

Sermon #23

Am I a Christian or Satan?

God is just and good.

He is ageless, eternal, wonderful, great.

God is ever-seeing and all-knowing.

He knows who belongs to Him.

God is God;

the one and only true, living God.

No one gets over on God.

None can usurp His power.

No one is greater than He.

Every contender will fail.

Every upstart shall be shut down.

God is God.

He exalted Christ, the humble, sacrificial Lamb.

Yet God casts down those who presume to exalt themselves.

Do you call yourself a Christian?

God did not invent the name “Christian”—man did.

God created man in His image and likeness,

without religious titles and distinctions.

The title “Christian” is meaningless in itself.

We are not called to tout ourselves as being “Christians,”

we are called to be faithful and obedient to God, who is love.

Jesus was and is the Christ. And here are His commands:

¹²“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them,
for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12

¹²“This is My commandment, that you love one another as
I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this,
than to lay down one’s life for his friends. ¹⁴You are

My friends if you do whatever I command you.” John 15:12-14

Jesus said, “If you love Me, you will obey My commands.”

If you call yourself a Christian, do you really obey His commands?

Jesus has an opponent, who He called “Satan.”

So who is Satan?

He is the **spirit of self-exaltation**, also known as the devil, the liar and father of lies, the adversary of God, Apollyon, Abaddon, the serpent, the dragon, Mephistopheles, Uncle Screwtape, masquerading angel, the deceiver, the accuser, etc.

Man has all sorts of doctrines and ideas and teachings about this devil guy. Some churches don’t believe the devil really exists and other churches spend a lot of time trying to convince everyone that the devil does exist and is responsible for all sorts of evil.

Many books and sermons have been written and preached about this ultimate bad-guy.

Is Satan really all he is cracked up to be?

Is he to be feared? studied? discussed?

If you love Christ—that is, obey His commands—
then the Spirit of truth lives in you.

Christ in you has authority over Satan, so there is no such thing as the devil harming you or screwing up your life.

If you love Christ there is absolutely nothing evil happening in your life. All that happens is for a good purpose, and is authored by God, regardless of how it appears at the time, or what you think about it.

However, to whatever extent you don’t love God—that is, you don’t believe and obey Christ—the devil **can** manifest in you.

And I’m not just talking about murder, theft and adultery.

Any time you exalt yourself over God, even if it seems noble to do so in your mind, you are manifesting Satan, the spirit of self-exaltation.

This is what Peter did once. Listen to the story:

²¹From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief

priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. ²²Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"
²³But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."
Matthew 16:21-23

Whenever I say that God's word isn't true, whenever I think my way is better than God's way, whenever I try to "protect" someone from going forward as God calls them--
I am Satan, for I am exalting myself over God.
It is pointless for me to fight and blame the devil when I am the devil!
The solution is to repent, believe that God's word and way are best, and follow Christ.
This is how to resist the devil and overcome evil with good.

Anyone who sits around whining about the devil or blaming the devil is probably resisting God and refusing to do His will in some matter.
Anyone who talks a lot about the devil may be more impressed by Satan than God, and may be exalting himself and opposing God without even realizing it. Watch out for that person!

Christ has all authority. Get this in your head.
Cling to Him, love Him, follow Him, obey Him, fill your heart with Him.
This extinguishes self-exaltation and lies from your heart.
They are gone, outta' there, cast into the lake of burning sulfur!

For most of us, though, this is a process and doesn't happen overnight.
We are slow to believe and slow to obey, resisting the commands of God while exalting our own ideas and desires.

Remember this:
All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Christ.
Turn to Him, humble yourself, love Him and follow Him,
and the devil will have absolutely no power in you or your life!

It is obedience to Christ--not church affiliation or religious titles
or fighting the devil--

that sets believers apart from unbelievers,
that returns man's dominion to him
and brings man back into personal relationship with God,
his loving Father and generous Creator.

"I the LORD love truth and justice, mercy and goodness.

But pride and lies I hate and destroy.

Do not take pride in your church affiliation;

And do not lie when you speak My name.

Do you really believe and follow Me?

Do you speak My word of truth?

Do you give others what you want them to give to you?

I AM with you and for you, if you want to be with Me.

Don't call yourself 'Christian,' just do what I say.

Then others will see, and they will confess that you belong to Me.

I AM with you and for you, now and forever.

I, the LORD love goodness and truth,

and I want to see them growing in you.

Keep your focus on Me and My word.

Receive and follow the Spirit of Truth.

Listen to what He has to say.

Don't blame the devil; have faith in Me!

Give your heart fully to Me,

and Satan will find no room for him there.

Trust Me working in all for good.

Rejoice! Be glad!

I AM good.

I always prevail.

Follow Me! I love you.

Rejoice!"