

Staying in the Word in 2026 – Preparing the Saints for ministry...

But you, Daniel, roll up and seal the words of the scroll until the time of the end. Many will go here and there to increase knowledge. Daniel 12:4 NKJV

One of the major problems some churches face is that they see themselves as churches for unbelievers

The church is not just for unbelievers

According to Paul, in Ephesians 4:11-12 it says, And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ - Equip the saints to do ministry

Matthew 28:19 NKJV - Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

Jesus did not say "make believers"; he did say "make disciples." The problem with the seeker model Church is that it tries to orient its worship services to unbelievers

Is it any wonder that we don't make disciples that way and that the people in the chairs start looking more like the culture than Christians?

Here is what's going to happen if we orient our worship services to unbelievers all the time

You're never going to talk about the hard issues. You're never going to talk about transgenderism, homosexuality, abortion, all these things that are tearing lives apart

Why? Because you might offend somebody

Do you realize that Jesus never compromised his message to attract the seekers? Neither did Paul, nor did Peter

In John 6, Jesus gives his bread of life sermon starting in verse 22, and then they say, "This is our teaching; who can accept it?"

In verse 41 many of his disciples stop following him then. He didn't change his message. He didn't say, "Oh don't leave. If you don't like that, I have other convictions."

If we're not trying to make disciples what are we doing? What's the point?

If we're not making disciples, we're missing the mission

Jesus didn't say, "Go and be busy," or "Go and be comfortable." He said, **Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations Matthew 28:19 NKJV.**

Anything less might look religious, but it's completely off-target

So, what's the point? **To know Christ more and help others know Him more.**

If that's not happening, we're just rearranging church furniture while the world burns

**Revelation chapters 1-8 review**

Revelation opens with Jesus Christ revealed as the risen, reigning Lord who walks among His churches and calls them to faithfulness

The churches are examined, the throne of heaven is unveiled, and God is shown to be sovereign over all history

The Lamb alone is worthy to open the scroll, releasing judgments that unfold not as chaos, but as purposeful calls to repentance

God seals His people, hears their prayers, and assures them that even as judgment increases

He remains in control, merciful, and just, preparing the way for what is yet to come

Built within the seventh seal are seven trumpet judgments...

**When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. Revelation 8:1 NKJV**

**6 So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. 7 The first angel sounded:** And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth...

**8 Then the second angel sounded:** And something like a great mountain burning with fire was thrown into the sea, and a third of the sea became blood.

**10 Then the third angel sounded:** And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water.

**12 Then the fourth angel sounded:** And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened.

**13 And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels who are about to sound!"**

The last three trumpets bring such terrible things to the earth that they are called the three **"woes"**

Then the fifth angel sounded: And I saw a star fallen from heaven to the earth. To him was given the key to the bottomless pit Revelation 9:1 NKJV

John sees a “**star**” that has fallen from heaven to earth. This is not astronomy; it’s theology

Scripture consistently uses this imagery for **a fallen spiritual being**, which is real, personal, and always opposed to God

But here’s the detail that matters most: The “**star**” *was given* the “**key**”

Here we see a star that is acting like a person, it’s given a key and it does something with the key

We believe this “**star**” is satan, also known as Lucifer, also called at the end of the paragraph the “**Destroyer**”

“**Fallen**” – pipto – to descend from a higher place to a lower

It’s a perfect tense – it had fallen in the past and continues in a “**fallen**” state

This gives us a clue as to the identify of this “**fallen star**”

**Verse one** is not satan’s original fall but something that will happen in the future

Some people are mistaken in thinking that satan no longer has access to heaven because they think he lives in hell. That’s incorrect...

satan used to be one of the worship leaders in heaven **Ezekiel 28:14-15**

he rebelled against God and became an enemy of God

**Isaiah describes Satan’s “fall”**

12 “How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: ‘I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north; 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.’ 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, To the lowest depths of the Pit. Isaiah 14:12–15 NKJV

The Bible explicitly shows satan having access to God’s throne room, though always by permission, never by authority

There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and satan also came among them Job 1:6 NKJV

Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and satan came also among them to present himself before the Lord. Job 2:1 NKJV

What does this tell us?

- satan appears in **God's presence**
- He must **present himself**
- He can do **nothing without God's permission**
- God sets **clear limits** on what satan may do

This is not satan storming heaven; it's satan **summoned and restrained**

**satan accuses before God**

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and satan standing at his right hand to oppose him Zechariah 3:1 NKJV

And the Lord said to satan, "The Lord rebuke you, satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you!" Zechariah 3:2 NKJV

What does this mean for us?

- satan functions as an **accuser, then God immediately rebukes him**
- satan's accusations do not overrule God's grace

Accusing is satan's role, **but it is not his power**

satan will be cast out of Heaven in **Revelation 12:7-10 NKJV**

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. Revelation 12:7-10 NKJV

**satan's final fall**

The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever Revelation 20:10 NKJV

God gave satan a “key” to allow demons in the “bottomless pit” to come out and torment the earth

The “bottomless pit” is a residence of demons, which is a place of permanent confinement for fallen angels or demons Revelation 9:11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3 “Tartarus

2 Peter 2:4 says, For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment

English versions translate *Tartarus* as “hell” or “lowest hell.” The word *Tartarus* can be defined as “the deepest abyss of Hades”

Evil is real, but **never in control**...Evil does not **seize authority**, evil does not **operate independently**, evil does **not outrun God**

**It is given permission and nothing more**

**Practically speaking**, because God holds the keys, every hard, confusing, or painful moment in your life exists under His authority, not outside it. He is sovereign, even when things feel anything but stable

he Bible also teaches something far more important

satan **never speaks first**—**God does**, satan never sets terms—**God does**, satan never wins the case—**God does**

Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Romans 8:33 NKJV

Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Romans 8:34 NKJV

**And after the Cross, we’ve been set free!**

In other words: The accuser may speak—but **the Judge has already ruled**