

Discussion Guide: Our Adversary the Devil

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42 (NIV)

March 2, 2003: "Our Adversary the Devil" by Pastor Kimber Kauffman, Senior Pastor College Park Church. Pastor Kimber returned to the pulpit this morning after a four month battle with Lymphatic Filariasis. Praise the Lord for his return. During this period pastor spent a lot of reflecting and reading about our adversary the devil in regards to principalities, powers and demons and felt led to do a 5-6 week sub-series and talk about this one called the devil, Satan, known as the serpent, Lucifer.¹

Opening Prayer

Our Father in heaven, you've told us to pray everyday, "lead us not into temptation, and deliver us from the evil one." And once again, we pray that. And what could be worse then for a group of Christians to gather in the name of Jesus to study the revelation that you have left us about this evil enemy that hates you and especially hates Jesus and hates the church, and to let him gain any advantage. We pray for him to be thoroughly defeated and kept away from our minds and our hearts and our understanding and that we might be filled to the fullest by the Holy Spirit as we study your word. In the name of Jesus we pray.

By way of introduction, pastor read from Psalm 19 and pointed out that God has chosen to reveal himself to mankind in two ways: General Revelation and Special Revelation.

In the first half of Psalm 19:1-6, scripture tells us that God makes himself known to all mankind by constant revelation of himself through what he has created (by *general revelation*). All creation cries out, "There is a God!!!"

Only the fool willfully opposes the truth and says in his heart, "There is no God." Psalm 14:1 and 53:1.

In the second half of Psalm 19:7-11, scripture tells us that God reveals himself through *special revelation* through the word of God that is given to those who have been blessed with "the book" or at least the hearing of "the book."

Pastor encourages us to get into God's word and find out how much he loves us, how we should live, how to go about solving problems in life. Taste the word of God and find how sweet it is. Psalm 119:103

Discussion Questions:

- What has God revealed to you about himself in what he has created?
- What have you learned about God this past couple of weeks in the scriptures.
- How has God's word effected your life this past couple of weeks?

¹ x-ref Revelation 20:2 for dragon, ancient serpent, devil or Satan; Isaiah 14:12 KJV for Lucifer.

With this backdrop, pastor introduced his theme for the series, "Our Adversary the Devil."² There is a God who is good and his ways are good, and there is a Devil who is bad and his ways are bad.

The God of the Bible wants exactly the same thing that Satan of the Bible wants. They both want to be #1 in your life. They both want to be worshiped. They both demand that you give them everything that you have. They are both real, but with different powers and capabilities.

In Genesis 1-2 of the Bible we have God's creation. In Genesis 3 through the rest of the Bible, Satan is on almost every page of the Bible until you get to the last two chapters of the Bible in Revelation 21 -22. All over the Bible Satan is there as our adversary and the enemy of God. The first story told about Satan is in Genesis 3 when he speaks in direct opposition to the word of God. Did God say... You will not die...

Pastor continued his sermon by describing the similarity between Psalm 19 and Genesis 3 in that that God's middle name is revealer. He loves to reveal himself. He loves to reveal knowledge. He loves intimacy. He loves fellowship. He loves to have people learn. He has opinions of things that are right and wrong. There are things that he hates and things that he loves, like righteousness, goodness, purity, and truth.

When sin entered into the world, we have a people who are going to follow God and a people who are going to follow the Devil from this point on.

As we proceed to the New Testament in Luke 4:1-11 we see that Jesus was tempted by the Devil when the Devil said (revelation and communication coming from the Devil just like he did with Adam and Eve). If you do it my way (the Devil's way) I will give you...

There is a God who loves you and knows what is best for you and that is to follow him. There is a Devil who hates you and seeks your destruction. He is more cunning than the wisest and lures you into the brink of hell in such a way that we think we are in heaven.

Discussion Questions:

- What words do you hear today that might be inspired by the Devil?
- What actions and behaviors display his "possible" direct involvement?
- In what ways have you seen people lured into the wrong paths?
- Have you been lured into a wrong path?
- How may we guard against the influence of the evil one (Satan)?³

In Matthew 13:1-19, the evil one (Satan) comes along and snatches away what was sown in the heart of the man who does not understand (so they many not believe and be saved⁴).

² *Hostage to the Devil* by Dr. Malachi Martin

³ Proverbs 4, Matthew 6:5-14, 1 Corinthians 7:5, 2 Corinthians 2:10-11, Ephesians 4:27; 6:10-18, James 4:7-10, 1 Peter 5:8-9

⁴ Luke 8:12

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. Matthew 13:19 (NIV)

How does this relate to Psalm 19? The heaven declares the glory of God, and yet there are fools. The word of the Lord is perfect, reviving the simple, and yet there are fools. The same Devil that stole the word from Eve and has stolen the word from the hearts of men and women of Israel and of all the world for years is still out there today.

What is Satan's number one goal? To steal the word of God and keep man separated from God and doing things God's way.

Satan can also enter into the thoughts of men and women of God and encourage them to do things they would not normally do. Take Peter for example, in Matthew 16:23, when his thoughts shifted from God's way to the way of "the world."

Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." Matthew 16:23 (NIV)

This same Peter gave the Pentecostal message in which the Holy Spirit brought 3000 believers into the fold. Then In Acts 5:3 we see how Peter sees Satan at work in the lives of some of the followers...

Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God." Acts 5:3-4 (NIV)

In the second letter to the Corinthians, Paul encouraged them to forgive one another...

...in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes. 2 Corinthians 2:11b (NIV)

When the seventy-two returned from their journey into the surrounding communities, Jesus described how Satan was cast out of heaven and they should rejoice that their names are written in the book of life. Luke 10:17-20 (NIV)

Discussion Questions:

- What is Satan's number one goal?
- As a Christian, what should be our number one goal in our life?
- Why is it important to set goals for your life?
- What can life be like with God at the center of everything you do in life?