



# SATAN UNMASKED

— THE —  
TRUTH  
BEHIND THE  
— LIE —

DR. JAMES B.  
RICHARDS

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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated, with deep appreciation, to my friend and partner Jim Rill. Jim has helped expand my opportunity to take the message of God's love, power, and protection to a whole new group of people. Because of his skill, encouragement, and efforts, this book and the freedom it brings is in your hands today.



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## INTRODUCTION

Late one night in the early 1970s, there came a knock at my door. I scrambled out of bed and rushed downstairs to find a nearly hysterical woman and her husband huddled together on my front porch. They kept looking over their shoulders as if they were being followed. Everything about their behavior communicated an infectious fear. Their demeanor brought me in contact with a fear that was palpable. In just seconds I too was caught up in the emotion of the moment!

Her eyes were swollen from crying. He was speaking in half sentences that made no real sense as he continued to look over his shoulder, as if at any moment someone would lunge from the bushes and attack him. I glanced out into the street and saw nothing. Yet, a chill rushed up my spine. I quickly brought them into my living room and closed the door, lest the thing that seemed to be pursuing them attack us all. Their story unfolded into a bizarre experience that would tempt any believer to run and hide. Ironically, it all started earlier in the evening when they attended a seminar about spiritual warfare.

What should have been an evening of ministry about Jesus ended in gross exaggeration of the devil's power. This couple had walked with God for years with a limited knowledge of the finished work of Jesus, and now they feared for their lives. They felt sure that they were no match for Satan's



power. They felt that this knowledge somehow brought them to a new level of threat. That night was the beginning of weeks of personal ministry and teaching about the finished work of Jesus. That night also inspired me to search the Scriptures to gain a more realistic view of Satan, our defeated foe. It was the first of hundreds of ministry sessions with good people who lost sight of the truth behind the lie!

In the early 1970s the church seemed to awaken to a new awareness of the devil. It was, unarguably, essential that we come to a better awareness of Satan and his strategies. But it seemed that the truth about the devil was somehow buried behind a lie. Our view of the devil and his power became so exaggerated that it rivaled the truth about the finished work of Jesus. People, like the couple in my living room that night, left seminars about the devil afraid and confused. They no longer trusted Jesus as their Lord and protector. They became devil-conscious and lost their God-consciousness.

I, like many people, went through a period of fear and anxiety as well, not knowing the truth from the lie. I too have been drawn into some of the extremes about the devil. But in the back of my mind I kept asking, "How can this be true if Jesus really did what the Bible said He did?"

After years of preaching the Gospel, traveling around the world, and encountering nearly every form of opposition from witch doctors to Satanists, I have come to the realization that most of what we have believed about the devil is not true. He is the father of all lies. And the greatest lie that he continues to perpetuate is about him and his power.

The grand lie, which is the one thing he is good at, is very cleverly disguised. It contains just enough truth that to challenge the lie seems to challenge the truth! We use scriptures

## INTRODUCTION

that portray him prior to the resurrection and assume that to be his present standing. These portrayals were true at one time, but today they are lies. We attempt to understand him through the testimonies of those who at one time followed him. The truth and the lie become so entwined that only the Word of God, like a two-edged sword, can sever the two.

The presently accepted beliefs about the devil are, for the most part, religious myths that stand in opposition to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. Instead of giving us faith, they rob us of faith. Instead of giving us confidence, they make us fearful and intimidated. The Gospel will never make us feel fearful, inadequate, or intimidated! *“For God has not given us a spirit of fear [intimidation], but of power and of love and of a sound mind”* (2 Timothy 1:7 NKJV).

The following pages may not answer every question about the devil. They will, however, expose many of the myths that have robbed us of confidence, peace, and power. These myths have taken our focus away from Jesus and His finished work and put our attention on the enemy. As you read these pages you will see the truth that is hidden behind the lie of his greatness and power. You will never again fear the devil. You will no longer be subject to his devices. You will see him in his rightful place—under your feet!



## CHAPTER 1

### TRADITION VS. TRUTH

**T**radition is an incredibly powerful tool. In fact, Jesus said it was so powerful that it could make the Word of God have no effect in your life.<sup>1</sup> This neutralizing effect happens when tradition becomes as much a part of our belief system as the Word of God. Tradition is the product of the ideas and perceptions that have been repeated so frequently that they become accepted as reality. Once this happens, they are as important to us as the Bible itself. Tradition is not something about which we are passive. It is something we attempt to guard, maintain, and defend. It is a part of who we are. We understand ourselves through our traditions; therefore, we fight to preserve them.

Tradition becomes a part of our emotional fabric through a simple mental process. Once we accept a certain opinion, the mind begins to seek equilibrium. In other words, if you believe it to be true, the mind seeks to prove it is true. In fact, if you do not determine something to be false and you continually expose yourself to the idea or behavior, it will, in time, be determined to be acceptable and factual. This is the subtlety of deceit.

This isn't something that happens on a mere emotional level. Your mind works till your beliefs and your sense of reality

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1. Mark 7:9-13.

are well balanced. There is a set of nerves at the base of the skull called the Reticular Activating System. Once we accept something or pass a judgment, activity in this area of the brain affects our reasoning process. A neurological process begins in our brain to establish it as fact. It alters our ability to perceive. It literally causes us to see it as we believe it to be. I call this process “selective reasoning.”

*If you believe something to be true,  
your mind will seek to prove it true.*

In selective reasoning we stop seeing things as they are and seek to prove what we have already chosen to believe. It is like looking at a word and thinking it says “horse.” You read the sentence over and over again and finally realize that it says “house.” You could have sworn that it said h-o-r-s-e. Why were you so sure, yet so wrong? Your mind had already determined what it was seeing.

### **Does Your Tradition Make God’s Word Ineffective?**

Jesus identified tradition as a powerful force that must be dealt with if the Word of God is to have power in our lives. He stated that the Pharisees accepted tradition and rejected the Word of God. The *New International Version* says it this way: “Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down” (Mark 7:13). Their tradition “dis-empowered” or neutralized the Word of God in their lives. The Word was still true, but it had no effect. Yet, they were certain they were serving God to the letter of perfection.

When we think of people who have problems with tradition, we tend to think more of the denominational people who are somewhat stuck in their hundred-year-old programs. Or we think of those who are very conservative in their approach to Christian faith. However, many of the more contemporary groups have equally strong traditions. Those traditions might not be as old, but they are just as restrictive as those of the older denominations.

Our traditions begin the moment we insist that we see. The moment a new paradigm is established, we have begun to form a new tradition. It is at that moment that we become blind to anything other than our point of view. Once it is accepted as truth, we begin a process of unquestioned repetition until we can't conceive of any other point of view.

The Pharisees heard the message of God's love and forgiveness, yet they insisted their doctrine was right. Because they clung to their point of view, they could never see what the Scriptures really said. Thus they not only rejected the truth, they also crucified the One who brought the truth. *"Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, 'What? Are we blind too?' Jesus said, 'If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains' "* (John 9:40-41 NIV). Insisting that we see is the road to blindness and tradition. Once something is accepted as fact, it is acted upon without thought or questioning.

All that we must do to see is to honestly "consider other possibilities." The Word of God holds so many possibilities to which we have already closed our mind. Therefore it is impossible to see them. We are so consumed with defending our position that we, like the Pharisees, crucify those who bring the truth that will set us free. We must relieve ourselves of the

need to prove we are right. Do not place so much of your self-worth on being right. What I see about any subject may be right or wrong. It may have nuggets of truth as well as

*Don't place so much of  
your self-worth on being right.*

nuggets of error. Being right or wrong changes neither who I am in Jesus nor my position before those to whom I minister. We place far too much emphasis on the need to be right and too little emphasis on the need to serve and build up.

### **Finding the Truth About the Devil**

In order to see the devil as he is, we must look at the scriptures that we know are about him. We often attempt to grasp what we do not know, or even have the means to know. We must focus on what is certain and separate fact from assumption. We should not feel a need to create doctrine about what we do not know. If we do not know, we do not know. God will still be our God if we do not have all the answers. If the Bible is not clear on an issue, then God obviously did not feel that it was important enough for elaboration. If God did not elaborate, neither should we.

The law of “first reference” is essential to discovering any truth. We should go back as far in time as possible to discover the truth about the devil. We should look at the earliest references to determine how we must view his beginning. Then we should look to what Jesus accomplished through His death, burial, and resurrection to understand who he is today. Many



of the current doctrinal concepts of Satan start with facts. However, they quickly enter into the realm of speculation and ultimately come into conflict with the finished work of Jesus.

In the following chapters we shall deal with the commonly accepted myths concerning the identity of Satan. The most destructive error is not that which is completely false. No! The most diabolical deception is the one that contains just enough truth to make the lie pass under the radar screen undetected or, in this case, unquestioned. Within each myth there is a degree of absolute truth. The challenging aspect of sorting this out will be the refusal to attempt to support the myth with the truth.

In order to get to the truth, we will begin with how Satan came into being. In these passages of Scripture we will seek to unravel the lie that is hidden behind the truth. In so doing we will gain a more scriptural concept of who Satan really is. Understanding his origins can give us clear insights into how he thinks and functions, and ultimately how he attempts to work in our lives.

Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 are accepted by the majority of scholars as the definitive source for understanding Satan's fall. We will look at these passages and identify what we should clearly accept. Likewise, we will attempt to identify the speculation and subsequent tradition that we have accepted along with the facts. In so doing we will discover the tradition that has caused us to create a larger-than-life concept of the devil. I want us to look at Satan's fall and understand who he was in eternity and where his fall places him today.

Make it your prayer to have eyes that see and ears that hear. Make a determination that you will only see the devil as he is through the finished work of Jesus.



## CHAPTER 2

### THE WORSHIP LEADER MYTH

One of the most commonly accepted theories about the devil is the worship leader theory. Like other false assumptions, it robs God of His glory and robs man of his dignity. This theory says that Satan, prior to his fall, was the worship leader in heaven. Many people go to extravagant lengths in their attempt to describe who he was and what his function was. This theory takes the verse that says, “*Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth*” (Ezekiel 28:14), and takes a quantum leap to say, “Satan covered the throne of God.”

This commonly accepted assumption is not supported in any scripture. But like all assumptions, once accepted as true, they alter the way we see other things. Ezekiel 28:13 says, “*the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee.*” This is where this assumption is developed. Since pipes and tabrets are musical instruments, it is assumed that he was a living musical instrument that existed to provide praise and worship for God. From here, those who embrace this theory extrapolate beyond reality.

I like to remind people that this passage is about his splendor. It goes to great lengths to describe the precious stones that were his covering. The words *tabrets* and *pipes* are both words that can be used to describe settings into which precious stones are placed. The word *tabret* is more commonly translated as “timbrel,” but in this context it would use the

second translation as a setting for a precious stone. Thus, the idea of a living musical instrument begins to lose its logic when taken in context.

*The context of scripture does not support Satan's being a worship leader.*

This theory is further developed by the phrase, "*the anointed cherub that covereth.*" Starting from the assumption that he was a worship leader becomes the perspective from which other scriptures are interpreted. If he was the worship leader, he must have covered the throne of God. These two assumptions seem to answer the questions about these passages. In light of the previously accepted theory, it makes sense.

This theory, however, presents an image of Satan that makes him closer to God than anyone in heaven. Again, this is completely inconsistent with what we do know about God in eternity. John 1:1 says, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.*" "The Word" refers to Jesus. It says He was with God, or literally "face to face" with God. There was no one closer to God the Father than Jesus. Satan was not the one closest to God. Satan was not the one closest to the throne of God. To place Satan in this intimate relationship with God de-thrones the Lord Jesus.

It is a myth that Satan was the worship leader in heaven, the leader in praise to God. It simply is not borne out by the Scriptures. So what else do we "believe" about the devil that is a myth?

We hope you've enjoyed this free sample of *Satan Unmasked*. For more information on purchasing *Satan Unmasked*, please visit

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# SATAN UNMASKED: THE TRUTH BEHIND THE LIE

Who is Satan, really? Far too many Christians have a distorted image of the devil. Contrary to popular belief, he is not a powerful spiritual being! He is a defeated foe; Jesus has stripped him of all power and authority. Satan is NOT our problem; it is ignorance. What we don't know WILL hurt us. When we know the truth, the truth will set us free. The Book of Isaiah teaches that a time will come when we will look on Satan in utter astonishment, and we will say, "Is this the one who made the nations tremble?"

Join best-selling author Dr. James B. Richards on a journey of deeper understanding as he exposes the truth of Satan and his "so-called" power. You will discover how the traditions of the past have presented a distorted image of the enemy's power versus the ultimate power of the finished work of Jesus.

**THERE IS NO REASON FOR ANY BELIEVER TO  
SPEND EVEN ONE DAY IN FEAR OF THE DEVIL.**

*Satan Unmasked* will change and free you like nothing you have ever read.

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