thought of facing evil spirits in battle is an unsettling concept for the average church attender, especially since we came to Jesus as lost sheep and not warriors. Ultimately, some of us may never initiate spiritual warfare, but all of us must face the fact that the devil has initiated warfare against us. So, we are in the fight whether we like it or not. **WE’RE IN A FIGHT!** When we became a Christian, we did not join a country club and became an exclusive member of the Name it Claim it Club. We did not sign up to become a gold card carrying member of the Spiritual Elitist turn our nose up at Sinners Organization. No, we joined the army of God and enlisted for battle. **YOU’RE IN A FIGHT!** Now, you can deal with this in one of two ways. You can just sit back and let the devil beat you down every day because he will try to do just that or you can make up your mind that I am going to engage in warfare and get on the offensive and in the name of Jesus, in the power of the Holy Ghost and through the Word of God I will fight back. **I’M GOING TO FIGHT!**

 And for too many in the body of Christ we have taken the devil either too lightly or we have overestimated his power. As a matter of fact one of the devil’s greatest tricks is to make men believe he does not exist." I have counseled those who basically are convinced that there is no such thing as demonic influence and that the devil is a figment of our imagination and an excuse we use when we either cannot explain something or when we ourselves have failed and are looking to cast blame. Too many people believe the devil is an old wives tale, designed to scare people into going to church. Some would say, "I have never seen the devil." You have never seen George Washington and you never met anyone who did. But you accept the witness of history. The same history offers evidence of the existence of God and once you accept God’s existence then you must believe the devil is real. If the devil cannot convince us that he doesn’t exist, then he tries to deceive us into both overestimating and under estimating his ability and influence. In my years of ministry I have encountered people in the church who simply have an unbalanced and totally unbiblical view of the devil. I have counseled people who have devil paranoia. They think there is a devil behind every body and in everything. There is a devil under every rock, behind every tree. The devil made me do it is their favorite phrase. I wasn’t late for work; it was the devil. I didn’t gossip and tear down so and so’s name , it was the devil. I didn’t mean to abuse my wife and sleep around, it was the devil. I remember being at a church in Virginia and we were running late for church and the woman was rebuking red light demons because the light turned red and spirits of delay because the car in front of us was driving too slow. I just kept silent and thought, that wasn’t the devil, we should’ve just left earlier to get to church.. And because of either our disbelief and our unbalanced perspective we are leaving ourselves open to the many attacks of the enemy and if we are going to be victorious we must properly assess the enemy that we are up against. So, who is the devil? Where did he come from, what does he do, and what is his future? We want to look at this devil we are battling against so we can know how he attempts use the Silent Killers to bind us in our walk with God. We will talk about his Plan, his Power, and his Place.

1. **HIS PLAN**

HIS ORIGIN- In order to understand the devils plan we must first review his origin. Where did he come from. I have heard people say, if God is so loving and cared so much, we would he create a devil to tempt me and wreak havoc in my life. Understand that God did not make a devil. God made a wise and beautiful angel by the name of Lucifer. The Anointed Cherub Angel

**Ezekiel 28:13-14**

“Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou wast the anointed cherub that covereth: and I set thee, so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

The word cherub is singular for cherubim. The cherubim are symbolic of God's Holy presence and His unapproachable majesty. These cherubim occupy a unique position. The "anointed cherub who covers" is the picture given to us in the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve had been sent out and God had placed cherubim to guard the way of the tree of life. Also, when Moses made the mercy seat and placed it into the tabernacle's Holy of Holies, God's glory came and dwelt between the cherubim. They "covered" the mercy seat with their wings. So, we now see that Satan was a cherub and his position was to guard the very throne of God. His position was that of protecting the holiness of God. Satan had the highest of all positions, a position which he despised and lost. We have here in Ezekiel a picture of the highest of God's creatures, perfect in wisdom, beautiful beyond description, a musician and on top of all that, he was given this high, exalted position. But, this creation, with all of these wonderful attributes also had a free will. One day, God says to this marvelous creature, "Iniquity was found in you."

**The Lead Worshipper**

The Musical Instrument- Guarding and surrounding the throne with Worship. When Pride came he saw his beauty, wanted to be worship and eventually wanted to be God.

To Be Like God

**Isaiah 14:12-14**

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. (KJV)

The Sin of Pride and Rebellion: God hates Pride and Rebellion. **Sin Of Pride - The Sin of Sins.** The sin of pride is a preoccupation with self. It is thus very fitting that the middle letter in the word is "i." Pride is all about "me, myself, and I." We are warned to guard our hearts against pride lest we too "fall into the same condemnation as the devil."3 It was the sin of pride which first led Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit.

**"**'Pride is the commencement of all sin'6 because it was this which overthrew the devil, from whom arose the origin of sin; and afterwards, when his malice and envy pursued man, who was yet standing in his uprightness, it subverted him in the same way in which he himself fell. For the serpent, in fact, only sought for the door of pride whereby to enter when he said, 'Ye shall be as gods.’"(St. Augustine of Hippo)

Rebellion

**Psalms 68:6** “God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

**1 Samuel 15:23** For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.

Pew Witches- witches in the church

* Who does he think he is trying to tell me what to do?
* Got the nerve to try to correct me….
* Boycott or Financial Strikes- quiet rebellion (boycott- we don’t like who the pastor appointed to a position, don’t like doing things in a new way and I’m not participating and not giving)
* I don’t like that idea, I’m not doing that!
* Just like the devil we rally people to our opinion and cause and pull people from under their spiritual covering.

**THE FIVE I WILLS OF SATAN**

* I will ascend into Heaven.
* I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.
* I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.
* I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.
* I will be like the most High. (KJV)

**A reference to Satan or King of Babylon?** (14:12–15) Christians have been fascinated with these verses. Many apply what students of prophecy call the “law of double reference” and see a shift in focus from a proud Babylon King to an even more arrogant being, Satan.

Certainly reference to Satan is indirect if present, but Christ in **Luke 10:18** applies language used in **v. 12** to Satan. It is not at all unusual for the prophets to see in the pride of pagan rulers an arrogance which reflects satanic principles, even as David and certain kings of his line reflect qualities found in Christ.

If the focus does shift now to Satan, we have a unique insight into the essence of his original fall. The five vaunting “I will” statements reveal a twisted passion of the creature to replace the Creator as Lord. But the arrogant effort to rise higher than God leads only to a devastating fall. Isaiah pictures the ruler cast down to the depths, a pitiful creature now and an object of wonder that any might have feared him at all.

There are several lessons for us in this. First, pride does, as the saying goes, “lead to a fall.” Put “I” on the throne of life rather than the Lord, and we too are doomed to failure and disappointment. Perhaps this kind of attitude is the ultimate source of evil, first in the universe and surely in our lives. Let’s be sure to walk humbly with our God.

Second, it reminds us that Satan is a fallen, and now defeated, foe. He may be now, but God’s power is absolute.

**Eph 2:2**

2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: KJV

The word translated “walked” speaks of meandering or walking without direction or goal. The Greek phrase translated “course of this world” refers to wind. Therefore, the implication is that whichever way the wind was blowing was the way we were going. Who was doing the blowing? Satan. He was the one dictating the styles, trends, and interests that so captivated you and me before we were saved, when we were still dead in our sin.

**Luke 10:18**

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I **beheld Satan as lightning fall** from heaven. Behold, I give unto you **power** to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

I **beheld** (theōreō). The verb denotes calm, intent, continuous contemplation of an object which remains before the spectator. to understand see — to understand, conceived of as seeing.

**Satan.** A transcription of the Hebrew word, derived from a verb to lie in wait or oppose. Hence an adversary

**As lightning**. Describing vividly a dazzling brilliance suddenly quenched.

**Fall** (piptō), verb. fall; fall down. Lit., having fallen. The aorist marks the instantaneous fall, like lightning.

**Power** (exousia) Jurisdiction, the sphere of authority. Ruler (one who has authority over). Supernatural power. Right to judge, freedom to action

To Attack the Things that Are Important to God- **Threefold Levels and Intentions of Attack**

1.Possess- (of a spirit, especially an evil one) to occupy, dominate, or [control](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/control) (a person) from within:

2. Obsess- to dominate or preoccupy the thoughts, feelings, or desires of (a person); beset, trouble, or haunt persistently or abnormally:

3. Oppress- to burden with cruel or unjust impositions or restraints; subject to a burdensome or harsh exercise of authority or power: to lie heavily upon (the mind, a person, etc.): to weigh down,

**1 Peter 5:8**

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: KJV.

satan- adversary, he who opposes, His name speaks of his goal which is to obstruct and oppose the will of God.

**1 Thess 2:17-18**

17 But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavored the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.18 Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us. KJV

devil- diabolos, means a slanderer, traducer, malignant accuser.

**Rev 12:10-11**

10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. KJV

**John 10:10**

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

**Acts 10:38**

How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him

**1 John 3:8**

He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil

1. **HIS POWER**

Notice in every one of the demonically themed movies the devil is presented as an all-powerful unstoppable force.

If you were to open your eyes to the invisible world we would see angels, demons, signals, messages etc.... soaring through the very atmosphere.

The devil is a spirit being therefore in order to accomplish anything in the earth the enemy needs a body.

The devil is not an equal power to God who is just evil. He is no match for the power of God. In the end, in Revelation, it will take just one of Gods angels to cast him into the lake of fire.

1. **HIS PLACE**

**ILLUSTRATION: Playing with the devils’ children thinking he will not come in.**

Ouija boards, party seances, levitation, transcendental meditation, tarot cards, horoscopes. Books and films that describe the practices and orgies of witches covens and satan worship. Harry Potter, Sabrina the teenage witch. Charmed, Bewitched, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Salem, Witches of East End....

**1 Peter 5:8-9**

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. KJV

**Ephesians 4:26-27**

26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. KJV

**Ephesians 4:26-27**

26 If you are angry, don't sin by nursing your grudge. Don't let the sun go down with you still angry-get over it quickly; 27 for when you are angry, you give a mighty foothold to the devil. TLB

**Deut 18:9-14**

9 "When you arrive in the Promised Land you must be very careful lest you be corrupted by the horrible customs of the nation’s now living there. 10 For example, any Israeli who presents his child to be burned to death as a sacrifice to heathen gods must be killed.

No Israeli may practice black magic, or call on the evil spirits for aid, or be a fortune teller, 11 or be a serpent charmer, medium, or wizard, or call forth the spirits of the dead. 12 Anyone doing these things is an object of horror and disgust to the Lord, and it is because the nations do these things that the Lord your God will displace them. 13 You must walk blamelessly before the Lord your God. TLB

**Ephesian 1:19-21**

19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: KJV

**2 Corinthians 11:14**

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. KJV

**Matthew 4:8-10**

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. KJV

“The kingdoms of the world.” God intends Jesus to rule all the world’s kingdoms. But first Christ was to go to the cross. Jesus’ commitment to worship God and serve only Him reminds us that we are to consciously subject ourselves to the known will of God. It is written.

In each case Jesus recalled a principle found in God’s Word and acted on it. We need to study and know Scripture. But most of all, we need to practice its principles.

**KNOW YOUR SPIRITUAL RIGHTS:** Throw the book at em!!!

**Philippians 2:6-11**

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. KJV

**Ephesians 6:18**

18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; KJV.

The manner in which a soldier takes up these last two pieces of spiritual armor is suggested by two Greek participles: “praying” and “being alert.” When the enemy attacks—and on all occasions—Christians are to pray continually in the Spirit (i.e., in the power and sphere of the Spirit; Jude 20).

With all kinds of prayers and requests suggests the thoroughness and intensity of their praying. And like reliable soldiers, they are to be keeping alert, literally, “in all persistence.”

Their requests are to be for all the saints because of Satan’s spiritual warfare against Christ and the church. In the Greek “all” occurs four times in this verse; three are translated in the NIV and the fourth is rendered as always (lit., “in all times” or “every time”).

**2 Corinthians 10:3-4**

3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: 4(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds; KJV

In this text the Apostle Paul admitted that he and his company live in the world but insisted that they did not wage war as the world does. They did not employ the intimidation, coercion, and violence normally associated with worldly authorities.

Instead of employing the weapons of the world, Paul relied on divine power. These weapons appeared weak by worldly standards, but they were actually immensely powerful. The preaching of the cross brought great displays of God’s power in the lives of believers everywhere, including Corinth.

Consequently, Paul was certain that he was on a course to demolish the strongholds or fortifications of arguments and every pretension that anyone set up against the knowledge of God. As Paul traveled the world proclaiming the gospel of Christ, he encountered pretentious disbelief supported by clever arguments and powerful personalities. But through the “weakness” of preaching Christ, Paul went about taking captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.