

SEEN & UNSEEN

A Study of Two Realms



'While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.' II Corinthians 4:18

The Bible tells us clearly that there are two realms – the seen and unseen. These two realms are not only connected, one relies heavily on what happens in the other. How do we know how to successfully navigate both realms if we don't know what the connection between the two is?

Over the next few days we will look at what this connection is and the navigation tools of both realms in more detail.



Day 1

The Unseen

'While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.' II Corinthians 4:18

Paul makes it known to us that there are two realms: seen and unseen. The realm we can see requires minimal explanation because we live in and engage with it on a daily basis. However, we also engage with the unseen realm, perhaps without realising it. Other than the Holy Trinity (the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) what makes up the unseen realm?

'Therefore, angels are only servants—spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation.' Hebrews 1:14 (NLT)

'Bless the Lord, you His angels, who excel in strength, who do His word, Heeding the voice of His word.' Psalms 103:20

'For our struggle is not against flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this [present] darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) places.' Ephesians 6:12 (AMP)

'The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.' John 10:10

The verses above highlight some of the key participants in the unseen realm, both for and against the children of God. The angels are sent by God to minister to us. Their function is to bring answers to prayers and care for our needs. We are not meant to pray to angels, rather we pray to God and the angels serve us as we do God's will.

On the other hand, Satan and his cohorts are there to try and hinder us as best they can.

How then do we engage this realm? We're going to look at this over the next few days.

Day 2

Our Words

'While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.' II Corinthians 4:18

Since we're surrounded by what we can see, how do we begin to shift our perspective to the unseen? The first thing we must understand is that our words shape our environment and our future. It's our words that the unseen realm uses to create the reality that we will eventually see, whether we realize it or not.

'Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it and indulge it will eat its fruit and bear the consequences of their words.' Proverbs 18:21 (AMP)

'You are snared by the words of your mouth; You are taken by the words of your mouth.' Proverbs 6:2

'Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.' I Peter 5:8

'But I tell you, on the day of judgment people will have to give an accounting for every careless or useless word they speak.' Matthew 12:36 (AMP)

'Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.' Daniel 10:12

The same way angelic forces are activated by our words (see Daniel's example above) is the same way we may unknowingly open the door to negative influences based on what we say. The Bible tells us that the devil is always looking for who to devour and will take advantage of any opportunity we make available.

Reflect: Words are powerful! Watch what you say. Let us pray as the psalmist did in Psalm 141:3, 'Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips.'

Day 3

The Word of God

'So will My word be which goes out of My mouth; It will not return to Me void (useless, without result), Without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.' Isaiah 55:11 (AMP)

An incredibly powerful tool to use in the unseen realm is the word of God. The Lord has assured us that none of His words will return to Him void, but it will yield results. Those results will take place first in the spirit realm and then be manifested in the natural realm.

When Jesus was tempted by the devil during his earthly ministry, he didn't argue with logic or any means other than the word of God. His response to every temptation was, "it is written....". That exercise gives us a template to follow in handling issues that come our way, declaring what the word of God says about the situation.

But how can you declare what you don't know? A tool that the enemy uses against God's children is our ignorance. There are many things you are crying out to God for which He has already given you in the spirit. But if you don't know this, you will be exhausting spiritual firepower for something you already have and neglecting to pray for the real issues.

'Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation! Selah Your God has commanded your strength; Strengthen, O God, what You have done for us.' Psalms 68:19,28

'Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ...' Ephesians 1:3

Reflect: Child of God, you are already more blessed than you realise. However, you cannot navigate life successfully with a closed Bible.

Day 4 Prayer

'And when you pray...' Matthew 6:5a

'Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' Matthew 6:10

That God desires something for you does not mean it will automatically come to pass. Prayer is the mechanism through which you effect God's will here on earth. Jesus said in the verse above, "When" you pray, not "IF" you pray making it clear that prayer is mandatory for the believer. When teaching his disciples the pattern for prayer, Jesus also showed us that it is prayer that makes it possible for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

'Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.' I John 5:14-15

It's important to note that prayer isn't just about listing our complaints and demands to God. It is supposed to be a two-way communication where we talk to the Father and also open ourselves up to hearing directly from Him what His will for our lives or a given situation is. When we know His will and we ask for it in the place of prayer, we know that we will have what we asked for at the appointed time.

'Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;' Philippians 4:6

'Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;' Colossians 4:2

'The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.' James 5:16b

When things in our lives are not lining up to what God has said concerning us, our posture should not be one of complaint or defeat. Rather we should diligently take it up in the place of prayer and turn the situation around. We also should not leave prayer as the last resort when we have exhausted all other options. Prayer should be our default position because it is in the place of prayer that God's hand moves on our behalf.

Reflect: For our prayer to be effective in moving things in the unseen realm to the seen, it must line up to God's will. The first place to seek God's will is in His word.

Day 5 Fasting

“Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.” Matthew 6:16

Jesus says “when” not “If” you fast, meaning He expects believers to fast. Why? The Bible tells us that the flesh and the spirit are at war with one another (Gal 5:17, 1 Peter 2:11), so both cannot be in charge at the same time. Fasting is not about going on a hunger strike, it is meant to deny the flesh in order to strengthen the spirit.

What good is fasting when you keep on fighting and quarrelling? This kind of fasting will never get you anywhere with me. Isaiah 58:4

Fasting isn't about stopping food and maintaining the status quo in other areas of your life – gossiping, bitterness, quarrelling, etc. It's consciously refraining from something pleasurable (it could be all or types of food, social media, etc.) for a period during with the goal to draw nearer to God. Fasting isn't meant to be done just so other people know, rather it's a private matter between you and God.

So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. Acts 13:3

The apostles understood a key strategy in navigating the unseen realm: they didn't embark on taking on new territories or new assignments without fasting and praying first. By reducing the influence of the flesh when we fast, we increase the sensitivity of our spirit to God's voice and the promptings of the Holy Spirit, which enables us manoeuvre through life more effectively.

'However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.'" Matthew 17:21

Combining prayer with fasting is also a believer's strategy for spiritual warfare. Remember the forces we are contending with are not visible to the naked eye. When we fast and pray we access supernatural insight and strategies by the power of the Holy Spirit which we otherwise may not perceive.

Reflect: Fasting and prayer helps us position ourselves to get to the root of issues, as well as launch into new areas. Don't short-change by neglecting this powerful strategy God has given us. Prayerfully ask the Holy Spirit when and how to fast, He will definitely answer you.



Day 6

The Name of Jesus

“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,” Philippians 2:9-10

“And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” Matthew 28:18

It is impossible to consistently handle things unseen successfully without understanding the power in the name of Jesus. When Jesus completed His assignment of reconciliation through His crucifixion and resurrection, He was given the name above all names. Which means everything is under His authority. But that’s not where it ends.

“And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” Mark 16:17-18

He has also given we who confess with our mouths and believe in our hearts that He is our Lord and saviour the right to use that Name. We are not to use it loosely or casually, but with understanding of the power and authority it carries. Make no mistake, the unseen realm recognises and responds to the power and authority in the name of Jesus. However, it also recognises when someone doesn’t understand the power that name carries. Lacking this understanding can lead to a lot of unnecessary losses in the battles of life.

There is more power in the name of Jesus than we may realise and the beauty of it all is that as believers we have the right to use this name in every aspect of our lives. It’s a shield, a defence, an armour, and the most powerful weapon of attack against the forces of darkness contending with us.

Reflect: You don’t have the power to effectively address situations in your life in your own strength. But with the delegated authority you have as a believer you are unstoppable. Challenges will come, but we have a promise of victory in the name of He who has overcome the world (John 16:33).

Day 7 The Enemy

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

“...Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” Revelation 12:12b

We wrap up this series by making mention of the fact that we have an enemy who constantly wages war against us. It would be naive not to acknowledge this. It's important to note that the devil isn't the opposite of God. He's a creation and therefore cannot compete with God in any way, shape or form. Also note that he has already been judged and knows his end.

“The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” Revelation 20:10

Until the scripture above is fulfilled, he wages war on the earth. However as believers armed with the power of the name of Jesus, we have authority over the devil. Remember, Jesus has authority over ALL and that includes the devil. Likewise because of the authority Jesus has delegated to us, we also have authority over the enemy and his cohorts.

As a believer you have the right, the power and the authority to cancel every working of the enemy in your life and the lives of others. But certain things can give the enemy an upper hand over us: sin, bitterness, strife, unforgiveness and the other areas listed in Galatians 5:19-20. When we engage in these, we open the door for the enemy to work in our lives.

“For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.” I John 2:16

One of the enemy's strategies is to get us so consumed with ourselves that we take our eyes off the things that have eternal relevance, thereby rendering us impotent because we don't even engage in Bible study, prayer, fasting, not to talk of declaring our rights as listed in the Bible and implementing our authority in the name of Jesus.

Reflect: A lot of the things we give priority to in life are just tools the enemy uses to distract us from functioning effectively as believers. Let's take the winning position, fixing our eyes on Jesus the author and perfected of our faith.

Thanks for completing the study. We'll love to hear from you, so please connect with us on:

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