

I. Review

I have been taking the last month or so and going through the questions that people over the years people who were classified as fools asked. People who either rejected the Bible or just didn't understand what they were talking about. The questions they have asked me shows you how to answer them. You are going to get asked these questions at some point. We have looked at some of the key ones that you will be able to use in dealing with people. Some of the key ones were Evolution and how that is a big thing today. We talked about drinking and the two wines in the Bible. We talked about the Holy Grail and some of these conspiracy theories that people come up with. They are very real to people who buy into them. But when you sit down and look at them through the Bible and history, you know that they are not credible. We looked at the Ark of the Covenant, which is credible, but there is a lot of bad information on that. Then the spear that was actually thrown into Christ's side. The Catholic church claims to have that and we know that none of that is true.

Last time we talked about dealing with the area of suicide. The question was if a person commits suicide is it still possible for them to go to heaven, if they are saved. We now know that suicide is NOT a sin that takes any part of any person's salvation away. As no sin is, so we understand that now. Then I also laid out and I want to make sure that we stay on top of this; there are **two types of fools**. There is a man or woman who is unsaved and they are a fool from the aspect that they have nothing about God. No knowledge of God, no understanding. Then you are going to have saved fools. Those will be people that are truly saved but they have gotten messed up in some kind of bad doctrine or bad teaching. It has really messed them up. The word fool itself in the day and age that we live in carries a very negative connotation. Every time you say somebody's a fool you automatically think that they are a very bad person. That is not necessarily true. But the word fool doesn't necessarily mean the person is a terrible person. It just means they have been fooled. I know people that were great people but they were fools because of what they fell into, not because they had character flaws or they were some kind of unsavory individual. I want you to understand that you are going to run into people who are very negative (bad) or some that are very good. But in both cases saved and lost they are foolish in the things that they think.

Today we are going to finish up our questions. I took you through all of the main ones and we have dealt with the key ones. **You now have all the information that you need to build your own library of material to be able to work with people.** That is really what I want for you to do. I am giving you the material not just so I can give you the material, but I am trying to show you how you can use the material. I am trying to in the middle of what I would be preaching or teaching to you, to stop and say now this is how you would use this. This is something you can use or this is something that only you need to know. But you need to figure out how to get it to them without giving them all the details that I am giving you. This is what builds you. This is what makes you effective in working with people. This is what the Bible calls in the book of

Hebrews 5:14 exercising your senses. Allowing God to take you as you work with people from the very beginning of Discipleship I, up through Discipleship II. Then when dealing with people and their problems you exercise your senses to discern. Having the discernment to understand who and what you are dealing with and to be able to better help them. This one today is one you are going to get asked a lot. **If you answer this one correctly and have some understanding behind it, this one will become a great tool to show someone their need for salvation.** In most of the questions, some Christians when somebody would ask them something that would question what they believe, their first inclination is to get on the defensive. Their first act is to react. They look at it as if somebody is attacking them, so they get into a defensive mode. You never want that to happen. If you really know the material and you are really set and settled in the word of God. You don't have to be on the attack. The rule is in every aspect of the Bible when dealing with people, whatever the case, it is simply this, being smarter than the problem. Don't allow somebody else to take you off your game. Always realize that you are in control. No matter what they say or what they believe or how they may say it to you. You don't have to get defensive because you have the truth. The key, being smarter than the problem is knowing how to use the information that you have in a non-offensive way to get the truth through to them. You will learn how to do that in time. Many of you can do that already. But you already see the problems and you can sidestep the personal things and then you can just use the truth to try to help them.

This is a great question, and I get this a lot. You will get this from unsaved people. You won't get this from saved people. Hopefully!

II. Why Does the Devil Exist & His Purpose? Question #22

The question is why does the devil exist? What is his purpose? Is he real? A lot of teaching out there in the 21st century that the devil is not a real person. That he is an influence of evil, but he is not a real person. The farther we get from the Bible, and the closer we get to the Lord's coming, the more you are going to see the disintegration of truth and people understanding it. So, you are going to get this a lot. They may even believe in the devil. But they are going to say why would God need the devil. Why would God allow the devil? What is the devil's purpose? These are the questions that get confusing in people's minds.

I want to start where you would start. You start understanding this yourself and then be able to develop it for somebody else. I want to look at two verses today. When somebody asks this question, you may not give them these verses. But these would be the two verses that would come to your mind as you are beginning to put your teaching process together. I want to encourage you to take this material and get it down. I have worked tirelessly trying to put them together to give you all the material in a workable format. I do that because you must realize that you never, never, never want to try to teach something that you don't fully understand yourself. It will be a disaster. This is why I go to the great lengths that I do to try to get you the word of God and break it down where you can grasp it. Then I give you the detailed stuff that is put together for you every week.

The main verse is going to be in Proverbs 16:4. If you don't have that marked in your Bible you need to mark it today. Within this verse contains everything that you need.

The LORD hath made all [things] for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil.

That is the devil! The other one is in Job 26:13

By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent.

Of course, this is the devil also.

❖ The Devil is a Created Being – He is a real person created for a purpose

These two verses show you that the devil is a created being. That is where we want to start. **The devil is a real person.** He is not some influence. He is not some magical, historical figurative figure that isn't real. He is real! Proverbs 16:4 tells us that **God made the devil for a purpose.** That is the second thing I want you to see. The third thing I want you to see is that God made him for His purpose. In other words, **God made the devil for God's purpose.** The Bible says that he made all things for himself including the devil. That is key. You got to start there. Now we have a biblical definition of what we are dealing with here. This is where you will start in your study to understand why God made the devil. Then the real question is why did he allow him to continue on the way that he does. It seems confusing. But it is not. Not if you follow through the Bible.

Here again, I am giving all the material at my fingertips to you. As you put your material together and you grow in using it you are going to see what you can use for others and what you just have for yourself. I can't tell you that. You are all different. I have no doubt for those of you who take this to heart, that you and God will use it and will do something with it. When laying this out and you are dealing with somebody, remember that you want to keep it simple. God's people have a tendency, especially younger Christians that are really doing well. They don't know where their limitations should be. What you don't want to do is get so doctrinally heavy with this teaching that you lose them. God's people sometimes tend to think when they are laying something out of the Bible that the person they are laying it out to understands everything that they do. That is not true. One of the rules in teaching people the Bible is be in tune with whom you are speaking to. You can't teach the Bible past a level of where they are at. If they are not very far, like most of the people you are going to deal with, then we need to find a way to bring it down where they can understand it. You do that by keeping it simple. You do that by getting the key points in that they need to see. You will learn that in time. Always remember the question. **Why did God allow the devil to exist? Where did he come from? Why did God make the devil in the first place.**

Obviously, there are a number of reasons why the devil is in existence and why God created him and his purpose. Most of you know that already. So we are not going to go there. **The key will be found where we started in Proverbs 16:4. This is where you can really use this as a platform to get the salvation message to them. If you look beyond just the question.**

❖ The Devil was created for the Day of Evil

In Proverbs 16:4 it says, “.....yea, even the wicked for **the day of evil.**” The next key thing I want you to see in this verse and begin to understand is “**the day of evil**”. That is what the devil was created for. So, his purpose is for the day of evil. **The devil was created for the day of evil.** The next step is to find out what is the day of evil. When you get into your Bible you will find in time and in history that there are **two days of evil.** There are two aspects to this day and these two aspects fundamentally in dealing with a person are the reason why God created the devil for his own purpose.

1.) The Day of Evil for Israel

The first one will be the tribulation period for the nation of Israel. This will be Israel’s day of evil. In the Bible it is called Jacob’s time of trouble or Jacob’s trouble or Daniel’s 70th week. We know that the last half of that tribulation period is the most unbelievable, ungodly, the most satanic period in the history. It is truly the day of evil for the nation of Israel. The Holy Spirit of God is gone. The antichrist has now complete control of the world. His purpose is to wipe out the nation of Israel. Because he hates Israel because they are getting all the promises that were his, that he lost. Now he is coming after Israel to wipe them out and destroy them. So, the first aspect of the day of evil will be the nation of Israel going through the tribulation period.

You will see that these two days fall into two categories. I tell you all the time, everything in the Bible falls into two categories. Everything that I read in the Bible, everything I read, or anything that I get my hands on, automatically filters down into two categories which form the baseline from which I am going to get my understanding. The first one will be the kingdom of heaven. The literal visible kingdom given to Israel in a physical form. This will be Israel’s day of evil. It is built around the kingdom of heaven. The devil coming and attacking them literally because the establishment of the literal visible reign of Christ is right around the corner. So, that one falls into the kingdom of heaven category.

2.) The Day of Evil for the Child of God -

The second evil day or the day of evil will be for the child of God. You and me. Hence where Israel’s day of evil is the physical destruction during the tribulation, the child of God in his day of evil will deal with the kingdom of God and the spiritual destruction of you as a child of God. It is that simple. This is the day found in Ephesians 6. This is the day that you and I as a child of God will for the first time face the world, the flesh, and the devil and you will have to stand alone. In Ephesians 6:11 notice the context here is put on the whole armor of God. Once you get saved you are going to get into a fight and that fight is going to be a spiritual battle. Look at verse 12.

12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood,.....

In the Old Testament their evil day with the tribulation, it's physical. But your evil day is spiritual. It is not a physical day. So, what do you do verse 11,

11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

The wiles of the devil will not be physical, they will be the attacks on your character, your mind which will lead to the attack on your body. But he says in verse 12

12 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].

That is our battle. Now look at verse 13.

*13 Wherefore (because of what he just said) take unto you **the whole armour of God**, that ye may be able to **withstand in the evil day**, and having done all, **to stand**.*

We have all had this study before. There are seven pieces of armor that the Christian soldier puts on himself to protect himself.

*13. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand **in the evil day**, (there it is!) and having done all, to stand.*

➤ The Defining Moment for Christians -the Day You Stand Alone

The defining moment in our lives as a Christian will be the day that you have to stand alone. Your mom or dad aren't there anymore. Your discipler isn't there anymore. You are out there on your own and the evil day is going to come. The job of a parent is to prepare their children for this day. It is just that simple. That is the job of every parent, to prepare your child to have foresight and to know that the evil day is coming in their life.

The greatest camp message that anybody could ever preach to kids would be the life of Daniel. When you study Daniel's life you see the classic example of what an evil day is or a day of evil. I try to get this across to the kids at camp. Daniel is just a young teenager. He is probably not more than 15-16 years old. He was taken away from everything that he knew that had to do with God. He is taken captive in the first captivity of Babylon. He is in Babylon under King Nebuchadnezzar. He has lost his family. I don't know if they were killed, but it doesn't look like he ever saw them again. He spends the rest of his life in Babylon. What he goes through is exactly what every one of you will go through and most certainly your children will go through when they hit that evil day. **The key if you haven't picked it up already is to be able to stand against the wiles of the devil and to be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all to stand.** What does that mean? That means one, parents preparing your kids for this day and two, it means the pastor preparing you as the children of God for day. Because if it hasn't already hit you, it will. When you come down through Daniel chapter 1, you will find the Bible makes the parallels that Daniel and the Hebrew children were of the king's seed. They are in the line of Christ, physically. Spiritually that is a picture of you and me as a child of God. You are the king's seed if you are born again. They are taken down to Babylon, a type of the world system.

Nebuchadnezzar, also a type of the devil. Then what follows is exactly what happens to your children and will happen to you too if you aren't prepared to stand against the day of evil or the evil day. He takes them down there and gives them to a eunuch. The plan is for three years he is going to feed them and indoctrinate them with all the garbage that is in Babylon. He is going to give them Babylonian food and drink. He is going to teach them Babylonian culture. and Babylonian religion. The Bible says the purpose for that is at the end of three years these children, the seed of the king of Israel, the cream of the crop, are going to lose everything they had with God back in Jerusalem. The king's seed was going to be destroyed and wasted. That is what he wants, that is the evil day, that each one of you are going to have to face and your children also.

Of course, the great message that you can preach to those kids is once all that happens, Daniel is faced with the defining moment in his life. This is what every parent needs to build into their kid for their defining moment. As your pastor I try to build into you for your defining moment. After everything was presented to him and the plan of the devil was laid out. Daniel looked him in the face and in Daniel 1:8 it says,

But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's meat, nor with the wine which he drank: therefore he requested of the prince of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Daniel 1:8

That is a defining moment in our lives. When our evil day comes, the day of evil. When you go back to Proverbs you see that verse is a classic verse that doesn't look like it does, but it opens up everything.

➤ Understanding God Gave Man a Free Will

Along with understanding the day of evil or the evil day you all must understand how it is dealing with man. The key concept of God (and there is a lot of great attributes of God) outside His holiness, will be the aspect of God giving man (his creation) a free will. God will not force a man to love him or to follow him. He doesn't want robots. **He wants a man or a woman to choose to love him and follow him based on their own free will and free choice. He wants man to choose him above all else.** It is not any different than any of us.

Keith and Stephanie got married last night. They chose each other. Most of you that are married or have boyfriends or girlfriends is your favorite song Love Potion Number Nine? Do you really want a woman in your life or a man that every morning you got to mix a little concoction for them to drink that will keep on loving you. Do you really want to slip a pill in your husband's coffee in the morning so that if he doesn't get that he is going to wake up the next day and not know who you are? Does anybody even want that kind of relationship? You want whoever you are with to be by your own choice. You don't want it to be orchestrated to the point where somebody is forced to accept you, and to love you. God is the same way.

➤ The Heresy of Calvinism

In Christianity you have the heresy of Calvinism. Calvinism is a big deal today. It is really resurged itself and has been repackaged. Most of the neo-evangelical guys and some of the Baptist guys too are embracing the idea of Calvinism. Calvinism along with predestination is the idea that God chose somewhere in the distant past who was going to heaven and who was going to hell. You don't have a choice in it. It was all settled way back there that God looked down through the annals of time and he picked you and didn't pick this person. Today the people that are Calvinists believe that they are part of the elect. They believe that God chose them, and they believe that if God chose you then it is through irresistible grace, and you had no say in it. God chose you to go to haven and you may be sitting next to a person that God didn't choose, and they are going to hell. There is nothing that person can do to go to heaven because you have been for-ordained and decreed before the foundation of the world that you are going to hell. There isn't anything you can do about it. It is the craziest thing you have ever seen in your life. If anything shows people being fools that's people who believe in that stuff. I have often looked at that whole mindset. That is where people are at today, they are fools. They may be nice people, but they have been fooled.

God made the devil to give man the choice based on man's own free will. The Bible makes it very clear that God is not willing that any should perish 2 Peter 3:9.

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

He wants all men to be saved. 1 Timothy 2:4 and John 3:16.

Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. 1 Timothy 2:4

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. John 3:16

But it has to be based on your choice. God isn't going to come down and put a double hammer lock on you to make you trust Him. In fact, if we just want to get just a little deeper for a moment, I think if I remember right, in the Bible you find free will 17 times thereabouts. When you look at that and study it a little bit farther, you realize that free will applies to everything in God's creation. We know that the cherub had to make a choice because one of them left. I would assume that the seraphim had to choose to stay or leave. We know that the angels had a choice. God didn't force them because one third of those went with Satan when he left. God created man so that he could choose his eternal destiny. God is not going to pick it for you. Everything that God created had to chose to be with Him. This is why you hear me say it over and over, **life is about the choices we make.**

➤ The Devil is Limited in His Power by God's Design

Here is another thing I want you to understand. **The devil is limited in his power by God's design.** I know it doesn't seem that way, but he can't operate outside God's permissive will and what God's plan is. **The proof of that is in the book of Job.** In Job chapter 1 and 2 when the

devil wants to wreak havoc in Job's life, he says first off, you can take all that he has, but you can't touch him. And the devil certainly took all that he had but the devil couldn't have touched his body because God set the parameters of what he could do. When you get into chapter 2 God says now you can touch him, but you can't kill him. The devil could have called every horde of hell and fallen angel and everybody else on the planet to kill Job. But it couldn't happen because **God set the parameters, and this is what he does with the devil**. This is very important for you to understand!

Today, it seems like the devil is operating worldwide on a scale unprecedented everywhere on all sides. So, when you see all that is going on it would be easy for you to scratch your head and say, where is God in all this. Where is he at in all this? He is where he has always been. Telling the devil what he can and can't do. Let me show you how you fix this. It may seem like he is operating out of control and doing whatever he wants to do. But when you put the devil's operation of the day into the context of the day of evil, the tribulation and the second coming, you see that God is using the devil. Everything he is doing is to prepare this world, prepare nations and prepare Israel for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. See how it goes into context? It is not confusing anymore when you say the devil's running everything. He is supposed to. He is going to get the whole world in just about an hour and a half. He is going to run the whole thing. What you are seeing right now is God saying, okay you can do this, you can do that, but you can't do this, and the devil operates within those parameters. God is using him to prepare Israel for the millennial reign of Christ and you see God doing this all down through the history of the Bible.

We talked Thursday night about the nation of Israel from the 1880's to where we are at today and how important the 20th and the 21st century is to what God is doing. That is why he has got complete control. We are told that he is the god of this world, and he is. But he may be the god of this world, under the control of THE GOD of the universe. God has a purpose for him and the purpose is two days. Two days of evil. One for Israel, which you are seeing unfolding right now. One for you and me spiritually that we are going to face when we walk out of here today.

III. Four Proper Names Given to the Devil

This is for you. Now you don't want to give this to them, but you are here this morning so I will give it to you. In the Bible you will find that there are four proper names given to the devil. Each name will be associated with the way that he will work in history and the world. It will help you establish a context when you find this name.

1.) Serpent – Genesis 3 and 2 Corinthians 2:11 – Context the Church

When you find the devil referred to as the serpent it is going to always be a context of the church. Eve was a type of the church. Adam is a type of Christ. Eve's evil day came while Adam wasn't home. Your evil day will come while Christ isn't here. He is up in heaven. Eve fell and then Adam fell and then we fell. 2 Corinthians 11, Paul says in verse 2 *I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy* and in verse 3, "*But I fear lest by any means as **the serpent beguiled Eve...***". There you are! He is going to beguile the church. Take the word beguile. There are

two ways that you study that. You study that in an Old Testament context in a physical kingdom of heaven. Then you study it in the spiritual under the kingdom of God. You will get some things done.

And the LORD God said unto the woman, What [is] this [that] thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat. Genesis 3:13

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. 2Corinthians 11:3

2.) Satan – 1 Chronicles 21:1 – Context Dealing with Israel

When you find the word Satan watch the **context because it is always a reference with him dealing with Israel.**

And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. 2Chronicles 21:1

3.) The Devil – Matthew 4 – Context the Tempter

When you find the word Devil it will be a reference and establish the **context as the tempter.** In Matthew 4 he is coming to tempt the Lord Jesus Christ.

*1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be **tempted of the devil.**
2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. [Mat
3 And **when the tempter came to him,** he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. Matthew 4:1-3*

4.) The Dragon – Isaiah 27:1, Revelation 12-13 – Context Tribulation & 2nd Coming

Sometimes the great red dragon. This will establish the context of the tribulation and the second coming. You will want Isaiah 27:1 and Revelation 12-13

In that day the LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that [is] in the sea. Isaiah 27:1

It is four simple ways based on four proper names that will help you to establish a context.

Here is how it works and the reason for the devil, his purpose and how God uses him. We know that God had an original plan. That original plan starts in Genesis 1:1. It is morally defined for you in Isaiah 9:6-7 and it ends with God establishing an eternal government. To be part of that government, God created man. We find man being created in Genesis, the story of man, his

creation and his fall in Genesis 1-3. So, he creates man, puts him into a perfect garden and from that act I learned a great truth. Based on what he did after he created man and made him in the image of God. God only wanted the best for him. Let me say this. **Once you become a new creature in Christ Jesus, God only wants the best for you.** Adam physically lived in the garden of Eden. According to Song of Solomon, God wants you and I as spiritual believers to live spiritually in God's Garden. Just go back and look at it. God only wanted the best for Adam and once you get saved to become a new creature in Christ Jesus you throw off the old Adam and put on the new. God only wants the best for you.

➤ Why Would God's People get an Attitude Towards God when He only Wants the Best for Them?

Why would God's people get an attitude towards God who only wants the best for them? I know the answer to that, but I want you to think about that for a moment. When you look at Adam and Eve in a garden, it was a perfect garden. God stacked the deck. I mean they had perfect weather. He put Adam and Eve down there. They were innocent. They had their days together, their sunsets together, their nights together and their mornings together. She would look at Adam and say Adam do you love me? He would say honey you are the only woman in the world for me. You see the kingdom of heaven, God put them in a physical garden. He gave them everything physical. They wanted for nothing because God wanted them to have the best.

Church age, you become a new creature in Christ Jesus. You come into the kingdom of God and God puts every spiritual blessing in your life. He gives you everything that you need in the word of God, King James 1611 Authorized Version, a church and a pastor and Christian friends. You know why? Because God wants the very best for you. Let me ask you. Why would anybody get upset with that, if they are truly saved? I believe many of them are. Why would a child of God who is really saved get upset with somebody or God when all that they want is for them to have the best of everything that God has for them? Don't you know there is a problem with us? I am going to give you the answer to that in a moment. But I want you to think about it.

God gives man the blessings of God in an unbelievable way. But God still wants man to make his own choice. His free will choice. So, he allows the devil to show up on Adam and Eve's day of evil which will mirror the church (2 Corinthians 11) day of evil. He allows him to show up after he has stacked the deck. After he has given him everything in his heart's desire. He has made it absolutely the most incredible perfect thing in the history of the world. Now he allows him to have an alternative choice after he stacked the deck. Adam starts the long line of wrong choices. Romans 5:12

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: Romans 5:12

God says you can have everything you want, perfect weather, you don't have to work, the food is right on top of the ground. How much more can I do for you. You can have every tree except one. When the devil came down, he just took them right out of God's hand, and they made the wrong choice.

➤ God Will Always Come Looking for You

What does God do? What does the God of second chances do? In Genesis 3:21, just a few verses after they did what they did, they now know they are naked, and they hide from God. What does God do? He comes looking for them. I am going to say this, and I am going to build into it a little bit later. **God will always come looking for you.** The problem will never be God coming looking for you. The problem will be which bush are you hiding behind? That is the question. When he found them, typical human nature, He says to Eve, what did you do? He said to Adam, you are supposed to be in charge of her. What did you do? You know what Adam said? He says well Lord the wife that you gave me. He did the same thing that we all do. Nobody wants to take accountability for the things that are wrong in their life. When most of it is about somebody that wants you to have the best that God wants for you, and you get an attitude about that. What did God do? Regardless of all God had done for them, and in spite of all that they did. They had just turned their back on God and now they are in a fallen state. What did God do? They are in a place where they can't have anything with God. They are naked. What did God do? He made the first sacrifice in the Bible. He killed something innocent, and he covered their nakedness with garments. You know what he did down through history when that sin passed upon you and me? God sent down his Son to die on that cross that you and I could have the garments of salvation because we too were naked.

In churches where people are saved, the pastor shouldn't have to get up and crank the congregation to do anything. He shouldn't have to preach on sin. Why is it with God's people that you got to get them right before you can get them to do anything? I am going to answer that in just a moment.

➤ God Has Given us a Free Will – A Choice to Choose

God made coats of skin for Adam and Eve and then he looked at you and me in our nakedness and our sin and he came down and he made a way out of our fallen state. But it is by a choice of your free will. You have the right to choose to not go to hell. You have the right to choose to tell God to go to hell. Your free will, your choice. Hopefully you can see that when you are answering this question with somebody that is a powerful thing to show God's salvation. If answer it right you are now showing them not only why the devil exists, but you are showing them that he is the alternative choice. They have to make a choice in their life; just like everybody else. You have everything there if you know how to use it correctly.

In the Bible there is a great word called blameless. The Bible says a pastor should be blameless. For years and years, I never figured that out. How can a pastor be blameless when he gets blamed for everything. I have had many people who thought they were intellectuals try to pose the question to me. Did God allow the devil. Yes. Did God allow sin to come into the world. Yes. Then arrogantly they say well let me ask you a question. If God allowed sin to come into the world and he knew it was going to destroy man. Then how can God ever judge a man and send him to hell if God allowed the sin to come into the world in the first place? I looked at him and said, you do greatly error not knowing the scriptures. The same God that allowed sin to come into the world is the same God that came down himself and paid the price to take it out.

Your move buster! You see it is your choice. It's always going to be your choice. No matter how you try to get out from under it. It comes down to your free will and you choosing.

If you ever wanted to see and understand the love of God for man, just stop and look at what I am give you. He just keeps coming after you. Saved or lost God is not willing that any should perish. You may come to the point in your life where you isolate the Holy Spirit of God out of your life. But the Holy Spirit of God will never isolate you from God's forgiveness. It is your choice. Why do you think they call it the gospel. It is the good news. You know what the good news is? You got a good choice that you can make that will change your destiny for eternity. He died so we could make the right choices in life.

➤ God Wants the Best for You & So do I as Your Pastor

I told you last week I want the best for you. That is not because I am anything special. It is because I know that is what God wants for you. I am his servant, maybe not a very good one, but I got that one down. People will get upset because you want them to have all that God has for them. I have seen it all my ministry. God's people get an attitude toward preaching, towards churches, pastors and Christians. A preacher will get up and preach against sin. He will tell them that they are headed in the wrong direction and try to warn them. They will actually get upset with him. The more bad choices we make the farther it will take God out of your life. Why is it that you could want the best for somebody that you are working with, and they get upset with you and mad at you. Why is that? Here it comes! Because bad choices will always in time lead to a bad attitude. **The more bad choices you make, the farther you get away from the things of God.**

Being a parent is the same thing. Most parents honestly may not do everything right. They may not know what they are doing, but most parents want what is best for their kids. My mom and dad wanted me to have a better life than they had. They didn't do everything right. They were great parents. I love them to death. I am so sorry that I was the idiot that I was when I was younger with them and the grief that I cause them. But it is okay, they are both up in heaven and they are okay with it. They only wanted the best for me. When I was 16,17 or 18, I thought I knew more than everybody in the world. I certainly thought I knew more than my dad. After a stint in the Army and getting out at 21 I couldn't figure out how my dad got so smart in those years. It wasn't him; it was me. Having said that let me just say something to you. Most parents want what is best for their kids. But I must honestly tell you I have met over the years some deadbeat parents. I have seen parents that their kids wound up in the lake of fire as sure as I am standing here. I have seen them lose their kids to drugs, alcohol. I have seen them lose their kids to the world. When you step back and look at those parents as far as I am concerned, they were probably the Uber driver that sent them to the lake of fire. They never prepared them. The kids saw them manipulate circumstances, lying, always making excuses for their kids. It was always somebody else. You know how it works guys.

You moms and dads, some of you are just going to be coming into that here in the next couple of years. When your kids get a little older, some of your kids are 18,19 and 20 and you have been through that, and you know how it is. When your kids get to be that old and the evil day shows

up. You know you haven't done what is right with them and now they are faced with that evil day, rebellion sets in. Rebellion against you, the parent, the world begins to creep in. They start heading down the wrong road and you see it as a parent. You didn't care before because it wasn't obvious. Now they turn on you. You argue with them about drinking, and you get into arguments about the wrongdoings. The smoking the drugs, the people they hang out with. You say son, daughter, you are heading down the wrong road and you try to deal with them and get them to see the mess that they are in. Where they are headed, and they get mad at you. They fight with you; they argue with you. You guys wind up saying terrible things to each other.

But what is your crime? What is this terrible dastardly thing that you have done that have turned your kids against you. When you try to get them to live right, not drink, not do things that are wrong. They get mad at you. They argue with you. Sometimes they leave your family. What was your terrible crime? You just wanted the best for your them. Why do they get that way? **Because a life of bad choices will always lead to bad attitudes.**

It is the same way in churches and in the ministry. You are all children of God. The pastor to some extent is a spiritual father to you. He will try to tell you that God only wants the best for you. He will try to stack the deck to give you everything in the Bible. Give you every principle that you need. Put the best people on the planet with you to help you and try to work with you through this. You will get upset with him. You argue with the people who are trying to help you. You do the same thing that kids do with their parents. Except you are God's children. So in time the bad choices you made produce a bad attitude where your kids leave home and go someplace else. You leave the church and go someplace else. It is the same system, and it all comes down to you just wanting the best for your kids. It all comes down to any pastor worth his salt just wants the best for his people.

➤ The Beginning of Knowledge is the Fear of the Lord

I will show you another way that God will use the devil to his honor and glory. It will be for us, he will warn us in the Bible. There is a great verse in Proverbs 1:7 that most of God's people really have no clue what it means. It simply says *the beginning of knowledge is the fear of the Lord*. I would say today every child of God needs a healthy dose of these two. Nobody fears the Lord today. We live in a world where kids don't fear their parents. That men and women don't fear the authority of government. You see it across America the lawlessness that is derailing this country into shambles. But it is the same issue in families and Christians.

The fear of the Lord isn't the fact that you are afraid God is going to kill you. There is a lot of people that walk around in their Christian faith in fear that if they get one step out of line God is going to give them cancer. God is going to make them blind. God is going to put them in a car wreck. No, he may do that, but he is not going to do it because you took one step out of line. The fear of the Lord isn't about what God will do to you. The fear of the Lord is reverence of who he is and the awesome power that he has. Understanding God judges sin and the fear of the Lord is a healthy thing for a healthy Christian. Write that down. **The fear of the Lord is a healthy thing for a healthy Christian.** Fearing your parents as God-given to you is a healthy thing. The fear of the Lord is looking at circumstances around you, and other people's examples

who claim to be Christians and their lives are an absolute disaster. I am not telling you that you sit there and judge that person. That is not what I am talking about. But you will see parents that their kids are in hell this morning. Burning and screaming in hell and you look at that and you say to yourself I don't want that for my child. That is the fear of the Lord. You will look at some kids out there that are out in the world, and they are just so screwed up and messed up. I am not saying that they are bad people. They are not. I am not saying the parents are bad. They are not. I am saying you as a Christian says I don't want that for my child.

You will see people that get into marriages that are the biggest disasters and three-ring circuses you ever saw in your life. You see that but you don't judge it. You don't judge the people; you pray for them. You ask God to help them, but you look at it from your own responsibility and you simply say I don't want a marriage like that. I am going to find out what I got to do to not have that. You will see the tragedy of lives that really could have been used of God. I think one of those most disheartening things for me in ministry is looking at people's lives who I see the potential inside. Who I see that 90% of them would be the most incredible witness and testimony for God. But it just takes 10% to cancel all that out. You are here today because you had Christian friends and unsaved friends that you saw where their life was going, and you made the conscious choice. I don't want that in my life.

God will use the devil and the destruction of people to give you and me a healthy dose of the fear of the Lord. You will see people who make really bad investment choices. They will make some of the worst choices in life and invest their life in the things that are only going to be a dead-end street. When you try to tell them, and they get upset with you. When you try to preach to them and show them the right direction, they don't like it. Because bad choices in time will always develop the wrong attitude about it. Somebody will look at that and you will say I love that person. That was a good person I really love them, but I am not going down that same road. Everyone of us has had to make that choice at some point in life about something. You were faced with a crossroads in your life, and this was going to lead you the wrong way and this was going to lead the right way and you had to stop maybe for a moment and ponder which way. But you saw the destruction, you saw the agony, you saw the endless hope and you decided to choose to go this way.

Now this is where I said a couple of weeks ago, 1 Corinthians 2:15 comes in. You don't judge people on the problems they get into. You love them and you pray for them. But the Bible says, "*But he that is spiritual judgeth all things....*" We are not to judge the people. But you have every right to judge the things that are in their life and say I don't want those in my life. But I will pray for them because I love them. Fear of the Lord! The Bible says that Noah lived in the most ungodly time. Much like today, as it was in the days of Noah. Yet the Bible says that Noah moved with fear preparing the ark for the saving of his household. I have always thought that verse was incredible found in Hebrews. I know the wickedness of Noah's time and the Bible says that the only ones that he prepared an ark was for the saving of his household. You are fast approaching a time in this world where the only ones that are going to get saved is your household. God's people can't even do that.

*By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen **as yet**, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. Hebrews 11:7*

Bob Jones Sr. used to say if the devil is going your way, ride him. I would not advise you to do that. When it comes to the devil and my dealings with him is Job 41:8. This is my standard verse on it. Look it up sometime. That is what God does, he can do it. I sure can't! He lets the devil do his thing and then he uses it to get his plan done. He uses the devil against himself just like he did Pharaoh or Nebuchadnezzar or the Roman Empire. The evil day when Israel was going to go through it and comes out on the other side with a victory will make them only stronger. You look at the book of Job. He was stronger coming out of it than when he went into it. In our day of evil when you and I face opposition and we get the victory through the opposition, God will make us stronger. You will be smarter and stronger. You will have more understanding, and you will be in a better position to help somebody that is going to go through the same situation. If you learn from what you go through. I call this the **Joseph principle found in Genesis 50**. The devil will always use it to your evil, but God will always use it to your good. You get the choice.

Now you can see what the overall purpose why God created a devil in the first place as the alternative based on man's free will. God's total plan. Most people look at God and the devil and just take a snapshot of a seven-thousand-year period of history. So, they try to interpret the seven thousand years based on one snapshot. That is like taking a picture of you in Hawaii and you say wish you were here, and you take a snapshot and send it. Somebody looks at that and then they know what the rest of your vacation was like. History is a documentary. History is a biblical documentary of God's plan and what God's doing. Why he allowed the devil to exist and how he uses him. Because at the end of the day, life is about the choices we make. I didn't get into Ezekiel 14 or 28 or Isaiah 14 or Genesis 1 and 2. I kept it based on the choices that people have to make. If you can take this material and work it down into your own workable format you can see how that becomes a tremendous tool. An incredible tool to show them out of their own question that life is choices and why God permitted the devil, created the devil, and gave man the alternative. Man failed and then God fixed the problem. Now it is their choice. This is one of the most incredible witnessing tools that you will ever have when people ask this question.

You work it from here and do what you need to do to get the material down that I have given you. God is going to take some of you and use you in a mighty way. We are standing on a threshold of a door that God has opened that is unbelievable. That we have never gone through before. It is one of the most exciting times in the 20 plus years of our church. We went through different levels and different doors. Now God has opened this one up and this one is to the world.

I preached a message a while ago out of Acts 8 with the Ethiopian eunuch and Philip. I bring that story around to an end and close where it says God had a prepared sinner, the Ethiopian eunuch and God had a prepared servant, Philip. Then the Holy Spirit of God got the prepared servant to the prepared sinner. That Ethiopian eunuch found Christ as his own personal savior. That is the greatest model in the world of what God wants to do with your life. You don't have to worry about who you win to Christ; all you need to do is work at being a prepared servant.