

# CHAPTER THREE

## THE CHALLENGING COUNTERFEIT

### OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verses from memory.
- Identify Satan as the challenging counterfeit of the true power of God.
- Explain what is meant by "spiritual wickedness in high places."
- Summarize how Satan imitates God's power through spiritual wickedness in high places.

### KEY VERSES:

**And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.**

**Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness: whose end shall be according to their works.  
(II Corinthians 11:14-15)**

### INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter you learned that God is the source of power and of the ways He reveals His power on earth. But God's great power does not go unchallenged. There is a power struggle going on in the world today. It is not a war of flesh and blood. It is the struggle of a very challenging counterfeit rebelling against God.

### THE CHALLENGING COUNTERFEIT

Satan constantly is challenging God's power in the universe. He is the challenging counterfeit because he actually poses no threat to God. Satan was originally created by God as a beautiful angel named Lucifer. Read about his original state and position in Ezekiel 28:12-17. But Satan rebelled against the power and authority of God. He wanted to be as God Himself. You can read the story of his rebellion in Ezekiel 28:17 and Isaiah 14:12-15. God could have struck Satan down and killed him for such rebellion. But if He had brought down the first enemy in this way, there would have been the possibility of another rebellion and the history of Heaven would have been clouded with similar disasters.

Instead, God cast Satan out of Heaven and allowed his claims to power to have complete trial on earth. God also cast out other angels who participated in Satan's rebellions. They are now evil angels known as "demons" or "devils" at work in the world today.

Shortly after God created the first man and woman, the battle began on earth. You can read of the first challenge in Genesis chapter 3. The fall of Adam and Eve into sin was rooted in rebellion against the authority and power of God. Adam and Eve sought knowledge equal to that of God. With such knowledge would come power.

From this time on, Satan has challenged the authority of God on earth. Through sin, Satan seeks to draw men and women to allegiance to himself instead of God. The Harvestime Institute course, "*Spiritual Strategies: A Manual Of Spiritual Warfare*," deals with the subject of Satan in detail. If you are taking the Institute courses in their suggested order, you have already studied this course. If not, we suggest you obtain it to assist in understanding this enemy and specific spiritual strategies to overcome his power.

One of the chief methods of Satan in challenging God's power is to counterfeit it. A counterfeit is an imitation of something and is designed to deceive. For example, counterfeit money is made to look like real money. Criminals pass it off to others as real money to deceive them.

Satan counterfeits the power of God. He imitates God's power to deceive people. He uses his angels (demons) to help him accomplish this goal. Satan and his demons sometimes appear as good instead of evil. We are warned:

**And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.**

**Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness: whose end shall be according to their works. (II Corinthians 11:14-15)**

In the final days of time on earth, this imitation of God's power by Satan will increase. Through signs and wonders, he will deceive many:

**Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders.**

**And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish: because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.**

**And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie. (II Thessalonians 2:9-11)**

This Scripture reveals how Satan works. He counterfeits the power of God with "all power and signs and lying wonders." The only way you can detect his deception is by the truth of the Word of God.

## PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS

**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. (Ephesians 6:12)**

Man is caught in this conflict of Satan rebelling against the power of God. We are engaged in a power struggle with the invisible powers of Satan. But the power of God is greater than "thrones, dominions, principalities and powers" (Colossians 1:16) and greater than all "principalities and powers in high places" (Ephesians 6:12). But you need to be alert to the deceptive power of Satan which counterfeits the power of God. You must be aware of . . .

### SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS IN HIGH PLACES

When Paul speaks of "spiritual wickedness in high places," he is referring to wicked spirits who have infiltrated the religious systems of the world. Satan has organized his evil forces to imitate the organization of the true Church of God. In some cases he actually has congregations known as "The Church of Satan" or "Spiritualists." He has set up a form of worship in the spiritual "high places" of organized religion.

Satan has also established his system right in the true Church through evil people who have "crept in unawares" (Jude 4). Satan has right in the Church who demonstrate power, but it is not God's power. The structure Satan has established in the high places of religion is based on imitation and deception.

### SATAN HAS HIS OWN TRINITY:

God is a trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The trinity of Satan includes Satan himself, the beast, and a false prophet.

### SATAN HAS HIS OWN CHURCH:

God established the true Church which is known as the "Body of Christ" of which Jesus is the head:

**Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in particular.  
(I Corinthians 12:27)**

Satan has his own church which is called "a synagogue of Satan":

**. . . I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. (Revelation 2:9)**

The name "synagogue of Satan" is not always openly used, but his synagogue is established any place the true Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is not preached.

### **SATAN HAS A DOCTRINE:**

God has a doctrine which is revealed in His holy Word, the Bible:

**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine...  
(II Timothy 3:16)**

The doctrine of Satan is called the "doctrine of devils":

**Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.  
(I Timothy 4:1)**

The doctrine of devils is any teaching presented as truth which does not agree with the written Word of God.

### **SATAN HAS A SYSTEM OF SACRIFICE:**

In Romans 12:1, we are told to present ourselves to God as a living sacrifice. This means we are to surrender in total allegiance to God. Satan demands sacrifices also:

**But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.  
(I Corinthians 10:20)**

Satan demands total allegiance of body, soul, and spirit. There are actually services of sacrifice conducted where men and women dedicate themselves to the service of Satan. The blood sacrifice of humans and animals is also practiced.

### **SATAN HAS HIS OWN COMMUNION:**

The sharing of the communion bread and wine was started by Jesus as a way of remembering His sacrifice for the sins of all mankind on the cross (I Corinthians 11:23-34). Satan counterfeits this with his own communion service:

**Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.  
(I Corinthians 10:21)**

## **SATAN HAS MINISTERS:**

God calls some believers to serve as pastors and minister to His Church by proclaiming the Gospel (I Corinthians 12:28). Satan also has ministers:

**And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.**

**Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.  
(II Corinthians 11:14-15)**

Satan's ministers proclaim his "gospel" which is contrary to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ:

**Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ.**

**But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.  
(Galatians 1:7-8)**

Just because a message is delivered with a powerful style of presentation does not mean it is a message of the true Gospel.

## **SATAN HAS A THRONE:**

God has a throne in Heaven. Satan also has a throne, although we are not told its exact location:

**And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon (Satan) gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. (Revelation 13:2)**

## **SATAN HAS WORSHIPERS:**

There are many who worship the true God. Satan also has worshipers:

**... and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast?  
(Revelation 13:4)**

Some worshipers of Satan pretend to be followers of Jesus:

**The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;**

**The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. (Matthew 13:38-39)**

Satan mixes the bad "seed" in with the good "seed" (true believers).

#### **SATAN HAS PROPHETS:**

God has set prophets in the church, men who are especially anointed to bring a direct message from Him to the church (I Corinthians 12:28). Satan also has false prophets:

**And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.  
(Matthew 24:11)**

#### **SATAN HAS TEACHERS:**

God has anointed some people as teachers to explain His Word to others (I Corinthians 12:28). But all teachers are not from God. Satan has false teachers who spread his evil doctrine:

**But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.**

**And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.**

**And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you . . . (II Peter 2:1-3)**

Satan's teachers bring in "damnable heresies," teachings which are false and cause division. They speak lies and are experts at mixing truth and error in a way that makes error acceptable.

#### **SATAN HAS APOSTLES:**

An apostle is a person who spreads the Gospel and establishes churches (I Corinthians 12:28). Satan also has apostles doing his work throughout the world. They deceive people by imitating the true apostles:

**For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. (II Corinthians 11:13)**

Satan's apostles become leaders of false cults and infiltrate churches and even become leaders in the churches.

## **SATAN RAISES UP FALSE CHRISTS:**

Satan has even imitated the Lord Jesus Christ by raising up false Christs. Jesus warned:

**. . . Take heed that no man deceive you.**

**For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. (Matthew 24:4-5)**

These false Christs may use the name of Jesus. They may do many signs and wonders. But they are imitators of the power of God.

## **SATAN HAS A COMMUNICATION SYSTEM:**

The Bible is a record of how God spoke to man in times past. God continues to speak to men today. Satan also speaks to man. His first words to humans resulted in their fall into sin (Genesis chapter 3).

Believers pray to God regarding their needs. God responds to the prayer of the righteous (James 5:16). Satan's followers pray to him and communicate with evil spirits. Sometimes Satan responds with supernatural events such as voices, the moving of objects, noises, etc. Satan does have real power and can demonstrate this power visually in our world.

God has communicated to man through His written Word, the Bible. Satan's message is also being communicated through the written word by evil magazines, books, motion pictures, and music. Communication from God through His written and spoken Word provides guidance for man in the affairs of life.

Satan has a system of false guidance accomplished through methods such as the following:

**Astrology and horoscope:** Which use stars to predict events and give guidance.

**Readings of tea leaves, pictures, bumps on the head, palm of the hand and crystal balls:**

The formation of the tea leaves, lines in the human hand, crystal balls, and pictures are claimed to give guidance.

**Witchcraft:** Using spells, potions, charms, rituals, séances, divinations, methods of chance, visions, drawings, and similar unscriptural methods to receive guidance.

## **SATAN HAS SUPERNATURAL POWER:**

Jesus promised supernatural power to his followers after they received the infilling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). Satan also gives supernatural power and authority (Revelation 13:2). His

demons create supernatural strength and energy. Satan gives both power and authority (Revelation 13:2), as did Jesus. Satan can perform many supernatural signs and miracles:

**For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles...(Revelation 16:14)**

Jesus said:

**Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?**

**And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. (Matthew 7:22-23)**

Note that Jesus said "I never knew you." These people with their impressive demonstrations of power were never of God. They were deceiving counterfeits.

### **THE GREATER POWER**

Satan is truly a challenging imitator. He has a powerful organization. His followers can do powerful acts. Jesus warned of his power:

**But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. (Luke 12:5)**

But God has greater power. Jesus said:

**. . . Greater is He (Jesus) that is in you than he (Satan) that is in the world. (I John 4:4)**

You will learn in the next chapter how Jesus came with great power and authority to destroy the evil works of Satan. You will learn in later chapters how Jesus delegated power over all the power of the enemy to believers.

### **FACING THE CHALLENGING COUNTERFEIT**

Here are some Biblical guidelines for facing the power of the challenging counterfeit:

#### **RECOGNIZE SATAN IS AN IMITATOR:**

The first step in overcoming the power of Satan is to recognize that Satan imitates God's power.

## **USE DISCERNMENT:**

There is a special gift of the Holy Spirit called discerning of spirits. It is an unusual ability given by God to immediately discern another person's spirit and know if they are good or evil. If you have this spiritual gift, use it to determine whether people's spirits are of God or Satan.

If you do not have this gift, God has provided other methods of detection. II Peter 2 and the book of Jude list the characteristics of people with seducing spirits to help you identify them. No matter how spiritual or powerful a person may appear, evaluate him on the basis of God's Word.

## **EVALUATE THE SUPERNATURAL BY THE FRUIT:**

Because Satan imitates the power of God through supernatural manifestations of miracles, signs, and wonders, God has provided a way to evaluate ministries. Jesus compared men to fruit trees:

**A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.**

**Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them. (Matthew 7:18, 20)**

Satan can imitate spiritual gifts and God's power, but he has no imitation for a holy life exhibiting the fruit of the Holy Spirit which includes . . .

**. . . love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance . . . (Galatians 5:22-23)**

Evaluate ministries by spiritual fruit instead of supernatural manifestations of power.

## **STUDY THE WORD OF GOD:**

In order to recognize false doctrines of Satan's teachers, apostles, prophets, and ministers, you must know what is taught in the Word of God. Paul told Timothy:

**Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (II Timothy 2:15)**

Even though Paul was a great spiritual leader in the early church, the believers at the city of Berea checked everything he said by God's written Word:

**These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. (Acts 17:11)**

To avoid being deceived by Satan's power, examine everything that is taught in light of God's Word. Evaluate the lives of those who are teaching powerful doctrines or performing signs and wonders.

Do not accept any teaching, doctrine, revelation, or miracle that is not in harmony with God's Word. The power of Satan often attracts believers through so-called "special revelation of new truth." People claim special dreams, appearances by angels, visions, voices, or other supernatural events. But Paul warned:

**... but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from Heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. (Galatians 1:7-8)**

Do not accept any so-called prophecy that is not in right relation to the faith (Romans 12:6) and which does not come to pass (Deuteronomy 18:22). Do not accept any revelation that leads you away from God and the truth of His Word (Deuteronomy 13:1-5):

**The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead. (Proverbs 21:16)**

#### **AVOID EVERY SATANIC INFLUENCE:**

God warned Israel to avoid every type of Satanic influence:

**... destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places. (Numbers 33:52)**

Read the additional instructions God gave in Deuteronomy 18:9-14. Israel was to have no contact with the work of Satan in any form. Destroy anything you own that has to do with witchcraft or the work of the devil. This includes idols, lucky charms, potions, amulets, crystal balls, games, divining devices, and other similar items. Destroy any evil literature and music that does not glorify God. This is what people did in the New Testament when they became believers:

**Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men, and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. (Acts 19:19)**

Do not spend time in places where there is evil influence. The Bible records that God manifested Himself in special places such as the Old Testament temple and the upper room of a house on the Day of Pentecost. It is equally true that Satanic power can be manifested in special places dedicated to evil. This includes places where evil pictures are shown, drinking and riotous

behavior is occurring, séances are being held, worship of Satan is occurring--anywhere sinful practices are going on. Avoid such environments, because Satan's power is especially strong there. You cannot pray, "Lead me not into temptation," and then put yourself in such a place:

**... and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.  
(I Corinthians 10:20)**

Do not associate with false leaders, teachers, prophets, ministers or apostles: **Abstain from all appearance of evil. (I Thessalonians 5:22)**

### **RECOGNIZE GOD'S POWER IS GREATER THAN SATAN:**

God's organization, the true church, is more powerful than that of Satan:

**(God) hath put all things under His (Jesus) feet, and gave Him (Jesus) to be the head over all things to the church. Which is His body . . .  
(Ephesians 1:22-23)**

**To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.  
(Ephesians 3:10)**

Jesus is the head of the Church. Believers are the body. If all things (including Satan and his religious structure) are under the feet of Jesus, then they are also under our feet because we are the body. "Under the feet" means they are under the power and authority which God has delegated to us. Jesus said we have power over "all the power of the enemy" (Luke 10:19). This includes spiritual wickedness in high places. Satan and his hosts challenge God's power, but they certainly are not a threat to Him or His people. The Church is actually to demonstrate God's power to these evil principalities and powers!

### **LEARN BIBLICAL POWER PRINCIPLES:**

You will study Biblical principles in this course. If you understand the principles of God's power, you will not be deceived by the counterfeit works of Satan.

## SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verses from memory.

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2. What is meant by "spiritual wickedness in high places"?

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3. Summarize all you remember about the counterfeiting of God's power by Satan through spiritual wickedness in high places.

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4. List eight Biblical strategies given in this chapter for overcoming the power of the challenging imitator.

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(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

## FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Study II Peter chapter 2 and the book of Jude. These chapters will help you detect Satan's imitators in the church.
2. Obtain the Harvestime International Institute course "*Spiritual Strategies: A Manual Of Spiritual Warfare.*" It will help you learn more about the challenging counterfeit and provide specific strategies for overcoming his power.

3. As an imitator of the power of God, Satan seeks to deceive in the world today. To "deceive" is to mislead or cause someone to believe something that is not true.

- Satan deceives not only individuals but nations: Revelation 20:8-10
- Satan works with "all deceivableness of unrighteousness": II Thessalonians 2:10
- We are warned that deception will increase: II Timothy 3:13
- Because deception will increase, we are instructed to be aware of the events indicating Christ's return: Matthew 24; Mark 13; II Thessalonians 2:3
- We are warned about those used by Satan to deceive: II Corinthians 11:13; Titus 1:10; II Peter 2:13; II John 7
- Man's heart is deceptive: Jeremiah 17:9
- Every unsaved man is deceived: II Corinthians 4:4; Hebrews 3:13
- Do not accept deceptive "fair speeches" which do not agree with God's Word: Romans 16:18; II Corinthians 4:2

### **You are deceived if . . .**

- You listen to vain philosophies: Colossians 2:8
- You trust in riches and permit the lusts of the flesh: Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:19; Ephesians 4:22
- You are a hearer and not a doer of the Word of God: James 1:22
- You say you have no sin: I John 1:8
- You listen to evil men: II Timothy 3:13
- You think you are important when actually you are nothing: Galatians 6:3
- You think you will not reap what you sow: Galatians 6:7
- You think the unrighteous will inherit the Kingdom of God: I Corinthians 6:9
- You think you are wise because you have the wisdom of this world: I Corinthians 3:18
- You think you are spiritual but an unconquered tongue reveals your true condition: James 1:26
- You do not believe Jesus Christ came in the flesh: II John 7
- You think contact with sin will have no effect on you: I Corinthians 15:33