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# Defeating Spiritual Wickedness (Help Is On The Way)

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## The Spiritual Connection

Pastor Wil Nichols

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***Sermon: The Spiritual Connection: Defeating Spiritual Wickedness (Help Is On The Way)***

***Lesson Text***

2 Timothy 3:1-7 (KJV) <sup>1</sup>This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. <sup>2</sup>For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup>Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, <sup>4</sup>Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; <sup>5</sup>Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.

Daniel 10:2 (KJV) <sup>2</sup>In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.

Daniel 10:12-14 (KJV) <sup>12</sup>Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. <sup>13</sup>But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia. <sup>14</sup>Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision *is* for *many* days.

***Introduction***

Theme Passage: Ephesians 6: <sup>12</sup>For 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*.

- *Principalities* are the demons who have the oversight of territories and nations. They would correspond to the rank of generals. – We stand our ground to defeat them.
- *Powers* are the privates who are the demons wanting to possess and attack human beings. – We use our power to defeat them.
- The *Rulers of the Darkness of this World* are those demons who are in charge of Satan's worldly business, attacking with the temptations of this world. – We defeat them by allowing God to order our steps and direct our path.
- *Spiritual Wickedness in High Places* are the demons in the heavenlies who have charge of religion.

Let's now conclude this series with the unclean spirits assigned to religion and churches.

Satan is organized, spiritual, and at work in the background creating havoc; he works through these unclean spirits to create heartbreak, suffering, and the tragedies of the world today.

This last category of unclean spirits are perhaps the most wicked because they attack us at the place where we come for help, our church and religions.

What do you do when your place of help becomes your source of pain? It's like going to the hospital only to be hurt by the doctors, nurses, and medication.

When people come to church, they come for answers, direction, help, and healing.

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But because of Spiritual Wickedness in High Places, too many of our churches and religious leaders have become a source of pain rather than a source of healing.

As a result, many people just quit and give up on the church. But today we must stand firm and trust that God is still God, our prayers still work, and help is on the way.

### ***Series and Sermon: The Spiritual Connection: Defeating Spiritual Wickedness (Help Is On The Way)***

“Defining Spiritual Wickedness, Overcoming Spiritual Wickedness, Defeating Spiritual Wickedness”

#### ***I. Defining Spiritual Wickedness***

2 Timothy 3: <sup>1</sup>This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. <sup>2</sup>For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, <sup>3</sup>Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, <sup>4</sup>Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; <sup>5</sup>Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof:

Spiritual Wickedness in High Places are the unclean spirits who have charge over religion. They operate in the realm of religion, church, and spirituality to create havoc in the very place where people come to receive help.

They are particularly influential and dominant where sin is prominent. Churches that have a form of godliness but deny the power of God are particularly vulnerable.

As a result, those in the church become a source of pain to those coming to church; we experience church hurt, spiritual abuse, and spiritual setbacks and delays.

Church hurt and spiritual abuse is perhaps one of the most reprehensible forms of attack on an individual because in many cases, it's kicking a person while they are down, hurting a person who is already hurt.

2 Corinthians 2: <sup>11</sup> Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

1 Peter 5: <sup>8</sup> Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

But just because we were hurt in the church, abused by church leaders, and have experienced setbacks and delay doesn't mean that God has not heard our cry.

#### ***II. Overcoming Spiritual Wickedness (Delays & Setbacks)***

Daniel 10: <sup>2</sup> In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.

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We all have been or are still at that place that Daniel found himself in our lesson text. Waiting for an answer, a blessing, a breakthrough, or simply just a word that seems like it will never get here.

We pray but hear nothing; we give but receive nothing; we praise but have nothing; we believe but see nothing; we lose but find nothing.

The delays are bad enough; a promotion that should have come three years ago is still not here. You've been trying for 5 years to get a house and are still paying rent.

But then there are the setbacks; you already don't have enough money to make ends meet and then you get laid off.

Psalms 73: <sup>1</sup>Truly God *is* good to Israel, *even* to such as are of a clean heart. <sup>2</sup>But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. <sup>3</sup>For I was envious at the foolish, *when* I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

We must understand why the enemy uses delays or setbacks: to get us to give up on our blessings and deny the source of our blessings!

For three weeks Daniel cried, "Lord where are you?"; "Why haven't I heard from you?"; "Why haven't I even been given a sign?"

The setbacks can cause us to give up hope. This becomes a problem when we have no substance for our faith.

Hebrews 11: <sup>1</sup>Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Spiritual wickedness in high places destroys our hope; we stop working; and our faith becomes useless.

James 2: <sup>20</sup> But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

Hebrews 11: <sup>6</sup>But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

We have to overcome the delays and setbacks by realizing that a **delay is not a denial**, and that a **setback is just a setup**!

The Delay is not a Denial:

- Galatians 6: <sup>9</sup>And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.
- Isaiah 40: <sup>31</sup> But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

The Setback is A Setup:

- Genesis 50: <sup>20</sup> But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

- Romans 8: <sup>18</sup>For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

### ***III. Defeating Spiritual Wickedness (Spiritual Hurt & Abuse)***

Daniel 10: <sup>12</sup>Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

Now church hurt is really no different than any other form of hurt we experience; it just becomes exacerbated, made worse or intensified because of where it happened.

In reality hurt is hurt; betrayal is betrayal; disappointment is disappointment.

People have been hurting and disappointing us all of our lives; but when it comes from those we put our trust in, those we thought would help us, it becomes even more hurtful.

“She was my sister in the Lord;” “He’s supposed to be a minister;” “How could they do that, I go to church with them”.

And so we experience Spiritual Hurt and Abuse!

What do you do when the place you went to for help turns out to give you hurt instead? What do you do when those you trusted in take and abuse that trust?

You have to believe that Help is on the Way!

Psalms 46: <sup>1</sup>God *is* our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. <sup>2</sup>Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; <sup>3</sup>*Though* the waters thereof roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. Selah.

Psalms 37: <sup>3</sup>Trust in the LORD, and do good; *so* shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. <sup>4</sup>Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Psalms 37: <sup>5</sup>Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring *it* to pass.

<sup>6</sup>And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.

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## Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: Defeating Spiritual Wickedness (Help Is On The Way))

### Lesson Text

- 2 Timothy 3:1-7, Daniel 10:2, Daniel 10:12-14

### Sermon Outline (Notes)

- I. *Defining Spiritual Wickedness*
- II. *Overcoming Spiritual Wickedness*
- III. *Defeating Spiritual Wickedness*

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

#### I. Getting to Know "Me"

1. What do you hope to get out of participating in your Growth Group this semester?
2. Discuss a fall tradition with your group: a) Football b) Changing Leaves c) Pumpkin Spice d) Other

#### II. Into the Bible

1. According to John 12:31, 14:3 and 16:11, the Bible refers to Satan as the prince of this world. i) What does this reference to Satan mean? ii) What authority does Satan have? iii) Is God in charge or is Satan in charge? (Provide scriptural references.)
2. Daniel in our scriptural text, Daniel 10:2, 9-12, persisted in prayer for 21 days before he received help. If he had given up on prayer on Day 20 he would not have gotten an answer. What can we learn about the importance of persistent prayers? Give examples of any Bible characters who were persistent in prayer and the outcome of their actions. (Provide scriptural references.)

#### III. Life Application

1. Should we as believers expect setbacks and delays in life? Is there anything a believer can do to brace themselves for delays or setbacks?
2. Have you ever experienced a setback or a delay? How did you manage to get through it? What will you do differently the next time you encounter a delay or setback?