

Perceptions of Satan

Text : **Zechariah 2: 10 – 3:10**

INTRODUCTION :

- A. The Innocence Project is a group of attorneys and law students re-examining questionable convictions.** **SL# 1.**
1. They have succeeded in overturning thousands of convictions. (311 by DNA)
 2. Eyewitness testimony played a part in 78 percent of those wrongful convictions. **SL# 2.**
- B. Ten people can see one event and give ten different accounts of what happened.**
1. Why ?
 - a. Are they dishonest ? No.
 - b. Are they incompetent ? Not necessarily.
 2. College students tend to be more accurate than elderly people but all are inconsistent
 - a. Why ? Young people are not smarter than older people.
 - b. Some younger people have better vision, but they're not more observative.
 3. Eyewitness accounts vary based upon the perception of the observer.
- C. We all live in the same world, but every person creates his own reality.** **SL# 3.**
1. Regarding perception the famous composer Irving Berlin once said : **SL# 4.**
"Life is 10 percent what you make it and 90 percent how you take it."
 2. When speaking of perception, the renowned author Wayne W. Dyer said : **SL# 5.**
"Change the way you look at things and the things you look at change."
 3. Douglas Adams, another famous communicator, defines perception like this : **SL# 6.**
"Everything you see or hear or experience in any way at all is specific to you. You create a universe by perceiving it, so everything in the universe you perceive is specific to you."
 - a. All of us live in our own little world, but we tend to think others around us are in it.
"It's so clear any fool can see the glass is half empty." **SL# 7.**
 - b. As the noted German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer accurately observed :
"Every man takes the limits of his own field of vision for the limits of the world." **SL# 8.**
- D. What is the significance of this to the Christian ?**
1. Our perception affects our relationship with the world and with God as well. **SL# 9.**
Titus 1: 15 – To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled. * We all view life through the prism of our experiences.

2. Understanding the concept of perception enables us to better understand others.
 - a. When we understand perception, we understand how honest disagreements occur.
 - b. Two people can both read the same article and draw very different conclusions.
 - c. Likewise, people can read the same scriptures and understand it very differently.

E. One's perception is not fixed; it's changed by every experience in his life. SL# 11.

1. Life is like flying into a strange city, one's perception of is different when flying out.
2. One can change and mold his perception by being selective in his life choices.
 - a. One who sells houses for a living tends to look at houses in terms of sale value.
 - b. Choose to have the experiences that lead to the godly perception you desire.
3. Those with whom we are closely associated tend to affect our perception. (+ or –)
 - a. **I Cor. 15: 33 – Do not be deceived: “Bad company corrupts good morals.”**
 - b. Likewise, godly companions encourage a godly perception of the world.

Our ungodly culture has created a perception of Spiritual things that is making it increasingly difficult to convince people to accept Christ and also increasingly difficult to persuade Christians to be devout.

**The modern secular perspective caused people to deny Satan.
If Satan does not exist, God does not exist.**

SL# 12.

I. Satan seeks to persuade people that he doesn't exist.

SL# 13.

A. Barna poll question among people who self-identify as Christians.

Do you Agree or Disagree “Satan is NOT a living being, but is a symbol of evil.”

1. **40%** Strongly agree
2. **19%** Somewhat agree
3. **26%** Strongly affirm that Satan is real
4. **9%** Somewhat affirm that he is real
5. **8%** Were not sure what they believed

SL# 14.

B. Barna poll question among people who self-identify as Christians.

**Do you Agree or Disagree “The Holy Spirit is NOT a living entity,
but is a symbol of God's power.”**

SL# 15.

1. **38%** Strongly agree
2. **20%** Somewhat agree
3. **25%** Strongly affirm that Satan is real

- 4. **9%** Somewhat affirm that he is real
- 5. **9%** Were not sure what they believed

C. Satan deserves a PHD in marketing.

SL# 16.

- 1. The majority of those who claim to be Christian don't believe that he exists.
- 2. Many who do believe that he exists view him as a cute, but naughty little imp.
- 3. Consequently, they do not have their guard up against him.
 - a. **I Pet. 5: 8** – **Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.**
 - b. This scripture warns us to take Satan seriously. ***Never let your guard down.***
- 4. Satan is more deadly than any terrorist. (***He has killed every person on the planet.***)
 - a. He is a super strong, extra-terrestrial, intelligent being.
 - b. He has targeted and breached the control center of every human, man's mind.

II. Satan is real and the originator of all evil on earth.

SL# 17.

A. Satan is the author of sin.

SL# 18.

- 1. **Ezek. 28: 15** – **You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you.** (*Satan as metaphor for Kg Tyre*)
- 2. Love is given, not forced so God allowed Satan to rebel.
- 3. **Gen. 3** ... Satan incited man to rebel against the authority of God and sin was born.

B. Satan is the author of suffering.

SL# 19.

- 1. **Acts 10: 38** – **You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.**
- 2. **Luke 13: 16** – **And this woman, a daughter of Abraham as she is, whom Satan has bound for eighteen long years, should she not have been released from this bond on the Sabbath day?"**

C. Satan is the author of death.

SL# 20.

- 1. **Heb. 2: 14** – **Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,**
- 2. Death is the consequence, the byproduct, of sin. ... **Rom. 6: 23**
- 3. He kills by influencing people to dwell on earthly things.
Rom. 8: 6 – **For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life**

D. Satan is the author of temptation.**SL# 21.**

1. **I Thes. 3: 5** – For this reason, when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear that **the tempter** might have tempted you, and our labor would be in vain.
2. **James 1: 13-14** Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God”; for **God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone.** ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his **own lust**.
3. **I John 2: 15** – Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶ For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.

E. Satan is the author of bondage.**SL# 22.**

1. **II Tim. 2:26** – and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been **held captive by him** to do his will.
2. Jesus has redeemed us from the slave market of sin.
3. Cf. – **Rom. 6: 16-18**

III. Satan is dangerous.

*The most dangerous insidious force on the planet. SL# 23.
Not that cute little character in red tights with a trident. # 24*

A. Satan is dangerous because he invades.**SL# 25.**

1. **John 13: 2** – During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father
2. The lie told by Ananias was prompted by Satan in his heart.
Acts 5: 3 – But Peter said, “Ananias, why has **Satan filled your heart** to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land?
3. Satan’s evil is like a viral infection. It is very contagious.
* **We sterilize the children’s dishes before serving food to our children, SL# 26.**
but we then set in front of an open sewer for hours. (TV, Computer, etc.)

B. Satan is dangerous because he enters into people.**SL# 27.**

1. **John 13: 27** – After the morsel, **Satan then entered into him**. Therefore Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”
2. Jesus could see Satan in Him.
3. There are many recorded instances of demon possession, e.g., Luke 4: 31ff, 8: 26ff
4. Christians are protected from Satan. **I Pet. 1: 5, II Pet. 2: 9, John 10: 28-29**

C. Satan is dangerous because he blinds.**SL# 28.**

1. **II Cor. 4: 3-4** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.
2. **I Cor. 2: 14** – But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.
3. **II Tim. 3: 6-7** For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, ⁷ always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth

D. Satan is dangerous because he steals.**SL# 29.**

1. **Luke 8: 11-12** Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. ¹² Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved.
2. Identifiable Pattern : *Satan actively works against God in the salvation process.*
 - a. **John 8: 44** – He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him.
 - * b. Satan doesn't want God to have men's souls so he steals man's only hope, the truth
 - c. **I Pet. 5: 8** ... Satan would rather destroy your soul than let God have it.
 >> *It is a well known tactic of war. As the Russians retreated during the war they burned everything so the enemy could not profit from their advance.*
3. Christians must constantly pray that God will help us advance His word.

E. Satan is dangerous because he multiplies evil doers.**SL# 30.**

1. Remember the parable of the tares.
Matt. 13: 25 – But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.
38-39 and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; ³⁹ and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels.
2. The Christian's goal is to harvest as many souls for Christ as possible, but Satan is tirelessly working to prevent people from being saved.
 - a. **Matt. 7: 13-14** ... We are persuading people to get off the expressway
 - * b. The problem is that so many people have just enough religion to feel saved.

*** THE MOST DANGEROUS ERROR IS THE ONE THAT'S CLOSEST TO TRUTH !! # 31.**

F. Satan is dangerous because he empowers wickedness.**SL# 32.**

1. Satan's ultimate deception is in religion; he impersonates Jesus.

II Cor. 11: 13-15 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. ¹⁵ Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

2. **II Thes. 2: 9-10** ... Satan will empower some to work false miracles.
 3. Today, there are false religions cropping up on every street corner.
 - a. They are designed for those prophesied in **II Tim. 4: 1-4** ... please their hearers.
 - b. They substitute the PC culture for the truth of the gospel. (*All roads lead ...*)
- * *At big unity conference ... God can be called God, Allah, Buddha, etc.*
- c. Satan is using the government to try to promote his doctrine in God's church.

CONCLUSION :**A. Never underestimate our enemy; Satan is very powerful.****SL# 33.**

1. Satan was able to limit some activities of the Apostles.

I Thes. 2: 18 – For we wanted to come to you—I, Paul, more than once—and yet Satan hindered us.

2. Satan opposed the priests and prophets of old.

SL# 34.

Zech. 3: 1 – Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

B. Though powerful Satan is a defeated enemy.**SL# 35.**

1. On the day that Jesus returns Satan will be confined to eternal punishment.

Rev. 12: 9-10 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

2. Remember **Job 1-2** ... God still limits the activities of Satan.
3. Satan cannot snatch away the Christian's salvation ... **John 10**. *He can solicit.*

INVITATION :

God offers security **Rom. 8: 1** ... He also solicits.

SL# 36. ... SL# 37.

Lesson Text :**Zechariah 2: 10 – 3:10**

10 “Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst,” declares the LORD.

11 “Many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you. **12** The LORD will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem.

13 “Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD; for He is aroused from His holy habitation.”

Chapter 3

1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. **2** The LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?” **3** Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel. **4** He spoke and said to those who were standing before him, saying, “Remove the filthy garments from him.” Again he said to him, “See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes.” **5** Then I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the LORD was standing by.

6 And the angel of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying, **7** “Thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘If you will walk in My ways and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing *here*. **8** Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you—indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch. **9** For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave an inscription on it,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. **10** In that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘every one of you will invite his neighbor to *sit* under *his* vine and under *his* fig tree.’ ”