

BIBLE STUDY SERIES:

TRUSTING THE FATHER

YOUR ADVERSARY

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YOUR ADVERSARY

INTENTION:

You will be surprised in realising who you've made as an enemy—it's not always Satan.

I. TOPIC:

We want to look at who is Your Adversary.

For me, as a believer, the term “adversary” related directly to Satan (and also the devil)—as he is my enemy and creates adversity in my life. But there is another, greater, adversary for non-believers: God.

In Luke and Matthew following, we read Jesus speaking about the need to believe in Him for salvation. That those who do not see and accept Him to be saved are not fearing the right one, God. Because they do not fear (revere) God, they do not take Him seriously. And in doing so, make Him their adversary. God really isn’t our adversary, we just personally make Him to be one. He Loves and cares for us more than anything, as we are the treasure He gave up His Son for ([Matthew 13:44-46](#)).

The Lord desires all people to come to Christ and be Saved. And it is the Holy Spirit that testifies to each and every individual about Christ Jesus and the true Character and Nature of God for us to come to believe in Him. When we reject that truth of the Holy Spirit, we are “blaspheming” Him, because we are calling Him a liar. And when we continually reject that testimony and die on this earth, we have no second chances to come to Him. This Sin of Blasphemy is the Sin of unbelief (not believing in Jesus Christ). So don’t make the Lord your enemy by rejecting Him.

This is why Jesus tells us: “As you are going with your adversary [*Jesus Christ*] to the ruler [*God the Father*], make an effort to settle with him [*Jesus Christ*] on the way.” And, “Anyone who is not with Me is against Me”.

- *Refer also: Bible Study Lesson 029 – The Thief (Discernment & Battle)*

II. READING: [Luke 12:1-59](#) (HCSB)

In these circumstances, a crowd of many thousands came together, so that they were trampling on one another. He began to say to His disciples first: “Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2 There is nothing covered that won’t be uncovered, nothing hidden that won’t be made known. 3 Therefore, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in an ear in private rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops.

4 “And I say to you, My friends, don’t fear those who kill the body, and after that can do nothing more. 5 But I will show you the One to fear: Fear Him who has authority to throw people into hell after death. Yes, I say to you, this is the One to fear! 6 Aren’t five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten in God’s sight. 7 Indeed, the hairs of your head are all counted. Don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows!

8 “And I say to you, anyone who acknowledges Me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God, 9 but whoever denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God. 10 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but the one who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. 11 Whenever they bring you before synagogues and rulers and authorities, don’t worry about how you should defend yourselves or what you should say. 12 For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that very hour what must be said.”

13 Someone from the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

14 “Friend,” He said to him, “who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?” 15 He then told them, “Watch out and be on guard against all greed because one’s life is not in the abundance of his possessions.”

16 Then He told them a parable: “A rich man’s land was very productive. 17 He thought to himself, ‘What should I do, since I don’t have anywhere to store my crops? 18 I will do this,’ he said. ‘I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones and store all my grain and my goods there. 19 Then I’ll say to myself, “You have many goods stored up for many years. Take it easy; eat, drink, and enjoy yourself.”’

20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is demanded of you. And the things you have prepared—whose will they be?’

21 “That’s how it is with the one who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.”

22 Then He said to His disciples: “Therefore I tell you, don’t worry about your life, what you will eat; or about the body, what you will wear. 23 For life is more than food and the body more than clothing. 24 Consider the ravens: They don’t sow or reap; they don’t have a storeroom or a barn; yet God feeds them. Aren’t you worth much more than the birds? 25 Can any of you add a cubit to his height by worrying? 26 If then you’re not able to do even a little thing, why worry about the rest?

27 “Consider how the wildflowers grow: They don’t labour or spin thread. Yet I tell you, not even Solomon in all his splendour was adorned like one of these! 28 If that’s how God clothes the grass, which is in the field today and is thrown into the furnace tomorrow, how much more will He do for you—you of little faith? 29 Don’t keep striving for what you should eat and what you should drink, and don’t be anxious. 30 For the Gentile world eagerly seeks all these things, and your Father knows that you need them.

31 “But seek His kingdom, and these things will be provided for you. 32 Don’t be afraid, little flock, because your Father delights to give you the kingdom. 33 Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Make money-bags for yourselves that won’t grow old, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. 34 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

35 “Be ready for service and have your lamps lit. 36 You must be like people waiting for their master to return from the wedding banquet so that when he comes and knocks, they can open the door for him at once. 37 Those slaves the master will find alert when he comes will be blessed. I assure you: He will get ready, have them recline at the table, then come and serve them. 38 If he comes in the middle of the night, or even near dawn, and finds them alert, those slaves are blessed. 39 But know this: If the homeowner had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. 40 You also be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour that you do not expect.”

41 “Lord,” Peter asked, “are You telling this parable to us or to everyone?”

42 The Lord said: “Who then is the faithful and sensible manager his master will put in charge of his household servants to give them their allotted food at the proper time? 43 That slave whose master finds him working when he comes will be rewarded. 44 I tell you the truth: He will put him in charge of all his possessions. 45 But if that slave says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and starts to beat the male and female slaves, and to eat and drink and get drunk, 46 that slave’s master will come on a day he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers. 47 And that slave who knew his master’s will and didn’t prepare himself or do it will be severely beaten. 48 But the one who did not know and did things deserving of blows will be beaten lightly. Much will be required of everyone who has been given much. And even more will be expected of the one who has been entrusted with more.

49 “I came to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already set ablaze! 50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how it consumes Me until it is finished! 51 Do you think that I came here to give peace to the earth? No, I tell you, but rather division! 52 From now on, five in one household will be divided: three against two, and two against three.

53 They will be divided, father against son, son against father, mother against daughter, daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

54 He also said to the crowds: “When you see a cloud rising in the west, right away you say, ‘A storm is coming,’ and so it does. 55 And when the south wind is blowing, you say, ‘It’s going to be a scorcher!’ and it is. 56 Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky, but why don’t you know how to interpret this time?

57 “Why don’t you judge for yourselves what is right? 58 As you are going with your adversary to the ruler, make an effort to settle with him on the way. Then he won’t drag you before the judge, the judge hand you over to the bailiff, and the bailiff throw you into prison. 59 I tell you, you will never get out of there until you have paid the last cent.”

III. RELATED VERSES AND QUESTIONS:

- A. Making God your adversary is recounted also in [Matthew 5](#). At the time of Jesus, and even to this day, mankind saw God as the opponent—for people had an issue with God based on ignorance or misguided teachings by the Scribes and Pharisees (and people today). As such, God saw this and rectified it. It is not that God was really our enemy, but we made Him so. Thus, as He sent Christ Jesus to the Cross (as an alter gift), He saw that mankind (brothers) had something against Him and went about reconciling Himself to mankind ([2 Corinthians 5:14-21](#)). If we do not, in return, come to believe and be Born-Again, we maintain our status as his adversary—which is why He says to “settle quickly” otherwise face eternal judgement to “throw people into hell (prison) after death”.

[Matthew 5:21-26](#) (HCSB)

“You have heard that it was said to our ancestors, Do not murder, and whoever murders will be subject to judgment. 22 But I tell you, everyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Fool!’ will be subject to the Sanhedrin. But whoever says, ‘You moron!’ will be subject to hellfire. 23 So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Reach a settlement quickly with your adversary while you’re on the way with him, or your adversary will hand you over to the judge, the judge to the officer, and you will be thrown into prison. 26 I assure you: You will never get out of there until you have paid the last penny!

Question: Share how, before coming to believing Him, you maybe saw God as an enemy?

Response:

- B. God often gives us instruction that we find difficult or even offensive. But God will never instruct us to do something He Himself doesn’t do—just as we now read above in Matthew. He will always hold Himself to the same standards of Righteousness that He holds us to. There is only one kind of Righteousness and one kind of Holy. As such, when we are told to “love our enemies” we can see that God loves us even if we are convinced He is our enemy. He cannot not Love each and every human being. He died not for just believers, but for all of humanity; believers or not ([John 3:16-17](#)).

[Luke 6:27-36](#) (HCSB)

“But I say to you who listen: Love your enemies, do what is good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If anyone hits you on the cheek, offer the other also. And if anyone takes away your coat, don’t hold back your shirt either. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and from one who takes your things, don’t ask for them back. 31 Just as you want others to do for you, do the same for them. 32 If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners love those who love them. 33 If you do what is good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even sinners do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do what is good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is gracious to the ungrateful and evil. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.”

Question: Do you have a difficult time loving your enemies?

Response:

- C. As unbelievers, we were against the Lord—the term for a non-believer being: Evil. Just as the unbelieving Pharisees were called evil ([Matthew 12:33-37](#)). But even though we had been against the Lord, and thus enemies of the Lord, He Loved us so much that He reconciled Himself to us. We had something against Him, yet He was the one to do the reconciliation ([Matthew 5:23-24](#)). Now we do not have to fear Him, allowing us to come to Him without fear or worry. It is only in our imaginations (minds) that we think we are His enemy.

[Romans 5:1-11](#) (HCSB)

Therefore, since we have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 We have also obtained access through Him by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only that, but we also rejoice in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, 4 endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. 5 This hope will not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

6 For while we were still helpless, at the appointed moment, Christ died for the ungodly. 7 For rarely will someone die for a just person—though for a good person perhaps someone might even dare to die. 8 But God proves His own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us! 9 Much more then, since we have now been declared righteous by His blood, we will be saved through Him from wrath. 10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by His life! 11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have now received this reconciliation through Him.

[Colossians 1:21-23](#) (HCSB)

Once you were alienated and hostile in your minds because of your evil actions. 22 But now He has reconciled you by His physical body through His death, to present you holy, faultless, and blameless before Him— 23 if indeed you remain grounded and steadfast in the faith and are not shifted away from the hope of the gospel that you heard. This gospel has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and I, Paul, have become a servant of it.

Question: Does knowing ahead of time that you've already been reconciled by God make it less obtrusive to then come to believe in Him or minister to others to believe in Him?

Response:

- D. Because we are reconciled to come to Him to claim His Righteousness as our own, we do have an opponent that tries to keep us from believing in Him: Satan. It is he who tries to snatch up the seed of the gospel that is spread on a person's heart. For the one on the path is too hard for the seed to sink in, and it gets stolen by Satan. The rocky and thorny ones are people who do become Born-Again believers, but their fruit is stifled by persecution or strongholds (such as worldly things).

[Mark 4:13-20](#) (HCSB)

Then He said to them: “Don’t you understand this parable? How then will you understand any of the parables? 14 The sower sows the word. 15 These are the ones along the path where the word is sown: when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word sown in them. 16 And these are the ones sown on rocky ground: when they hear the word, immediately they receive it with joy. 17 But they have no root in themselves; they are short-lived. When pressure or persecution comes because of the word, they immediately stumble. 18 Others are sown among thorns; these are the ones who hear the word, 19 but the worries of this age, the seduction of wealth, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 20 But the ones sown on good ground are those who hear the word, welcome it, and produce a crop: 30, 60, and 100 times what was sown.”

Question: Looking back to before being Born-Again, can you see the times when the seed was taken from you?

Response:

- E. There are people in this world that hold God as an enemy, and therefore, hold you as a believer as an enemy. This enmity can come from direct persecution, or just by the things around us in the world. Remember, we fight the spiritual battles. We cannot help but live among our enemies, but we have been given Grace and Peace to live above their deceptions.

[Matthew 13:24-30](#) (HCSB)

He presented another parable to them: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while people were sleeping, his enemy came, sowed weeds among the wheat, and left. 26 When the plants sprouted and produced grain, then the weeds also appeared. 27 The landowner’s slaves came to him and said, ‘Master, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Then where did the weeds come from?’ 28 “‘An enemy did this!’ he told them.

“‘So, do you want us to go and gather them up?’ the slaves asked him.

29 “‘No,’ he said. ‘When you gather up the weeds, you might also uproot the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At harvest time I’ll tell the reapers: Gather the weeds first and tie them in bundles to burn them, but store the wheat in my barn.’”

[Philippians 3:13-21](#) (HCSB)

Brothers, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, 14 I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God’s heavenly call in Christ Jesus. 15 Therefore, all who are mature should think this way. And if you think differently about anything, God will reveal this also to you. 16 In any case, we should live up to whatever truth we have attained. 17 Join in imitating me, brothers, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us. 18 For I have often told you, and now say again with tears, that many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction; their god is their stomach; their glory is in their shame. They are focused on earthly things, 20 but our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. 21 He will transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of His glorious body, by the power that enables Him to subject everything to Himself.

[2 Thessalonians 2:1-4](#) (HCSB)

Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to Him: We ask you, brothers, 2 not to be easily upset in mind or troubled, either by a spirit or by a message or by a letter as if from us, alleging that the Day of the Lord has come. 3 Don't let anyone deceive you in any way. For that day will not come unless the apostasy comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction. 4 He opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he sits in God's sanctuary, publicizing that he himself is God.

[1 John 4:1-6](#) (HCSB)

Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to determine if they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

2 This is how you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God. 3 But every spirit who does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist; you have heard that he is coming, and he is already in the world now.

4 You are from God, little children, and you have conquered them, because the One who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. 5 They are from the world. Therefore what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them. 6 We are from God. Anyone who knows God listens to us; anyone who is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of deception.

Question: Do you come across people or things in this world that directly or deceptively oppose the Lord?

Response:

- F. Sometimes, our adversary are the things we must give up. Often, when we seek the Lord and His ways, the ways of our former self must be let go of. Holding onto them can be a stronghold that keeps us anchored to our past. Sometimes that stronghold isn't just money and things, but people—family that are close to us and mean the most to us. Thus, many times, it is very difficult to either come to believe in Christ or to follow Him if it means we will lose our “brothers, sisters, mothers, and children”—knowing even the persecution that may come.

[Mark 10:23-31](#) (HCSB)

Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!” 24 But the disciples were astonished at His words. Again Jesus said to them, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.”

26 So they were even more astonished, saying to one another, “Then who can be saved?”

27 Looking at them, Jesus said, “With men it is impossible, but not with God, because all things are possible with God.”

28 Peter began to tell Him, “Look, we have left everything and followed You.”

29 “I assure you,” Jesus said, “there is no one who has left house, brothers or sisters, mother or father, children, or fields because of Me and the gospel, 30 who will not receive 100 times more, now at this time—houses, brothers and sisters, mothers and children, and fields, with persecutions—and eternal life in the age to come. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Question: What have you given up, or are being called to give up with the Lord? How can you discern if this “giving up” is done from a “religious stance” (flesh-centric) or Spirit-led?

Response:

- G. When we choose the Lord and to believe in Christ Jesus, that moment we are Born-Again, we are (in essence) no longer making God our adversary (enemy); yet the devil still remains (and treats us as) an adversary (enemy). And as we learned in previous Bible Lessons, the devil is not specifically Satan, but anything that opposes God—thus opposing you as a Child of God.

[1 Peter 5:8-9](#) (HCSB)

8 Be serious! Be alert! Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. 9 Resist him and be firm in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world.

[Revelations 12:7-12](#) (HCSB)

Then war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels also fought, 8 but he could not prevail, and there was no place for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was thrown out—the ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the one who deceives the whole world. He was thrown to earth, and his angels with him.

10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:

The salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Messiah have now come, because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown out: the one who accuses them before our God day and night.

11 They conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not love their lives in the face of death.

12 Therefore rejoice, you heavens, and you who dwell in them!

Woe to the earth and the sea, for the Devil has come down to you with great fury, because he knows he has a short time.

Question: Do you see the Devil and Satan at work in this world?

Response:

- H. As we learned in our previous Bible Study (*Lesson 038*), the Law is actually our adversary—creating an “anti-love” approach to our life. Our flesh longs for the Law, but the negative impact comes about from a Law-based mindset / heartset / attitude; whether towards our self or others. The Law is sin-focused and death, not Love and Life.

[Romans 8:1-4](#) (HCSB)

Therefore, no condemnation now exists for those in Christ Jesus, 2 because the Spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. 3 What the law could not do since it was limited by the flesh, God did. He condemned sin in the flesh by sending His own Son in flesh like ours under sin's domain, and as a sin offering, 4 in order that the law's requirement would be accomplished in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Question: How does the Law show up in your life?

Response:

- I. This flesh we have is a self-adversary. It represents the parts of us that have not yet been renewed (healed)—by which that healing brings about a Spirit-lead existence. The flesh is anything we pick up of the world that causes so much hardship and destruction in our life (even if unintentional). Our flesh will always be at odds with our Spirit-self.

[Romans 8:5-14](#) (HCSB)

For those who live according to the flesh think about the things of the flesh, but those who live[b] according to the Spirit, about the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind-set of the flesh is death, but the mind-set of the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind-set of the flesh is hostile to God because it does not submit itself to God's law, for it is unable to do so. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 You, however, are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, since the Spirit of God lives in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. 10 Now if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, then He who raised Christ from the dead will also bring your mortal bodies to life through His Spirit who lives in you.

12 So then, brothers, we are not obligated to the flesh to live according to the flesh, 13 for if you live according to the flesh, you are going to die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 All those led by God's Spirit are God's sons.

Question: How do you discover areas of yourself that need renewing because it brings hardship or destruction in your life and/or those around you?

Response:

- J. How often it is then, that we are "our own worst enemy"—whether our own condemning hearts, thoughts, or sin-conscience. We can learn (renewing our hearts and minds) to Love ourself as the Lord Loves us, healing those parts of our own being that have been trained (programmed) to self-sabotage, jeopardise, "steal, kill, and destroy" us. Instead, we have to be good to ourself and bless ourself, even when we become our own enemy. Our "flesh" will still battle us and resist (as a stronghold) our Spirit-self; but even in that turmoil, we can treat ourself with respect.

[Romans 12:14-21](#) (HCSB)

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. 16 Be in agreement with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation. 17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Try to do what is honourable in everyone's eyes. 18 If possible, on your part, live at peace with everyone. 19 Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead, leave room for His wrath. For it is written: Vengeance belongs to Me; I will repay, says the Lord. 20 But

If your enemy is hungry, feed him.

If he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

For in so doing you will be heaping fiery coals on his head.

21 Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good.

Question: What goes on in your being that treats you as an enemy? Do you turn-around and Bless yourself?

Response:

IV. FURTHER THOUGHT:

A. [Philippians 4:8](#) (HCSB)

Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is any praise—dwell on these things.”

Thoughts: Too often, our nature or habits look for the things wrong—not only in others but in ourselves too. We become adversaries to both our own self and to others—whether criticising external appearances (the body) and internal problems (the mind, soul, and heart). We are inherently (programmed in us) as fault-finders.

But that's not how the Lord sees us. The Lord only sees the good in us and how to encourage and build us up. He doesn't condemn us when we fault. So let's do the same to ourselves and to each-other (any other) to see only as the Lord sees us and sees others.

Look for (focus on finding) and strengthen these things in your life and in the life of others. That is your nature of the Lord in you. And the nature of the Lord to you and to everyone too. For if the Lord's requirement of us is to think on those things, would He not also hold Himself to do those things of us!

Let's let go of the notion that the Lord sees your faults; for it is the Love of God that draws people to Himself. How can you believe He Loves you if you believe He dwells on your faults. And moreso, let go of dwelling on your own faults and think on those good things about yourself, others, and the Lord. He lives in us and all He has is Goodness in us and out through us, unhindered by our faults.

Remember, no matter what transpires in our life—whether of ourselves or from others, the Lord WILL bring good from it all... nothing that transpires will ever go to waste:

[Romans 8:28](#) (HCSB)

We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose.

B. [Luke 11:14-26](#) (HCSB)

Now He was driving out a demon that was mute. When the demon came out, the man who had been mute, spoke, and the crowds were amazed. 15 But some of them said, “He drives out demons by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons!” 16 And others, as a test, were demanding of Him a sign from heaven.

17 Knowing their thoughts, He told them: “Every kingdom divided against itself is headed for destruction, and a house divided against itself falls. 18 If Satan also is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say I drive out demons by Beelzebul. 19 And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, who is it your sons drive them out by? For this reason they will be your judges. 20 If I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you. 21 When a strong man, fully armed, guards his estate, his possessions are secure. 22 But when one stronger than he attacks and overpowers him, he takes from him all his weapons he trusted in, and divides up his plunder. 23 Anyone who is not with Me is against Me, and anyone who does not gather with Me scatters.

24 “When an unclean spirit comes out of a man, it roams through waterless places looking for rest, and not finding rest, it then says, ‘I’ll go back to my house where I came from.’ 25 And returning, it finds the house swept and put in order. 26 Then it goes and brings seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they enter and settle down there. As a result, that man’s last condition is worse than the first.”

Thoughts: Our strongholds are things we hold onto that we have come accustomed to. Often the things that are engrained in us as children through the nature and nurture aspects of upbringing. We thus do not immediately know that they are opposing to the Lord. Instead, they feel so natural to us that for us to lose it makes it seem we are being robbed of something. But that is just it... the Lord breaks into us (as a thief / adversary) being the stronger person and binds up that which we had held onto as our truth (“weapons we trusted in”), revealing His Truth by setting us free. We think only a “bad guy” would break into a home; but the Lord is the one rescuing us from the “bad guy” that has been holding us deceptively captive.

Of note: a stronghold is not demon-specific. It can be for some in certain areas, but we must not see it as only demonic, as I feel it is mostly just our flesh. Our approach to strongholds are just us healing whatever area of our life that stronghold exists in. My take on the demon-aspect of the verse is that Jesus is speaking in regards to a non-believer (someone not Born-Again):

That when that stronghold (or demon in the passage) is overcome, bound, and removed, it cleans a person’s self to be able to more freely accept Christ Jesus and fill that “cleaned house” with the Spirit of God. When a person doesn’t come to belief, filling themselves with the Spirit of God, it stays vacant for the demon to return. Thus, this is not referring to a believer being opened up to demonic possession, as Born-Again believers are purged from their old self into “a new creation” ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)).

Bible Study: Lesson 039



V. CONCLUDING REMARKS / NOTES:

[illegible]