

Title: unbelieving believers II – the enemies of the church
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“Why do you call yourself a believer, but then you live as if I am not real?”

*Wake-up call - *Most people only start to value something when it is under threat.*

What are the primary enemies of the church? sin, satan and death.

- **The deception of the enemy** is to minimise these threats. So the church becomes complacent.
- **When the church becomes aware of these enemies** then it causes the church to act, to move, to respond.

The urgency of death

In the face of death life is re-prioritised.

“a man drowning crying out to you to save him”. *How would you respond?*

The urgency of death. The clutter is removed in a moment. Everything is reprioritised.

The urgency of sin – *putting a plastic bag over your head, it suffocates the life out of you*

- **Sin brings destruction.**
- **Giving in to temptation:** it is to surrender your future to the enemy. Surrender your family. Surrender your faith. Make no mistake. Giving in to temptation will cost you.
- **Soldier defecting to the other side.** Those who submit to temptation are taken captive to do the work of the enemy and become slaves of sin.
- **We cannot tolerate sin in our lives.** Deal with it. Bring it into the light. Bring it to the blood of Jesus and get free.
- Staring into the face of sin, it brings an urgency.

The urgency of Satan and his minions – **do not underestimate the enemy of your soul**

- **Staring into the face of evil.** Those who have experienced that tend to run to God.
- Jesus came to deal with these three issues but we need to enforce that victory.

1 Peter 5:8–9 (NLT) ⁸ *Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.* ⁹ *Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your Christian brothers and sisters all over the world are going through the same kind of suffering you are.*

- **His power is in his deception.** He devours through lies and offenses. He devours by getting Christians isolated.
- *How is your thought life? Your heart life? Has the enemy broken through the defenses?*

Satan, as deceiver: Satan's character is deceitful, devious and cunning as in a variety of guises he seeks to influence people for his own ends.

Genesis 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ *Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”*

Satan is the embodiment of evil. A liar. A murderer. A schemer:

Ephesians 6:11 (NIV) ¹¹ *Put on the full armour of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.*

- *One of the greatest deceptions of the devil is to persuade the world that he does not exist.*

1 Timothy 4:1 (NIV) ¹ The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

- What are you believing? What teaching are you embracing? Not everything preached in churches are of God.

Satan as tempter: God's people are incited to evil by Satan. He seeks to exploit their weaknesses in order to deflect them from obedience to God.

Revelation 12:9 (NKJV) ⁹ So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

He tempts Christians to fall away:

Luke 22:31 (NKJV) ³¹ And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

He makes sin attractive – "Verbode vrugte, is tog te lekker..."

Ephesians 6:12 (NLT) ¹² For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

What is the battle for? The souls of men. The minds of men. The hearts of men.

In the presence of God there is liberty

Prayer: Matthew 6:13 (NKJV) ¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Faith in Jesus: 1 John 3:8 For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

In the presence of Jesus the enemy must bow the knee.