

27- Identify the Enemy Mark 9:38-41

I- The Enemy:

The first mention of the enemy in the Bible of the enemy is early in the history of mankind. The enemy disguises himself. He appears as a serpent in *Genesis 3:1* *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?* We see him described in *Revelation 12:9* as *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

We see from places like *2 Corinthians 11:3* *...as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty...* that he is shrew and clever. An then there is *2 Corinthians 11:14* *And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.*

This should not surprise us because after all Satan was the chief angel before he was cast out of heaven. *Ezekiel 28:14* *Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.*

We see his downfall and reason in *Ezekiel 28:17 NASB* *"Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor. I cast you to the ground; I put you before kings, That they may see you.*

II- The Enemies Reputation:

Look at what Jesus said about him and then the warning given in the epistle of Peter.

Murderer and Liar: *John 8:44* *Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*

Devourer: *1 Peter 5:8 HCSB* *Be sober! Be on the alert! Your adversary the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour.*

III- Another Selfish Move:

Remember that Jesus was in the midst of the rebuke for selfishness when this dialogue took place. Perhaps they were upset that this man had success when they had failed in *Mark 9:14-29. Mark 9:38* *And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbid him, because he followeth not us.*

It is clear he was not one of the inner circle. They had taken it upon themselves to forbid the man and thusly had closed ranks on their privilege and place. They had in effect done the very thing that Jesus condemned the rulers of the day for. They had stood between God and man by thinking they could choose what was of God for their own selfish wishes.

It is obvious to me that the disciples considered the man an enemy of the gospel or at least an enemy of their status.

IV- Team Players:

So who is the enemy? Who is our enemy? May I suggest it is someone who is anti-christ, against Christ? John said later in his epistle, yes the same John who is now forbidding others, the following. *1 John 4:2-3* *Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3 And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

An enemy of the gospel is someone who would relegate Christ to less than He is, making Him only a prophet, a teacher, someone who would deny His deity. How should we treat these that are against Christ? With a heart that breaks from their lostness. Have a heart that desires them to not be an enemy of the gospel but a brother with a relationship to Christ.

Mark 9:39 *But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me. 40* *For he that is not against us is on our part.*

Jesus told them that someone who is not against us is not the enemy. A great example is. *Philippians 1:15-18* *Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: 16* *The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: 17* *But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. 18* *What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.* Praise God we should rejoice when someone comes to faith in Christ.

V- The Rewarder:

We spend a lot of time in life being envious of others who are more gifted, more affluent, or a multitude of things. May I suggest that many times we are our own worst enemy? Notice that Jesus tells them that there is a reward for serving in the name of Jesus. *Mark 9:41* *For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward.* Someone who gives us a cup of water in the name of Christ is rewarded. May I flesh this out to say that which we do for Him also will be rewarded? He is a rewarder of those that serve Him and others in His name.