



John's Schedule

Subscribe to Living Hope daily devotionals

Check out our daily Living Hope devotional message in both print and audio link. Start your day or add to your day a moment in God's Word! The archived devotional messages [are here](#).



- [Current Broadcast](#)
- [Previous Broadcasts](#)
- [Podcasts](#)
- [Featured Series](#)
- [All Series](#)
- [This Week's Sermon](#)
- [All Sermons](#)

Sermons in this series
(click to see details):

- Part: 16 [The Results of Resisting the Devil](#)
- Part: 15 [Don't Give Place to the Devil](#)
- Part: 14 [Don't Ignore the Devil](#)
- Part: 13 [Our Unseen but DANGEROUS Enemy--Sata1](#)
- Part: 13 [Satan Wants YOU to Doubt God's Word](#)
- Part: 12 [Resisting Satan's attacks](#)
- Part: 10 [What Is Satan Up To Right Now](#)
- Part: 9 [Where Did Satan Come From?](#)
- Part: 8 [Humility, Worship and our Adversary the Devil](#)
- Part: 7 [Humility, Worship and our Adversary the Devil](#)
- Part: 6 [Wearing His Word](#)
- Part: 5 [Wearing His Salvation](#)
- Part: 4 [Wearing His Faith](#)
- Part: 3 [Wearing His Peace](#)
- Part: 2 [Wearing His Righteousness](#)
- Part: 1 [Wearing His Truth](#)

Don't Give Place to the Devil



Part 15 (070429AM)

[Return to previous Page](#) | [Print](#)

Listen:

(To download [Right-click here](#) and choose "Save As")

[Purchase this single sermon on CD](#) 

As we open to [Acts 19:19-20](#), we meet a group of people convinced that any contact with demonic materials is deadly and to be avoided at all costs.

In the last hundred years we have made great strides towards understanding how dangerous germs and viruses really are. We know that even the smallest breach of our protective layer of skin can become the invasion point for deadly armies of microbes; and those germs once inside the defensive walls, can multiply into million in a matter of a few hours, overwhelming our bodies with toxins and disease.

Because of that awareness, if you were walking down an alley behind the Mall and you spotted a used syringe with a razor sharp needle filthy and stained with blood, wouldn't you be alarmed if your small child walking beside you picked it up and began poking their arm with that needle? Wouldn't any of us stop everything and keep them from such a dangerous action? Of course we would.

We respond to these situations because we are all convinced of the devastating effects those pathogens can have if they get into our bodies. Deadly disease producing germs (as in viruses and bacteria) are what we would fear that needle might get into our child's body--sickening them or even endangering their life.

This week I read an online bulletin from the renowned Mayo Clinic. These words reminded me of our Spiritual Warfare study we are walking through these past few weeks.

We Live in a World of Germs

... Some keep you healthy — others make you sick. Protect yourself by understanding which ones are harmless and which ones pose a threat.

Germs were behind every fever, runny nose, ache, pain and other sign and symptom of every cold and flu you've ever had. When you're in the midst of such symptoms, you might not stop to think about the germs (microbes) that are causing them. Not all germs will harm you, but knowing more about germs — including bacteria, viruses and parasites — can increase your chances of avoiding infection.

Germs: A multitude of microscopic invaders

Bacteria, viruses and other infectious organisms — germs — live everywhere. You can find them in the air, on food, plants and animals, in the soil, in the water, and on just about every other surface — including your own body. These microbes range in size from microscopic single-celled organisms to parasitic worms that can grow to several feet in length.

Most of these organisms won't harm you. Your immune system protects you against a multitude of infectious agents. However, some bacteria and viruses are formidable adversaries because they're constantly mutating to breach your immune system's defenses. Often the most dangerous are the viruses.

In its simplest form, a virus is a capsule that contains genetic material — DNA or RNA. Viruses are even tinier than bacteria. To put their size into perspective, consider that, according to the American Society for Microbiology, if you were to enlarge an average virus to the size of a baseball, the average bacterium would be about the size of the pitcher's mound. And just one of your body's millions of cells would be the size of the entire ballpark.[1]

That online medical bulletin was a fascinating reminder of the real world we are called by God to live in and serve Him in, each day. The bottom line is this: there are two relentless wars waged against us each day. Both are usually unseen.

One war is physical the other war is spiritual. The physical war involves our bodies; and the spiritual war involves our minds.

Physically, the war targets one of the most amazing systems of our bodies, the immune system. Almost always unseen, this amazing defensive system operates 24/7 warding off untold legions of deadly attackers in the form of germs that enter our bodies through cuts, scrapes, punctures of our skin, breathing air, or eating food.

Spiritually, we are likewise under continuous bombardment and attack. And one of the most amazing systems of our spiritual lives is the immune system God has also built into us in Christ.

Our spiritual immune system is laid out in Scripture as having three factors: **spiritual health** (eating and drinking in God's Word, plus exercising each day by walking in the Spirit); **spiritual armor** (understanding and using the armor Paul commands us to use in [Ephesians 6:10-18](#)); and **spiritual warfare** (resisting the devil and his demons). If you neglect any part of your spiritual immune system—Satan and his army have a point to target in their relentless campaign.

So what is the direction we get from God's Word? When we open to the book of Acts we see that Paul served the church at Ephesus longer than any other New Testament church. His epistle or letter to the Ephesians is the chief insight into spiritual warfare. One of the key insights we get about Ephesus was their attraction to the occult (as with most of the ancient world).

The most remarkable facet of Paul's ministry to this church is that when Paul taught the Ephesian believers about the strategies of Satan in [Acts 19:19-20](#), they collected and burned all of the objects associated with demonic and satanic contact.

Please read again with me those powerful words of the Gospel's powerful entrance into Ephesus as stated in [Acts 19:19-20](#).

Acts 19:19-20 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totaled fifty thousand pieces of silver. 20 So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

The level of their desire to repent and follow the Lord was seen in this costly choice to rid their lives of anything that displeased Him. Their example recorded by God in His Word should stir us to ask, "Have we likewise carefully purged out of our lives any of these landing places of the devil?"

As you look back at v. 19, doesn't that verse amaze you? What did God lead Paul to do to prompt such a huge response in public with such great sacrifice involved?

Have you ever wished you knew what exactly Paul told them that made them respond so dramatically to the evil around them? What did Paul say that made them go home, search out, gather and BURN all that expensive media?

Did you know that the Holy Spirit has captured for each of us Paul's message that those saints heard and responded to? It is in the Epistle to the Ephesians, where Paul wrote down the messages God wanted them to remember and us to hear with them. Turn with me to [Ephesians 4:17-27](#) and [5:1-12](#).

Please stand, listen to what Paul preached, taught, and prayed for these saints—and then join me in praying for your life this morning.

Read. We want to empty out any part of our life that grieves, quenches, and displeases our God; and shut the door to any place for the Devil and his demons in our lives. PRAY

Satan is not interested in a head on confrontation with Christ's Church. He usually does not kick down the front door and walk in. Rather he quietly slips into unguarded areas by way of doors left unlocked, windows left open, and any other means of establishing a beach head.

Satan and his demons are alive, awake, and at work relentlessly, tirelessly, and devastatingly 24/7 as the ultimate spiritual terrorists. Paul preached, taught, disciplined, and reasoned longer and deeper than in any other church. The response was amazing, but the message was simple. Always guard against the...

Landing Places For the Devil

Paul warned the new believers in Ephesus that they must not surrender any part of their lives to the Devil. Once he gets a foothold he can defeat us in other areas of our lives. That is why they rid themselves of everything that could be used by Satan to distance them from God. We must do the same.

When we look back at history, landing places or footholds, were the key to the outcome of World War II. After the string of devastating set backs for the months after Pearl Harbor, the tide began to turn. On August 7, 1942, the Allies began their first offensive action in the Pacific.

Allied strategists believed that the central Pacific fortress of Japan could be cracked. They did not intend to seize each island separately. This would be too costly and take too long. Instead, they decided on a plan of island hopping, or seizing key islands from which to attack the next target, bypassing other targets.

The idea was to capture certain key islands, one after another, until Japan came within range of American bombers. Led by General Douglas MacArthur, the Gilberts, Marshalls, Marianas, Carolines, and Palaus were taken in seemingly endless, bloody

battles — ultimately leading to the unconditional surrender of the Japanese.[2]

Even a small part of our life, allowed to become a landing place for the devil can lead to ongoing spiritual defeats and greater bondage to sin. We must stay on guard against our adversary the devil as Peter warned us.

Here is a brief list of the places believers can actually contact and get defiled by exposure to Satan and his army.

Watch out for IMAGES: **Worshiping any image** is a place for demon snares or contact.

That is the most literal and obvious kind of a place for demon intrusion, the kind so frequently denounced in the Old Testament. Look at [Isaiah 44:9-17](#) for the reminders of God's view of any idol which a person makes an image with his own hands and then "falls down before it and worships; he also prays to it and says, 'Deliver me, for thou art my god'" ([Isaiah 44:17](#)).

As believers beware of even statues or other images of Christ; they are not to be revered or worshiped. Only Christ is to be worshiper, not likenesses of Him. They do not represent Jesus Christ, no matter what our claims and intentions are. "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" ([John 4:24](#)). Even non-liturgical Christians should be on guard, whether in public worship or private devotions, about associating any place, picture, or pattern of worship too closely with God. It is easy for such a thing to come between us and Him, though we may think it helps draw us closer.

Godly believers should have nothing to do with image worship.

Watch out for ANGELS: **Worshiping angels** is a place for demon snares or contact.

Paul warns, "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels" ([Col. 2:18](#)). When, overcome with awe, John fell at the feet of the angel who was speaking to him, the angel said, "Do not do that: I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God" ([Rev. 19:10](#)). Angels are created beings and, whether holy or fallen, are not to be venerated or worshiped.

Godly believers should have nothing to do with angel worship.

Watch out for DEMONS: **Worshiping demons** is a place for demon snares or contact.

Satan is always closely associated with the worship of images, behind which are often demons. In Satanic cults demons are worshiped directly. Speaking of the Tribulation, John foretells that "The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as not to worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood" ([Rev. 9:20](#)). Though we may not see this much around us, the world is fast chasing after powers and spirits and contact that is deadly beyond their wildest imaginations. Like militant Islamic terrorist sleeper cells, the demons wait until this call to unleash their destruction—and then as John records, all Hell will be loose.

Godly believers should have nothing to do with demon worship.

Watch out for DEAD PEOPLE: **Worshiping dead people** is a place for demon snares or contact.

Referring to a place for demon intrusion that Israel learned from Moab, the psalmist wrote, "They joined themselves also to Baal-peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead. Thus they provoked Him to anger with their deeds; and the plague broke out among them" ([Ps. 106:28-29](#)).

We do not worship human beings, whether they are alive or dead, saintly or otherwise. Even the great heroes of Scripture—such as Abraham, Moses, David, the prophets, Mary, or the apostles—are never to be worshiped. That is a place for demon intrusion.

Godly believers should have nothing to do with worship of dead people.

Watch out for SELFISHNESS: **Supreme loyalty to anything other than God** is a place for demon snares or contact.

Every person is tempted with ambitions, desires, possessions, recognition, and a host of other such things that easily can become idols. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also," Jesus said ([Matt. 6:21](#)). The greatest heart treasure, or heart idol, is self. Cultivating a self-centered, self-seeking life leads believers away from God, away from His protection and into a growing exposure to the self-seeking god of this world and all his self-seeking hosts.

Godly believers should regularly repent of all selfishness in their hearts and lives.

Watch out for GREED: **Covetousness** is a place for demon snares or contact.

Those who covet or are greedy worship at the shrine of materialism, one of the most popular and powerful idols of our day. But Paul says, "For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God" ([Eph. 5:5](#); cf. [Col. 3:5](#)).

Remember the coveting of praise as well as greed for money were the twin sins that lead to such severe judgment by God in [Acts 5:3](#).

But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?" (NKJV)

Godly believers should regularly repent of all covetousness in their hearts and lives.

Watch out for LUST: ***Inordinate desire, or lust***, is a place for demon snares or contact.

Paul speaks of "enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things" (Phil. 3: 18–19).

The person whose mind, desires, longings, and appetites are set on fleshly things is an idolater. The feeding of one's mind on the lewd information and photographs so widely and easily available gives a ground of entrance for the demons who promote and feed on sensuality.

Godly believers should regularly repent of all lust in their hearts and lives.

Watch out for AMUSEMENTS: ***Intentionally exposing your mind to satanic ideas and stories*** must be constantly avoided as a place of demonic snares or contact.

Some examples are:

1. Movies that follow the theme of Satan and his demons.
2. Science fiction that portrays superhuman powers available from cosmic sources leave unguarded minds open to endless fantasies about what if this may be true, and thus a conflict with the authority of God's Word.
3. Television programs dealing with the occult directly or indirectly.
4. Music that popularizes demonic activities, through satanic words and occultic mantras.
5. Plays promoting contact with demons.
6. Games which encourage contact with demons and their related activities should be avoided and burned! (This is the scriptural method of dealing with all such things that offend God, grieve His Spirit, and defile and ensnare us as believers.)
7. Actual Occult Practices (these are things which bring with them demonic contact): black magic, astrology, fetishes and talismans, fortune-telling, **séance** meetings, witchcraft, palmistry, spiritism, ESP (extra-sensory perception), pictures of witches and occult propaganda, voodoo dolls, candles with occult significance, incense, excessive superstition, religious practices that highlight the emotional, cults, Satan worship, tarot cards, Ouija boards, crystal balls, black cubes and related occult practices.

Godly believers should regularly repent of all evil amusements, exposures in their hearts and lives.

To apply all this let's go back to where we started. When Paul taught the Ephesian believers about the strategies of Satan in Acts 19:19-20, they collected and burned all of the objects associated with demonic and satanic contact.

The heart of the message Paul taught them is in Ephesians 4:22-24. Christ's Lordship must fill our lives displacing any places in our lives to the Devil. Three clear choices we must make!

*Ephesians 4:22-24 that you **put off**, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, 23 and **be renewed** in the spirit of your mind, 24 and that you **put on** the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.*

First, note that Paul describes the actions of v. 22-24 after the Ephesians had already put off the old self (their pre-salvation life described in vv. 17–19) which happened at the start of their salvation, when they became new creatures in Christ (I Corinthians 5:17). Paul is asking them to start a life-style of shedding the old life repeatedly. Old habits like old clothes are so comfortable and fit us so well, that we often forget that we even have them on again—until the Spirit of God convicts us. Paul is reminding us that those who will live a life holy to the Lord must repeatedly put off the old ways. If we struggle with anger, anger must be shed daily; and if we struggle with pride, pride must daily be shed. This is also the choice we must make for lust, greed, fear and any other byproducts of our flesh. Often believers fail to grow in their spiritual lives because they don't understand the life-long need to shed or "put off" our old sins on a daily basis.

Next, in v. 23 Paul points to our minds and says those must change also. Choices to put off old ways flow from our renewed minds. Just as Romans 12:2 says we are "transformed by the renewing of our minds". When we think godly, we behave godly; or when we believe right, we behave right. *"This is done by reading and studying God's Word, and by asking the Holy Spirit to continue his renewing work. The Word gives us God's very thoughts, and prayerful meditation upon it will infuse his mind into ours in constant renewal. This is why every Christian should be regularly — daily — reading God's Word. This is also why it is valuable to read the Bible through once a year. It is imperative that we read the Word expectantly, praying for God to speak to us by his Holy Spirit.*

Finally, there is the putting on: "... and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (v. 24). The fact is, we have this new self if we are Christians. We received the old man at birth, and we were given the new man in our

heavenly birth. The new man is not our work — it is God's creation and gift. Our task is not to weave it, but to wear it. Paul is commanding a daily appropriation of that which we already possess.

Here we must keep in mind that we do not put on the new man merely by putting off the old. We need to put on love, to put on peace, to put on joy, to put on patience, etc. (cf. [Galatians 5:22](#)). For example, I may have lost my temper with my children, and I have repented and put it off. But I have not completed my responsibility unless I have also put on love and patience.

All of this is through God's grace. Works have no place in obtaining salvation or in gaining merit in the Christian life.

The Christian life is *sola gratia*, grace alone.

Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul said, "continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose" ([Philippians 2:12b, 13](#)).

God is at work in his people. But as children of grace we must work at our Christian lives.

We have our part to do in dressing ourselves with the divine wardrobe, for here clothes do make the man — and the woman!

- We must daily set aside the rotting garments of the old man.
- We must formally reject sensuality and selfish pride and materialism and bitterness.
- We must read the Word and ask God to renew our minds through the Spirit.
- We must work out our salvation by doing those things that will develop a Biblical mind.
- We must put on our new, shining garments of light. We must put on what we are!" [3]

[1] <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/germs/ID00002>

[2] <http://www.u-s-history.com/pages/h1661.html>

[3] Hughes, R. Kent, *Preaching the Word: Ephesians—The Mystery of the Body of Christ*, (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books) 1997.

[Send this page to a friend](#)

Site hosting by FamilyNet | Site development by Brent Riggs

[Home](#) | [About Us](#) | [We Believe](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Tulsa Bible Church](#) | [Grace To You](#)
© 2007 - Discover the Book Ministries. All Rights Reserved.

Comments, suggestions, concerns about this page?
[Contact the Web Manager](#)