

Discussion Questions:

What are examples of Satanic deception that look good and that look moral and look helpful?

Do you think the United Nations is essentially a satanic stronghold?

Do you think the United Nations is actually devoted to uniting the nations in good will, good health, and moral goodness?

Do you think that Satan incites alcohol abuse?

Do you think Satan incites rehab initiatives that enable people to detox from alcohol abuse and drug abuse?

Do you think Satan advocates for premarital sex, extra marital sex, and numerous forms of unnatural sex?

Do you think Satan sometimes advocates for celibacy and strict rules against sexual misconduct?

Beginning 2023 With a Clap of Thunder: I John 5:18-20 January 1, 2023

I. There is two-sided activity in being kept from sin.

A. *Your responsibility* to keep yourself is the point in vs. 18.

“We know that *not sinning* however connected with being born again and secured by the very seed of the divine nature and eternal life residing inside, a Christian **is not so connected, or so secured**, that careful keeping of ourselves is unnecessary.”¹ Begotten children of God must actively, carefully, **keep themselves**.

B. Your keeping *thwarts Satan's grabbing*².

Our keeping of ourselves in an effect of the being born of God, and it is a means by which born ones resist Satan's influence.

“O Timothy, **keep that which is committed to thy trust**, avoid profane and vain babbling, and oppositions of science falsely so called.” I Timothy 6:20

Our Vulnerability

Though born again and actually new creatures in Christ, “we are not as filially (pertaining to sons and daughters) exercised thoroughly in our relationship with our God and Father: I John 3:1,2.

Behold how ready we are to hear Satan's whisper (or shout), “Yea hath God said?” or, “God's commands are so grievous” (I John 5:3): His Lordship is *austere, harsh severity*: Luke 19:20,21.

Be sure that your filial son-ship/daughter-ship believingly apprehended and realized is a great shield and defense against the grab of the wicked one.³

1 Robert S. Candlish *Commentary on 1st John* p. 411

2 Compare references to “touch” John 20:17 clinging, grabbing; Mark 5:27, 31 Did this woman touch Jesus like you touch an elevator button to go to the next floor?

3 Ibid. p. 412

II. Keeping ourselves from sin requires knowing the character of the *whole world*: 5:19.

A. This sounds like a simple contrast. A contrast exists no doubt, but the intention here is more a warning than stating a contrast--we're saved, they're lost.

B This is a warning and the emphasis is not on *who* the world is, but on *what* the world is: “**whole**” is key to understand the point.

This is a strong expression from a *son of thunder* (Mark 3:17) going beyond his previous remarks on the subject of satanic conflict:

2:13,14 “overcome the wicked one”;

3:8,12 “He that commits sin is of the devil” “...Cain, who was of that wicked one” (all along)...

4:3 “This is that spirit of Antichrist”

5:19 “the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one.”

“Instead of “wickedness,” in 5:19, we may rather read “the wicked one.” There is no good reason for any change in this verse from the rendering in the verse before. There, 5:18, it must unavoidably be personal, “the wicked one touches him not.” It is quite unnecessary and unwarrantable to make it impersonal and abstract here, “the whole world lies in wickedness.” It is the same expression and should be translated in the same way, “the whole world lies in the wicked one.”⁴

C. Satanic power is an age-long global reality: Acts 26:15-18

“So I said, 'Who are You, Lord? And He said, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness both of the things which you have seen and the things which I will yet reveal to you. I will deliver you from the *Jewish* people, as well as from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you, to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, **and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.**”

⁴ Ibid. p. 417

D. Satan receives the fallen race.

In the fall, Adam and Eve fell away from walking with God, fellowship with God, by refusing to submit to God—His one command to them.

Satan was altogether ready to receive the fallen pair,—and in a measure—break their fall. His domain does have a menu of benefits, “pleasures of sin”. He can provide something like a couch: lie there. Now that's not so bad is it? In my domain you will be independent of that great obstructor of happiness and freedom.

And to this day the whole world is laying in his domain with little or no resistance. The world listens willingly to this seducer, *who now comforts and guards them*.

The nations of the globe are awash in his deception (Revelation 20:3), and yet they lay down unresistingly in it—often basking in it as though it was normalcy and truth. They “*love* darkness.”

III. Apply this passage by looking deeper into the *whole world*.

It is true that the wicked one touches us not, is unable to grab us, while we walk circumspectly: “wise as serpents, harmless as doves.”

Beware of letting the wicked one touch you through **the world that lies in him**. In this way he will seek to grab you.

Have you ever considered how remarkably placed the warning about “loving the world” in I John 2:15-17 is placed? Do the people just addressed in 2:13,14 need to hear the warning in 2:15-17?

Was Cain of that wicked one from his youth up, or did he just go bad later in life? Genesis 4:3 Was the murder incubated wickedness?

A great deal of “the world” is not weird gross drag shows. Many things of “the world” are fascinating and impressive and moral and very religious: Mathew 24:24; I John 5:21.

