
Defeating Rulers of Darkness (Lead Us Not)

The Spiritual Connection

Pastor Wil Nichols

September 18, 2022

Victorious Praise Fellowship Church of God in Christ

2116 Page Rd. Durham NC 27703

WEBSITE: www.VictoriousPraise.org

EMAIL: PastorWil@VictoriousPraise.org, Info@VictoriousPraise.org

PHONE: (919) 957-7500

Sermon: The Spiritual Connection: Defeating Rulers of Darkness (Lead Us Not)

Lesson Text

1 John 2:15–17 (KJV)¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Matthew 7:13–14 (KJV)¹³ Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Matthew 6:13 (KJV)¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Introduction

Theme Passage: Ephesians 6: ¹²For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.

Four Levels of Unclean Spirits, which produce four levels of Drama or attacks on relationships

- Principalities are Territorial Unclean Spirits
- Powers are Personal Attack Unclean Spirits
- Rulers of Darkness are Unclean Spirits of Temptations
- Spiritual Wickedness are Religious Unclean Spirits

So far, we've learned to stand our ground against territorial unclean spirits. Then we learned to use our power to overcome and defeat the powers that attack us personally.

Today we will look at the Rulers of the Darkness of this World.

One of the things most people struggle with in life is knowing their purpose, their destiny, their journey. How does one know if they are taking the right path? Is this the right career? Is this the place I'm supposed to live? Is this the right person to marry? Am I at the right church, right job, with the right friends?

Jeremiah 1: ⁵Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

The Rulers of the Darkness of this World are unclean spirits of temptations that tempt us away from the path that God has destined for us.

They tempt our flesh with worldly desires; they tempt our eyes with the earthly riches; and they tempt our pride with human vanity.

There is a purpose for our lives, there is a way and path that we are to take, but it's up to us to find that path and not be led astray from it once we find it.

This is what Jesus instructed us to pray at the end of our daily prayers: “**And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:**”

Series and Sermon: The Spiritual Connection: Defeating Rulers of Darkness (Lead Us Not)

“Defining Rulers of Darkness, Overcoming Rulers of Darkness, Defeating Rulers of Darkness”

I. Defining Rulers of Darkness

1 John 2: ¹⁶ For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

The rulers of the darkness of this world are the unclean spirits that prey on our weaknesses to lead us astray. Those weaknesses would be the sins that our flesh craves after: the lusts of our flesh, the lusts of our eyes, and the pride of ourselves..

They constantly tempt us to get off the path that God has destined for us.

Some unclean spirits use the lusts of the flesh to lead us down the Path of Regret

- Galatians 5: ¹⁷For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.
- Driven by our emotions, we make emotional decisions that we later regret.

Some unclean spirits use the lusts of the eyes to lead us down the Path of Fear

- 2 Timothy 1: ⁷For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.
- When we walk by our sight and not by our faith, we succumb to our fears.

Some unclean spirits use the pride of life to lead us down the Path of Destruction

- Proverbs 16: ¹⁸Pride *goeth* before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.
- Because God resists the proud, we are ultimately led away from life in the path of destruction.

James 1: ¹⁴ But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵ Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

The key to dealing with Rulers of Darkness is Love and Obedience

1 John 2: ¹⁵ Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

1 John 2: ¹⁷ And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

We must love God more than we love the things of this world, and we must obey the word of God to learn his ways.

II. Overcoming Rulers of Darkness

Matthew 7: ¹³ Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴ Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Overcoming the Rulers of Darkness is about taking the right gate. At the beginning of every path is a gate, an opening, an entrance that is the way to the path.

It doesn't matter how far you go if you're on the wrong highway.

Our lesson text reveals why so many people end up on the wrong path, the rulers of darkness have them taking the wrong gate.

Matthew 7: ¹³ ... for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

These spirits tempt us to follow the crowd. If everyone else is doing it, then it must be right.

Our flesh says it's right because it feels right; Our eyes say it's right because it looks right; Our pride says it's right, because we must be right.

Proverbs 16: ²⁵ There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death.

Matthew 7: ¹⁴ Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

This gate is not wide, but narrow; it isn't easy to find; it's hard to find.

You can't feel your way, you have to know the way. You can see your way, you must believe in the way.

John 14: ⁴ And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. ⁵ Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? ⁶ Jesus saith unto him, **I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.**

Hebrews 12:¹ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ² Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

III. Defeating Rulers of Darkness

Matthew 6: ¹³ **And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

Defeating Rulers of Darkness (Lead Us Not)

Page 4 of 5 (September 18, 2022)

First, we must realize that the rulers of darkness want to distract us from our divine path

Next, we must overcome the rulers of darkness by finding the right gate to our path

Finally, we must defeat the rulers of darkness by allowing God to direct our path.

Psalm 37: ²³ The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.

So how do we get our steps ordered? Ask & Trust God!

Psalm 119: ¹³³ Order my steps in thy word: and let not any iniquity have dominion over me.

Proverbs 3: ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

⁶ In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Pray to God for direction every day.

Matthew 6: ⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. ¹⁰ Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: Defeating Rulers of Darkness (Lead Us Not))

Lesson Text

- 1 John 2:15–17, Matthew 7:13–14, Matthew 6:13

Sermon Outline (Notes)

- I. Defining Rulers of Darkness*
- II. Overcoming Rulers of Darkness*
- III. Defeating Rulers of Darkness*

Questions (What was your main takeaway from Sunday’s Sermon?)

I. Getting to Know “Me”

1. Name three things that you enjoy doing as recreation.
2. What line from a song, movie or television show fits your personality?

II. Into the Bible

1. According to 1 John 2:15, we are commanded not to love the world or the things of the world. Define the term “world” which John uses in this verse. What are some examples of characters or situations in the Bible where the love of the world was demonstrated more than following the ways of the Father? What can we learn from their examples?
2. Our scripture text, Matthew 6:13, and 1 Corinthians 10:13 are in agreement with an “exodus” or deliverance from evil. Can we always expect God to remove trials from our lives? Explain your answer with scripture references.

III. Life Application

1. We know that God does not lead us into temptation. Share one strategy that you use to stay on the right path when you feel tempted to stray away from God.
2. **Self-reflection:** The Bible tells us to not be ignorant of Satan's devices and sometimes it seems that Satan is more aware of what distracts us than we are. Are you aware of how Satan distracts you? In your journal, write down the times you’ve been distracted to see if there is a common theme; that way, you can be equipped and ready when Satan comes to distract you again... because he will come!