



SESSION 1

THE MENACE BEHIND THE MASK

Theme: God uses His Word to help us identify and resist Satan's false teachings.

I. Satan's _____

A. Discourage believers from _____ the gospel (Gen. 3; 1 Peter 5:8)

Discouraged and fearful believers won't _____ Satan's _____ with the _____.

Satan is the _____ of _____. He wants believers to _____ God's _____ and trustworthiness.

B. Distract unbelievers with _____ gospels (2 Cor. 11:3, 4; Gal. 1:6, 7)

Satan borrows _____ of _____ from God and mixes it with _____ to misrepresent the _____ way of salvation.

II. Satan's _____

A. Use _____ (Gen. 3:1; 2 Cor. 11:14)

Satan still uses _____ as a mask to distract unbelievers from the true gospel. His masks appear to be the _____ of salvation.

B. Use _____ (2 Cor. 11:13–15)

In the present Church Age, Satan uses people, his minions, to present his _____ _____ to the world.

All false apostles will suffer for _____ in the _____ of _____ if they don't accept the true gospel of Christ.

III. Believers' _____

A. Be _____ with God's _____ (Acts 20:29–32; 2 Tim. 3:13–17)

God will use His Word to _____ believers spiritually. But believers have to commit to _____ and _____ God's Word.

B. Be _____ to Satan's _____ (Acts 20:31; 1 Peter 5:8)

Being alert includes educating ourselves about the _____ and _____ of _____ religions.



Time with God

Read each passage and answer the questions to spend personal time with God.

MONDAY

Read Genesis 3:15; John 3:16; 1 Peter 5:8.

Satan “roars” to discourage believers from sharing the gospel. What might he use to discourage you?

God promised Adam and Eve that a “Seed” would take the punishment for their sin. Jesus is that “Seed.” Praise God for providing a solution for your sin and for being faithful and trustworthy. Through Christ, you can courageously shine the gospel light in Satan’s realm.

TUESDAY

Read 2 Corinthians 11:3, 4; Galatians 1:6, 7.

Paul warned about a distorted gospel. What is the true gospel? (See 1 Corinthians 15:1–4 for help.)

Satan uses distorted gospels as a tool to distract unbelievers from the true gospel. What might someone add to the gospel to distort it?

WEDNESDAY

Read Genesis 3:1; 2 Corinthians 11:14.

Why did Satan disguise himself as God’s good creation when he tempted Eve? What did he want her to believe about his intentions?

Satan still uses “disguises” to present himself as a messenger from God. He is very successful in deceiving people. Who do you know who has fallen for one of Satan’s false gospels? Pray for that person.

THURSDAY

Read 2 Corinthians 11:13–15.

Satan uses those who believe his false gospels as his primary means to spread his false gospels. When has one of Satan’s minions tried to get you to believe a false gospel?

What will be the “end” of those who dedicate their lives to sincerely spreading one of Satan’s false gospels?

FRIDAY

Read Acts 20:29–32; 2 Timothy 3:13–17.

What did Paul encourage Timothy to do while others were spreading false doctrine?

What will you do to fully prepare yourself to recognize false teachings in today’s world?

SATURDAY

Read Acts 20:31; 1 Peter 5:8.

How seriously did Paul take the threat of false teachings and distorted gospels?

Thank God for making the truth so clear in His Word. Ask Him to help you share the truth clearly and faithfully.

Tough Questions Answered



How can I reach those deceived by Satan's lies?



People involved in false religions often resist the truth and may seem unreachable. What are some ways you can witness effectively to them?

First, pray for the Spirit's guidance. Jesus promised that His Holy Spirit will teach and guide believers (John 14:26; 16:13). You can trust Him to give you the right words as you witness. Ask the Spirit to prepare that person's heart to listen to your testimony.

Second, begin on common ground. Follow Paul's example in his speech to a pagan Greek audience (Acts 17:22–31). The Greeks believed in many gods but also included an altar dedicated to "The Unknown God." Paul explained that this God they called "unknown" was the true, living God. Paul then presented the truth of Christ. When you witness, begin with a truth your listener accepts, then gradually present the gospel.

Third, approach people of other religions with respect. You can expose their false beliefs without being rude. Paul taught Timothy not to be quarrelsome but to correct his opponents (unbelievers) with gentleness (2 Tim. 2:24–26). Paul wrote that believers are to give their testimony "seasoned with salt," meaning truthful and effective. He added that believers should witness with grace (Col. 4:6). Without grace and respect, your testimony loses its effectiveness.

Finally, be patient. It takes time for people to realize their beliefs are wrong. Think about Jesus' patience with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:4–26). She didn't understand all Jesus was saying at first. But Jesus gave her time, allowing her to ask questions and to think about His words.

You might know someone involved in a false religion. And you probably have friends or classmates under the influence of false teachings and philosophies. Your honest but respectful witness can help lead them to God's truth.

Without grace and respect, your testimony loses its effectiveness.

A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing



Jesus' comparison of false prophets to wolves in sheep's clothing has inspired numerous writers and storytellers throughout the centuries. In the 15th century, an Italian professor told a tale in which a wolf disguised himself in a sheepskin to blend in with the other sheep. Each day, the wolf killed one of the sheep. Eventually, the shepherd recognized the "sheep" as a wolf and hanged him on a tree. When the other shepherds asked him why he hanged one of his sheep, the shepherd replied: "The skin belongs to a sheep, but the activities were those of a wolf." The moral of the fable reflects Jesus' warning not to judge people by outward appearances but by their character and actions. He said we will know true prophets by their fruit (Matt. 7:16–20).

Be on guard. Test teachers' words and actions against God's Word. False teachers will violate God's Word, showing that they are "ravenous wolves" at heart.



Memory Verse Review



Memory Verses—2 Corinthians 11:13, 14

Paul exposed false teachers who claimed to be preaching the truth. The false teachers made themselves seem like Christ's apostles, but their teaching distorted God's Word. Paul was not surprised since the teachers followed Satan's lead. Satan disguises himself as a messenger of light. To the unaware, his lies appear as God's truth. But only darkness lies behind Satan's shiny mask.

1. What are some ways Satan deceives teens today?
2. What types of people might be easy targets for Satan's false teachers?
3. Pray for wisdom to recognize Satan's deceitful ways and expose his lies.

Additional Memory Verses—Matthew 7:15; 1 Peter 5:8.

Measuring Growth



Satan actively pursues the spiritual destruction of those who have not yet turned to God. His plan includes casting doubt on God's Word and spreading lies. He uses false religions and philosophies as a mask of light, making false teachings appear to be God's truth. Satan's minions do his work on earth. False teachers and preachers undermine churches and sway the spiritually weak with false doctrines and gospels. To defend against Satan's destructive deception, believers must arm themselves with God's Word and stay alert by learning to recognize false teachings, religions, and philosophies.

Look for the following indicators that you trust God's Word to reveal Satan's false teachings.

1. I understand Satan as the source of all teachings that contradict God's Word.
2. I test new ideas against the truth found in Scripture.
3. I am committed to consistent Bible study to build a strong defense against Satan's lies.