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## **HOT TOPICS**

**A 4-part study that can lead to  
your next spiritual breakthrough**





... which is why the greatest thing you can do to fight that “grain of sand” that Satan is might be to immerse yourself in Jesus (also known as the “Living Water”) each day (the pursuit of pleasure), or live out of being loved (knowing God pursues you).

**WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT WHO THE ENEMY IS AND HOW GOD EMPOWERS YOU TO FACE HIM?**

**JOB 1:6-7**

NOTICE THAT SATAN IS PERSONAL

**JOB 38:4-7**

NOTICE THAT GOD IS WAY MORE POWERFUL

**MATTHEW 4:1-11**

NOTICE JESUS OVERCOMES SATAN WITH TRUTH

**MATTHEW 9:32-33; 12:22; 17:18**

NOTICE PEOPLE CAN BECOME POSSESSED BY AN EVIL SPIRIT

**2 CORINTHIANS 11:14**

NOTICE SATAN DISGUISES HIMSELF WELL

**JOHN 12:6**

NOTICE PEOPLE OPEN THEMSELVES UP TO POSSESSION

**1 CORINTHIANS 16:9**

NOTICE CHRISTIANS HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT

**1 JOHN 4:4**

NOTICE CHRISTIANS HAVE OVERCOME THE ENEMY

**GENESIS 2:17, PHILIPPIANS 4:8**

NOTICE WE’RE NOT TO FOCUS ON EVIL IN WAYS THAT INVITE IT INTO OUR MINDS

**EPHESIANS 6:10-19**

NOTICE WE CAN TAKE A STAND AGAINST EVIL

**QUESTION:** SATAN WANTS YOU TO LIVE DEFEATED AND IN FEAR, BUT GOD WANTS YOU TO FIND LIFE IN ATTACHING YOURSELF TO HIM. WHAT WILL YOU DO NEXT, AND HOW WILL IT HELP ONE OF THEM TO WIN IN THE BATTLE OVER YOU TODAY?

## LET'S START A CONVERSATION ABOUT SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Not to make things weird, but yes, Satan is real.

Take that in.

The greatest Truth you can ever realize is that you have a personal Savior and Lord in Jesus Christ. Once you say YES to Him and begin to follow Him, you immediately want to also recognize that you also have a personal enemy in His enemy. Keep in mind, for all the power Satan has (which, by the way, he does), compared to God it's nothing... Satan is like one grain of sand compared to a God who'd be like a universe of universes of beaches. No comparison. It's not even a contest.

Still, that grain of sand can all by itself scratch at you, blind you, make you walk differently, cause you to squirm and more.

What if you didn't have to just "take it," though? What if God Himself gave you Truth and Himself inside of you to live differently? This is what "spiritual warfare" is.

In fact, there are two primary errors we can make with it - over-emphasis and under-emphasis. It's not always right to blame every struggle or sin on Satan attacking us when sometimes we're the ones who choose to take steps that put us into those situations. Likewise, we do ourselves a disservice when we completely ignore that we are battling against spiritual creatures who live in a spiritual realm that overlaps with the one we see with our eyes. God wants you to each day not feel like you're battling all of this without Him, but through Him...



## HOT TOPICS

### TIMELY WISDOM FOR TIMELY QUESTIONS

**There is Timeless Truth for every timely question.**

We're just not always sure which question to ask. Often what rolls out of us is emotional, perhaps from feeling lonely, or frustrated that something hard happened to us (or someone we care about), or sad that a dream we've had for a long time hasn't yet happened. Soon that ache becomes all we think about, and we can get lost in either feeling stuck or any conclusions we came to that "sound right."

Feelings do matter, but finding our identity in them or tough circumstances is exhausting. But, Jesus invites us to imagine a different reality. Instead of looking to our feelings to determine who we are and what story we're in, we can look to the Author to tell us who He invites us to be and the Story we get to live in instead. Jesus invites us to come to Him, and to find our identity in Him. What do you think? What if it means changing what you currently think?

BY PASTOR TONY MYLES

# PART 1

## **JOB 1:1, 1:21, & 13:15**

NOTICE THIS PERSON'S **TRUST** IN GOD,  
NO MATTER WHAT

## **ROMANS 3:23 & LUKE 18:19**

NOTICE HOW SIN **IMPACTS** ALL

## **2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-18**

NOTICE THE **HOPE** WE ALWAYS CAN HAVE

## **ROMANS 8:28**

NOTICE THE **PROMISE** WE ALWAYS CAN CLAIM

## **GENESIS 50:19-21**

NOTICE HOW EVIL CAN BE **FLIPPED** FOR GOOD

## **2 CORINTHIANS 1:3-5**

NOTICE GOD'S **COMFORT**

## **1 PETER 2:20-23**

NOTICE JESUS' **EXAMPLE**

## **ROMANS 5:8**

NOTICE JESUS' **COMMITMENT**

## **PROVERBS 3:5-6**

NOTICE THE CHANCE FOR **WISDOM**

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE IN THESE VERSES ABOUT TOUGH THINGS AND OUR OPTIONS?

Racism shows itself in big and small ways, in both our action and our inaction. Jesus died to save all and desires all, regardless of nationality or race, to come to a saving faith in Him. Diversity itself isn't the goal... making sure everyone gets invited in is. Sometimes that may mean you do a little extra work to make sure someone isn't being \ excluded, but even then be sure to foster warmth, challenge and grace as you take what can be a new step. In a culture that is unwilling to stretch or forgive, we are called to be His light, shining His love and invitation to all.

### **WHAT DO YOU NOTICE ABOUT THE TOXIC WAY WE CAN TREAT OTHERS VERSUS GOD'S INTENT?**

#### **GENESIS 1:29-30**

NOTICE GOD WANTS US TO FILL THE EARTH

#### **GENESIS 11**

NOTICE GOD MOVING PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

#### **MATTHEW 25:31-40 & JOHN 13:34**

NOTICE WE'RE TO CARE FOR ALL

#### **JOHN 3:16**

NOTICE JESUS CAME FOR THE WHOLE WORLD

#### **ROMANS 2:11, GALATIANS 3:28**

NOTICE GOD SEES ALL

#### **PHILIPPIANS 2:3-4 & PROVERBS 16:18**

NOTICE OUR OWN PRIDE

#### **COLOSSIANS 3:15**

NOTICE THE PEACE GOD GIVES

#### **PSALM 1**

NOTICE HOW TO BE ROOTED)

#### **PROVERBS 22:24-25**

NOTICE THE TEMPTATION TO BE A CRITIC

#### **HEBREWS 4:16**

NOTICE OUR OWN NEED FOR GRACE

# PART 3

## LET'S START A CONVERSATION ABOUT CANCEL CULTURE, RACISM AND "THOSE PEOPLE"

Whether in life or online, we've all seen what happens when someone gets outraged at someone else. Whether what's being said is true or just thought to be true, the reaction seems to be the same... the person who's angry tries to get as many people as they can to be angry with them and speak against someone else to get them "canceled."

Meaning, to get the whole world to treat this person like they're the worst of the worst of the worst.

Keep in mind, God does care about making things better when a legitimate wrong thing has happened. Those who do wrong need to be rightly held responsible, because actions have consequences. Yet, God calls and empowers us to have a different response than our culture.

He asks us to see what someone else has done as a way to examine ourselves... not to find all the good we're doing, nor to ignore it, but to not use it as a cover-up for our own sin.

One version of cancel culture is racism, which is when one group of people try to circle up against another group of people by saying or thinking things about them that try to cancel their God-given worth and dignity.

**QUESTION:** WHEN FACED WITH ANY OF THIS, HOW CAN WE POINT PEOPLE BACK TO JESUS BY WHAT WE SAY AND DO?



What do you notice in these verses that you could share With Someone who felt like life was overwhelming?

### PSALM 31:15

NOTICE THAT **GOD** IS WHO OWNS OUR LIVES

### JOB 1:21

NOTICE THAT GOD CAN BE **SOUGHT** ON ANY DAY

### ECCLESIASTES 2:17

NOTICE WHAT WE PURSUE **IMPACTS** US

### 2 CORINTHIANS 1:9

NOTICE THAT OUR **POWER** COMES FROM GOD

### ROMANS 10:13

NOTICE THAT JESUS' NAME HAS **POWER**

### ROMANS 8:38-39

NOTICE GOD'S WITH US IF WE ARE **IN HIM**

### LUKE 1:37

NOTICE YOU CAN **OVERCOME** ANYTHING WITH GOD

### PSALM 50:15

NOTICE THAT SOME DAYS ARE **TROUBLE**

### 1 KINGS 19:4

NOTICE SOME GREAT GODLY PEOPLE GET DOWN

### ISAIAH 61:1-3

NOTICE THAT SOME DAYS ARE **FILLED WITH FAVOR**

### PSALM 32:8 & PROVERBS 18:24

NOTICE GOD **GUIDES** US

### EPHESIANS 2:10

NOTICE THAT GOD SAYS **YOUR LIFE HAS PURPOSE**

## QUESTION

IF YOU HAVEN'T YET SAID **YES** TO JESUS, THIS WORLD IS THE ONLY "HEAVEN" YOU'LL EVER KNOW, BUT IF YOU HAVE SAID **YES** TO JESUS AND FOLLOW HIM, THIS WORLD IS THE ONLY "HELL" YOU'LL EVER KNOW. SO, HAVE YOU SAID **YES** TO JESUS? AND WHAT DOES YOUR ANSWER MEAN?

# PART 2

## LET'S START A CONVERSATION ABOUT LUST AND IDENTITY

Try this (really, do this right now):

Count up all the different movies, TV shows, videos online and more you've watched that showed you two people in some sort of romantic relationship with each other. Seriously, take a moment to add it up—whether that presentation was spot on or totally off base. C'mon, adding that up feels impossible... but if you were going to get a billion dollars for giving a real guess that was remotely accurate, what would that NUMBER ACTUALLY BE?

WRITE IT DOWN  
HERE →

What if you also included anything that claimed or showed that it was somehow “okay” for two people who aren't married to have sex, as if God's said nothing about it being in a marriage relationship between a husband and wife? How many times has something you've watched promoted or subtly endorsed two people of the same gender to be in a relationship? Don't be defensive on this - be honest.

AGAIN, WRITE IT  
DOWN HERE →

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE IN THESE VERSES REGARDING GOD'S THOUGHTS ON LUST, SEXUAL IDENTITY, AND THE OPPOSITE SEX IN YOUR LIFE?

**GENESIS 1:27**

NOTICE **GOD'S DESIGN** FOR GENDER. WHAT IS IT?

**GENESIS 2:24**

NOTICE GOD'S DESIGN FOR **MARRIAGE**. WHAT IS IT?

**GENESIS 19:1-13**

NOTICE A SOCIETY THAT **IGNORES GOD** TO DO WHAT IT WANTS. WHY IS THAT?

**MATTHEW 5:28**

NOTICE HOW YOUR **INTERNAL FOCUS** MATTERS. WHY?

**ROMANS 1:18-32**

NOTICE THE **MISUSE** OF FREEWILL AND WHERE IT CAN LEAD. WHY IS THIS?

**1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-11**

NOTICE HOW WE UNDERSTAND “IDENTITY” IS TRANSFORMED BY JESUS WHEN WE **FOLLOW HIM**. WHY?

**1 CORINTHIANS 6:18**

NOTICE WE'RE TO FLEE AND NOT FEED LUST. WHY?

**GALATIANS 5:16**

NOTICE THAT WE'RE TO LIVE BY THE **SPIRIT**. WHY?

**2 TIMOTHY 2:22**

NOTICE A **PURE HEART** IS GREATER. WHY?

**JAMES 1:14-15**

NOTICE CURIOSITY/TEMPTATION CAN BE REDIRECTED TO GOD **BEFORE** WE TURN IT INTO SIN. WHY NOT DO THIS?

### QUESTION

After you take the time to read through that, is your attitude, “Whatever, I just think people should do whatever they want” or “God, whatever You've said, help me to follow You.” Or are you more like, “God, You get to define this. Reset me on this.”



## PART 2 CONTINUED

THIS NEXT PART IS GOING TO REQUIRE SOME COURAGE. IF YOU'RE WILLING TO LOOK AT WHAT GOD'S SAID ABOUT THIS TOPIC, IT'S GOING TO CLASH WITH WHAT EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING AROUND MAY BE SAYING.

SO THE QUESTION IS IF YOU'RE OPEN TO LETTING GOD ACTUALLY BE GOD... WE CALL HIM THAT, WHICH MEANS WE FOLLOW HIS LEAD ON ALL THINGS.

WILL YOU FOLLOW HIS LEAD ON THIS?

Now, if you were to total how often you've searched the Bible to intentionally learn or remember what God says on this topic, what might that number be? (Hey... don't worry, this isn't about guilt. It's about math. Just be honest.)

WRITE IT DOWN  
HERE →

Here's why this matters:

**Unless you're clear on even a few simple truths to stand for, you'll fall for anything that mathematically overexposes and overpowers you.**

We're constantly being handed ideas that encourage us to "hook up" with whomever or whatever "makes us happy." Soon it's not just a question of what we think or feel about someone else, but also what we think or feel about ourselves. It's why we may not correct our friends who have bought into the idea that them attaching themselves to whatever feels good to them is better than them finding real joy through a closer attachment to Jesus. You can't have it both ways – you either live for the pursuit of pleasure and ignore all of who God is and what He says on it, or you start with all of who God is and what He says on it as you then step into any type of pleasure He's for (and not against).

Do you believe He loves you? Do you believe His teaching (even the hard stuff on this) comes from a place of love that will redirect you if you are not on track with Him?