

Romans 1:25

“For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and **worshiped and served the creature** rather than the Creator.”

Paganism

Worship of the creation over the Creator

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Radical Environmentalists
Groups that emphasize the supremacy of the earth

New Age
Sects that emphasize the inner light

Occult

Sects that emphasize the magic arts

Witchcraft

Familiars

- spirits in physical form

Fairies

Good spirits

Demons

Evil spirits

James 4

“7 Submit therefore to God. **Resist the devil and he will flee from you.** 8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”

Mark 9

“14 And when they came back to the disciples, they saw a large crowd around them, and some scribes arguing with them. 15 And immediately, when the entire crowd saw Him, they were amazed, and began running up to greet Him. 16 And He asked them, “What are you discussing with them?” 17 And one of the crowd answered Him, “Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; 18 and whenever it seizes him, it dashes him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth, and stiffens out. And I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it.” 19 And He answered them and said, “O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!” 20 And they brought the boy to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit threw him into a convulsion, and falling to the ground, he began rolling about and foaming at the mouth.”

“21 And He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. 22 And it has often thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, take pity on us and help us!” 23 And Jesus said to him, “If You can! All things are possible to him who believes.” 24 Immediately the boy’s father cried out and began saying, “I do believe; help my unbelief.” 25 And when Jesus saw that a crowd was rapidly gathering, He rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it, “You deaf and dumb spirit, I command you, come out of him and do not enter him again.” 26 And after crying out and throwing him into terrible convulsions, it came out; and the boy became so much like a corpse that most of them said, “He is dead!” 27 But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him; and he got up. 28 And when He had come into the house, His disciples began questioning Him privately, “Why could we not cast it out?” 29 And He said to them, “This kind cannot come out by anything but prayer.””

Observations from this story

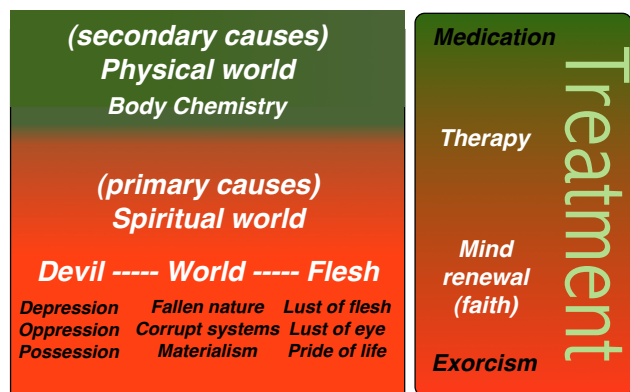
1. The boy is said to be “Possessed with a spirit” (moon struck) **epileptic**.

The N.T. recognizes a distinction between biological disease and demonic possession.

Matthew 4:24

“and they brought to him all who were ill, taken with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics: and he healed them”

Disorders of the soul



2. Jesus treats this disorder as a “**spirit**” or demon that can be exorcized by the authority of his words.

Common mistakes

- ✓ Demonism is a **hoax** - an embarrassing concession to primitive understanding.
- ✓ Demonism is **limited** - to the first century or the third world.
- ✓ Demonism is **pervasive** - and the source of every problem.
- ✓ The demonic is always **dramatic** - associated with special defilement and only responsive to special “exorcism.”

3. Exorcism is **not emphasized** in the Apostle’s teaching to the early church.

References to exorcism in the New Testament

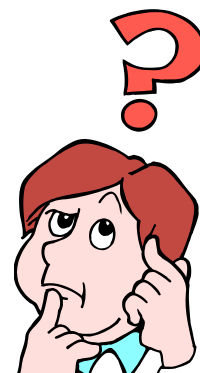
| Gospels (23) | Acts (2) | Epistles (0) |
|--|--|--------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesus is tempted/tested in the desert by the Devil/Satan • Unclean Spirit/Demon in Synagogue at Capernaum • Jesus casts out a demon that made a man dumb (mute) • Beelzebul Controversy: What power does Jesus use? • Gerasene/Galilean Demoniac possessed by “Legion” • Syro-Phoenician Woman’s Daughter • Boy with an epileptic spirit • Another casting out Demons in Jesus’ name • Jesus “rebukes” the fever of Simon’s Mother-in-Law • Summarize Jesus’ exorcisms and his healings • Jesus goes throughout Galilee casting out demons • Unclean spirits recognize Jesus, but he silences them • The 12 have authority to cast out demons • The Devil/Satan taking away the word in people’s hearts • Apostles have authority over unclean spirits • Apostles cast out many demons & cure the sick • “Get behind me, Satan!” • “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven” • Jesus heals a crippled woman • Satan enters into Judas Iscariot at the Last Supper • “Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat” • Jesus had cast out seven demons from Mary Magdalene • Believers will cast out demons in Jesus’ name | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul casts out demon • Paul heals and casts out demon | |

Could this mean that Jesus’ miracles are primarily **notarizing signs of his authority** over death & the demonic?

4. Immediately after the Transfiguration the **disciples’ inability** to exorcize the demon is emphasized.

The disciples are confused

- If Jesus is the Messiah (Peter’s confession) - why will we bear a cross?
- If Jesus is the Power of God (Transfiguration) - why will he suffer and die?
- If all is possible through faith - why are we sometimes impotent in ministry?



Deliverance ministry requires wisdom and humility.

- ✓ **Triumphalism** - a problem in power ministry.
 - We foolishly feel that we know the source and cure for every problem.
 - Possession obsession - Excessive exorcism.
 - Defilement phobias.
 - Ignoring the “angel of light” demons.
- ✓ **Roman Catholicism** has much to teach us about deliverance ministry.
 - Wise, gifted, and trained only.
 - Rational research for each case.
 - Preparatory prayer.
 - Perseverance until complete.

The mystery of faith & the plan of God in deliverance ministry calls for humility.

Mark 8:33 “Get behind me.”

Mark 9:23 “All things are possible to him who believes.”

Mark 14:36

“All things are possible for You; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but that You will.”

2 Corinthians 12

“7 there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me—to keep me from exalting myself! 8 Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.””

**Example
of Jesus being IN but not OF
the world.**

**Disciples address this
world's biggest problem,
understanding that they have
spiritual causes and cures.**

My personal sense?

- ✓ Demonic activity is as **common today** as it has always been.
- ✓ It is too often restricted to the **dramatic**, overlooking the subtle actions of Satan.
- ✓ Demonic activity calls for a **wide range of responses** in ministry.
- ✓ Christians should resist these common spiritual strongholds - **groundless fear, false guilt, distorted hope, and misplaced faith.**
- ✓ The most common responses - **the full armor of God, and a renewed mind.**

Ephesians 6:14-17

The Full Armor of God

✓ **Prepare** - dressing for battle

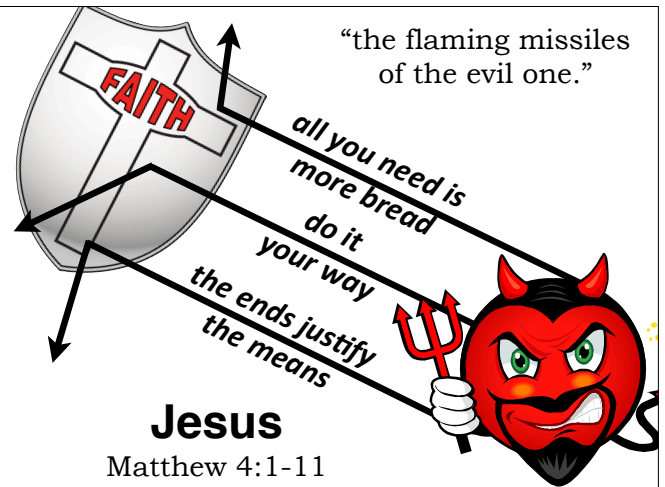
- Truth
- Righteousness
- Gospel of Peace
- Salvation



✓ **Pick up** - putting your hands on

- Shield of faith
- Sword of the Word

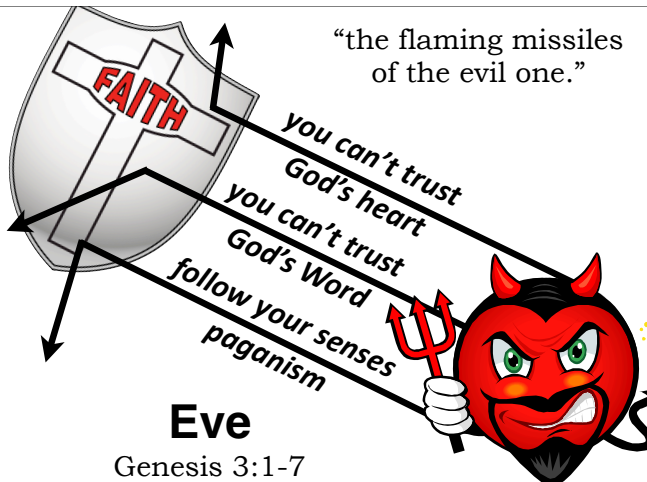
“the flaming missiles of the evil one.”



Jesus

Matthew 4:1-11

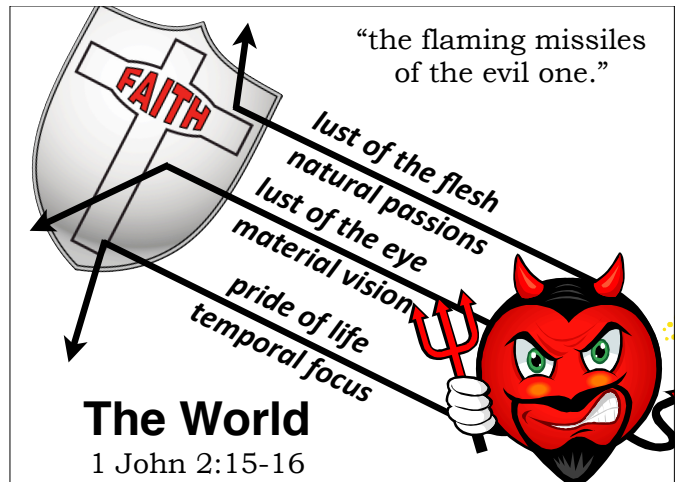
“the flaming missiles of the evil one.”



Eve

Genesis 3:1-7

“the flaming missiles of the evil one.”



The World

1 John 2:15-16