

**Scripture Reference: Luke 22:31-32**

**Date: October 27, 2013**

**Title: "...And the Devil"**

**Focus:** The corrupting influence of Satan (Series 3 of 3)

**Intro:**

1. On the night of the last supper, mere hours before Jesus was betrayed, a dispute broke out among the disciples about which one of them was the greatest apostle.

They did this in response to Jesus' revelation that one of them would betray Him.

2. Jesus responded to this discussion by telling them about the nature of kingdom greatness. It is not like "the kings of the Gentiles" who lord their authority over others. Instead, being great in the kingdom is found in being a servant.

3. But, as Peter would find out, being great, a servant, in the kingdom assures resistance.

4. In words reminiscent of Job, Jesus talks to Peter about the resistance he is soon to encounter.

**Body:**

*"Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat;" (v. 31)*

Several Things are noteworthy:

1. Jesus acknowledges the reality of Satan.

It is a historical fact that if an individual can be depersonalized, he or she can be diminished and discarded. This has happened with the devil.

Satan has been relegated the rubbish heap of antiquity. He is viewed as the concoction of the imagination of ignorant men as an explanation of what was unexplainable.

But, here we see the high servant of God, YHWH in the flesh, one who only spoke what God had Him to say, speaking personally about the devil. He even calls him by name, Satan.

The devil is a real individual. What we know from the Bible of his nature is that he:

- a. Is an angelic being (Isa. 14:12).
- b. Does not possess any divine qualities. He is limited by the laws of nature (Matt. 4:3 - he couldn't change the stones into bread).
- c. Uses deception to advance his cause through the use of human agencies (Eph. 2:2).
- d. Is of the order of a created being and is therefore subject to God (Job 1:6 / Rev. 20:10).

2. Satan does not have free reign.

Like with Job, Jesus tells Peter Satan "*has demanded permission*" to act upon him.

Because he is a finite, created being, he is subject and accountable to God.

What he does, must come with God's consent.

So why does God allow Satan to afflict His creation?

a. Trials provide the means for the proof of our faith and result in glory to God.

*1 Peter 1:6-7; "In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ."*

b. The consummation of one's sinful desires is often a deterrent to them.

*1 Corinthians 5:5; "I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."*

3. Peter would experience sifting, not consumption.

In the trials that would immediately come, as well as in those that would follow him throughout his life, Peter might be shaken, but he would not be defeated.

God has promised His presence and that He would never abandon His children.

The sifting of a life is not a testimony of God's disfavor, it is the opportunity for Him to be seen in His disciples.

2 Cor. 4:7-11; *"We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great treasure. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves. We are pressed on every side by troubles, but we are not crushed. We are perplexed, but not driven to despair. We are hunted down, but never abandoned by God. We get knocked down, but we are not destroyed. Through suffering, our bodies continue to share in the death of Jesus so that the life of Jesus may also be seen in our bodies. Yes, we live under constant danger of death because we serve Jesus, so that the life of Jesus will be evident in our dying bodies."* (NLT)

### **Closing:**

1. What was Jesus doing as Peter faced his sifting?

v. 32; *"But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail; and you, when once you have turned again, strengthen your brothers."*

2. During times of satanic affliction the believer is not without hope, Jesus is praying (interceding - Rom 8:34) for the believer.

3. His intercession makes overcoming possible.

4. Have you yielded your life to God that His prayerful intercession would be a present reality or are you left unguarded to the schemes of the devil?

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