



What is the Church? Part 3

“Restoring Spiritual Order to the City, the Church, & the Family”

UCC Pastor Ron Burks 5/7/17

Summary: The church is not a place, it is a group of people who make up the body of Christ. Christ gave us the keys to the kingdom of heaven which represents His authority. Our authority is threefold: (1) to use the power that comes from the Holy Spirit (Luke 10:19, Acts 1:8) over our enemy Satan by seeking spiritual wisdom (James 3:3-18), by bearing spiritual fruit (Gal 5:22-25), and by putting on spiritual armor (Eph 6:10-20); (2) to fulfill our purpose to walk in unity as we seek first the kingdom of God (Matt 6:33) make disciples (Matt 28:18-20), be witnesses (Acts 1:8), and glorify God with our lives by obeying Him and bearing fruit (Jn 15:16, 17:1-4); and (3) to live out our faith by obeying Christ's two great commandments to love God with our whole being and love our neighbors as ourselves (Mark 12:30-31).

Keys to the Kingdom: (1) Walk in the power of the Holy Spirit by seeking Spiritual wisdom (Gal 5:16, 25, James 3:13-18), by bearing fruit (Jn 15:16, Gal 5:22-25), and by putting on spiritual armor to battle Satan (Eph 6:10-20). (2) Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt 6:33). (3) Be witnesses for Christ (Acts 1:8). (4) Make disciples of Christ (Matt 28:18-20). (5) Glorify God by obeying Him with your life and your witness (John 17:1-4, 22-23). (6) Maintain unity in the body of Christ as a witness to the world that Christ loves them (John 17:22-23), and (7) Live out your faith by loving God with your whole being and loving your neighbors as yourself (Mark 12:30-31).

Christ followers need to understand that we are engaged in a spiritual battle with Satan for the souls of mankind (1 Jn 4:1-6, Eph 6:12). Satan has blinded the minds of unbelievers so they cannot see the light of the gospel (2 Cor 4:4).

Our job as Christ followers is to restore spiritual order to the city, the church, and the family. In order to accomplish this task, we must ENGAGE IN SPIRITUAL WARFARE WITH SATAN. Therefore, we must understand Satan's domain, his strategy, and how we can overcome him. Then, we will look at God's order for the city, the church, and the family.

Satan's Domain or Realm where He Operates and the Methodology He Uses to Kill, Steal, and Destroy the World (Jn 10:10):

1. Satan has a dwelling place (temple or synagogue – place of worship) just as Jesus has a dwelling place and that dwelling place is in the hearts of men and women
 - “Do you not know that your body is a temple (dwelling place) of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your

own, for you were bought at a price. So glorify God in your body” (1 Cor 6:19-20)

- Because, I will cause those of the synagogue of Satan, who say that they are Jews and are not, but lie—I will make them come and bow down at your feet, and make them know that I have loved you. (Rev 3:9). Satan wants to capture the hearts of people to turn them away from the truth so they will follow his will (2 Tim 2:22-26).
2. Satan has a seat (designating his authority) in the physical realm and works in the physical world behind the scenes (Rev 2:13). I want you to understand these truths about Satan’s authority:
- Satan’s authority and power is limited by the absolute universal and infinite authority of God (1 Jn 4:4, “Greater is he (Christ) that is in you, than he (Satan) that is in the world.) Scripture designates Christ as king (1 Tim 6:14-15, John 12:14-15, Phil 2:9-10) while Satan is called prince (Eph 2:2) and ruler of this world (John 14:30, 16:11)
 - Satan uses his authority for two purposes – (1) keeping unbelievers from the gospel so they will not turn to Jesus Christ, repent, and become a Christ follower (2 Cor 4:4 - “And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world (Satan) has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (2) keep Christ followers from being used of God just as Satan tried to destroy Peter when he denied Christ three times (Lk 22:31 – “Simon, Simon, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”)
3. The deep things of Satan (his method of corrupting the church and the world) are false teachings taught by false prophets (Rev 2:24)

Satan’s Strategy (Four common traits the churches of Asia Minor had in common): (Revelation, Stephen Witmer & J. I. Packer, p. 7)

1. Persecution from without
2. False teaching from within
3. Temptation to compromise with surrounding pagan culture
4. Spiritual lethargy

How to Overcome Satan:

1. Practice the spiritual disciplines that include prayer, Bible study, faith, abiding in Christ, and bearing fruit as you grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ (John 15:1-4, 16)
2. Seek first the kingdom by demonstrating God’s love to the world, sharing the Gospel with the world, and making disciples (Matt 6:33, Mk 12:30-31)
3. Put on the full armor of God with prayer (Eph 6:10-20)