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**Presentation Transcript**  
**The Devil's Best Kept Secret**  
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**July 7, 2017**

People are curious about the devil, Satanism, demons, the occult – all those things come up a lot. People are getting rich by playing on the curiosity that folks have – writers or film makers, for example, or rock musicians. There are sensational articles in papers when some crime is suspected involving Satanism or anything smacking of the occult. Years ago there was a guy named Anton LaVey that founded the Church of Satan. We know that a lot of the metal bands talk about the devil a lot. There are videos with satanic symbols – to peak the curiosity of mostly kids, I think. The world sees the devil as secretive and mysterious. And people are curious to learn about him – and afraid of him at the same time. So it makes it all the more mysterious in some sort of Halloweenish kind of way.

The Bible actually says quite a bit about the devil. God tells us he's a liar. Look in John 8:44.

**John 8:44** – *“You belong to your father the devil,” Jesus said. “And you want to carry out your father’s desire”* – talking to, I think, the Pharisees. *“He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth. But there is no truth in him, When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”*

The father of lies – so the concept was originally his. He invented lying. He was the first liar. He's also a manipulator. There are many instances where he has possessed people. It's not a very subtle way to manipulate people. It's direct. But he also puts thoughts in people's minds to get them to do what he wants – and other ways that he does that as well. Judas would be a well-known example of that. He was manipulated into giving up Christ.

We're told, too, that he's a deceiver. All of these things have to do with lying in some way, don't they? He has quite a repertoire. Revelation 12 says:

**Revelation 12:9** – *The great dragon was cast out – that old serpent called the devil and Satan – which deceives the whole world. He was cast out to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

So he deceives the whole world! He's been at it a while and he's been quite successful. He's lying to us and manipulating us to prevent us from learning the truth of God. He's deceived people about the law of God. He's confused people about the resurrection, about the hidden truth of man's origin. Most people today believe they are related to monkeys. Of all the truth he hides from man, which truth do you suppose he fears the most however? Which one does he try to cover up the most? Which truth, from the Bible, does he desperately want to hide from all people? What is the devil's best kept secret?

In the movie, *The Usual Suspects*, one of the characters, Kaiser Soze, tells us that the devil's greatest deception is that he has humanity convinced that he doesn't exist. Could that be the greatest secret? Well, if it is, it's not very well-kept. Think of all the movies made about the devil – and the rock songs. Of course, as our nation moves further away a belief in God, we also move further away from belief in the devil. So there is some validity there, I'll grant you that. But secret or not, I think there's something else that he desperately wants to keep from us – to hide from us – more than his existence. What could it be?

Well, maybe it's his presence in the occult. During World War II, the allies created a diversion to trick the Germans. They built mock-up planes, tanks, barracks and other building. They brought Patton to England – whom the Germans feared. They created a fog of phony radio communications – all to make the Germans believe the allied assault was coming across the English Channel. But it was all a diversion. Like the occult, it was supposedly cloaked in secrecy, yet they allowed the Germans to find out about it. This took their mind off what they were really after – a main assault in Normandy. So, I think the devil lets us know about the occult in the newspapers and TV and movies and that sort of thing – the occult arts, witchcraft, demon worship, séances and all that stuff – it's just a smoke screen. The occult is a mystery too easily cracked to be his best kept secret. There's got to be something else.

What do we know about the devil? Perhaps, if we knew what he's doing, it would lend a clue. Look with me in Luke 8:18. This is an amazing statement that Jesus made. He's a human on the earth, and He said:

**Luke 8:18** – *I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Wow! We wonder if He remembered that or He just read it in the Bible and realized He must have seen it. I don't know.*

The prophets, Ezekiel and Isaiah, tell us he was once an archangel of God, serving at the throne of God, but he tried to take over the government of God and was cast back down to the earth. So, since he's been here, what's he been doing? 2 Corinthians 4:4 tells us this – Paul says:

**2 Corinthians 4:4** – *In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* He has placed himself in God's place in the world. And he's blinded everybody. And people are actually worshipping him, instead of the true God by what they do mostly and what they believe.

So he controls man's religion. 2 Corinthians 11:14 says this:

**2 Corinthians 11:14** – *And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.*

Satan is also involved in geo-politics. Daniel 10:11 talks about a time, where an archangel, we think, came to him – picking it up in verse 11:

**Daniel 10:11** – *And he said unto me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you and stand upright, for unto you I am now sent." And when he spoke this word unto me, I stood trembling. And then he said to me, "Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day you did set your heart to understand, and to chasten yourself before God, your words were heard, and I am come for your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days – obviously, no human could withstand an archangel for a second, let alone three weeks! So it's not talking about a human being. But lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there with the kings of Persia.*

So the devil has control of the empires of this world. And he does that, sometimes through arch-demons, controlling various nations. That's what we're told. Know from the passage, also, that Satan is not only active in geo-politics, but he is also actively resisting the plan of God. That archangel – probably Gabriel – along with Michael...well, they're God's messengers. They're in the business of doing His work.

The prophets tell us Satan said in his heart, "I shall be like the Most High." So, do you know what the name, Michael, means? It means *who is like God* – just the guy to send to deal with somebody that wants to be like the Most High. You can't be. Who is like God? Pretty interesting.

Besides resisting God's plan, he also has animosity toward human beings, especially those who obey God. How do we know that? Well, look at Luke 22:31.

**Luke 22:31** – *And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat." He wants to kill everybody. How do I know that? Well, look with me in Revelation 16:12.*

**Revelation 16:12** – *Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the kings from the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. So this is a pretty picture, isn't it? For they are spirits of demons, performing signs which go out to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty.*

So, he's going to drive a governmental entity – the Bible calls the beast – and his demon princes will goad the Gentiles in the east – east of the River Euphrates (well, we know that's in Iraq. So what's east of there? Well, you have India, you have China, you've got Southeast Asia and a good bit of Russia. The River Euphrates, we know where it is) – and they're going to over the River Euphrates, and come to Jerusalem to fight the Battle of Armageddon - a battle so fierce that, if God did not intervene, no humans would survive on earth. So, some awesome weaponry there.

Read with me in Matthew 24:21.

**Matthew 24:21** – *Then shall be great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should be no flesh be saved. But for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened.*

So Jesus tells us that Satan is laying his plan – lying and deceiving and manipulating us closer to the day when he will attempt to kill all of humanity.

Now, Satan doesn't like us to know these things. That we know these things about Satan sheds uncomfortable light on him. He doesn't like it. He'd rather we not know it, because it exposes him for what he is. It penetrates his cover. But while he doesn't like it, he can still work.

I talk to people all the time that understand that Satan is the god of this world, yet they're still deceived. They will not act on the truth they know, because they do not understand the devil's greatest secret. Satan doesn't care if people know bits and pieces of the truth, but there is one item of information that he is desperate to keep from human kind – and from me and you, too! But too late there, because we know. He has hidden this truth from the world so cleverly, so completely, so subtly that only a few have ever learned it. It's quite likely that it outrages him that some understand it. And I can guarantee that he's desperate to keep any more from learning it, because he knows that a man understand the secret, that man can foil Satan's plan for him. So he's desperate to hide it.

Now, there are certain key times in history when the devil has intervened, such as in the Garden of Eden. He started manipulating and lying right from the very beginning to Adam and Eve to get them off the track. Think also of Satan's intervention when Christ was an infant – he tried to kill Him when He was a baby by killing all the babies in Bethlehem – or when he tried to tempt

Christ to fail when He came here as a human being before He started His ministry, or when he manipulated Judas into betraying Christ, or when he whipped the Jews and Romans into a frenzy, causing them to kill Him. We also know that he has resisted the leaders of Israel and the church down through the ages. And we know he will resist the two witnesses at the end time. In short, he resists the plan of God at every turn. Why?

Well, let's look in Matthew 4:23.

**Matthew 4:23** – *Now Jesus went about all Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people.*

So what was He doing? He was preaching the gospel of the Kingdom. The word *gospel* means *good news*. So He was preaching the good news about the Kingdom of God. Clearly, the devil did not want this good news known – desperate to stop it.

So what kind of good news are we talking about? Well, the good news about the Kingdom of God – God's government set up here, salvation from sin, the Holy Spirit – the power to overcome Satan's nature in us. By the way, if you want to know more about how his nature came to be in us, look up a presentation on our Website called, *Flesh and Spirit*. That's [liferesource.org](http://liferesource.org).

Now look with me at Revelation 20, and verse 4:

**Revelation 20:4** – *And I saw thrones and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark in their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*

It's pretty clear that this is talking about on the earth, isn't it? So somebody that lives and reigns with Christ on the earth for a thousand years has to be immortal. Christ is going to come here and rule in Satan's stead. He's going to take back what was handed over in the beginning and He's going to be the King of the world now. And we're going to rule with Him. And this enrages the devil and frightens him. This, in a general way, is the wrapping that covers the greatest secret, but it's not the secret itself.

What's inside the wrapping? Well, let's get a little closer in Colossians 1:26.

**Colossians 1:26** – *The mystery – there it is! – which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints – to them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you – the hope of glory.*

So this scripture gives us a massive clue to the answer to our question. Notice the phrase, *the riches of the glory*. The riches of the glory. What does that mean? Well, *riches* modifies *glory*, doesn't it? So we're talking about how rich the glory will be. Yes, that Christ came and succeeded in foiling the devil, even as the devil succeeded in killing the mortal Christ, that He succeeded in releasing us from slavery of sin by His own death and the resultant grace. Christ now made it possible for us to escape death and live forever – like God does and like Satan does – and this infuriates him. He wanted to be God and take God's place, and we, who are just made of dirt, we're going to be able to live forever with God. He doesn't like that!

Yet, all these things really are peripheral to the one big secret does not want man to know. You know, a lot of people know they're going to live forever. That's not the secret. Let's think about this a minute. The explanation of this simple truth – the core of the secret – Satan's biggest secret – is also God's greatest gift. It's the best of the gospel – the good news. And we haven't brought it to light yet. Let's think about it.

It's explained in Hebrews 1:4. Paul is talking about Jesus.

**Hebrews 1:4** – *So He became as much superior to the angels as the name He has inherited is superior to theirs.* So what is the name that He's inherited? Well, it's God. Jesus is the *Son of God!* And so He *is* God, because He's God's Son. And He became superior to the angels, even though while He was on the earth, He was not superior to them, as far as His composition and in what He could do. *For to which of the angels – verse 5 – did God ever say, "You are My Son. Today I have become Your Father?"* Well, God has *never* said that to an angel. *Or again, "I will be His Father, and He will be My Son."* He's never said that of an angel. *And again, when God's brings His Firstborn into the world, He said, "Let all God's angels worship Him."* Who gets worshipped? God does. So He was God in the flesh and the angels were to worship Him.

So Paul is explaining here that there's a vast difference between God and angels. Angels are created servants – beings who help God do His work – and they help us – look after us. So, they're helpers, but they're not God's offspring in the same way that Jesus was. Then he continues in Hebrews 2, verse 5:

**Hebrews 2:5** – *It is not to angels that He has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. But there is a place where someone has testified, "What is man, that You are mindful of him – the son of man, that You care for him?"* Where do we fit in all this? And why is God so mindful of us human beings? *You made him a little lower than the angels. You crowned him with glory and honor, and put everything under his feet. In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him* – talking about people. Now notice this: *Yet, at present, we do not see everything subject to him.* Man was given control of the earth, but there's going to be a lot more coming for man.

So a connection is made between Christ and man here. Christ first, then man. Christ is first given eternal life, then man. Christ the first Son to be changed to a spirit, and then mankind. So there's the progression of it. Christ is the first One to be changed to a spirit, and He is called the Firstborn of many brethren. So we will share control of the universe with God as God – as a part of the God family. There it is! That's why humans are called God's children in the Bible.

Many here have children. What are your children? Are they dogs, cats, monkeys? Well, some people might think so, but no! They're human, because they came from you – a human! That's how it works. When God has children, they are not angels. They are Godkind. Jesus is called the Firstborn of many brethren and the Son of God. What is He? Well, He's a part of the God family. And what are we going to be? We're going to be a part of that family, too. It says so over and over. Notice the connection in 1 Corinthians 3:21:

**1 Corinthians 3:21** – *So let no one boast in men, for all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or the present, or the future. All are yours. And you are Christ's and Christ is God's.* So there's the connection again.

Christ is God's. And how is He? Well, He's God's Son. And we are Christ's. He's our older brother. And everything else is going to be ours. Is everything the angels? No. No, they're helpers. We're going to be superior to angels, because we're going to be in the God family – all the same order – the Godkind. And He says it more plainly than that in Psalms 82:5. This is a prophecy about the future – or *was* the future back then and may still be again. It may be dual.

**Psalms 82:5** – *They have neither knowledge nor understanding. They walk about in darkness. All the foundations of the earth are shaken. And I say, "You are gods, sons of the Most High – all of you."*

You know, that's pretty plain, isn't it? As plain as the nose on our faces. And let me tell you. Satan hates that. He *hates* that. He's jealous of us. He wanted to be like God and now somebody else is going to have that role. And that would be us.

Why do you suppose he hates the truth so much? Well, let's look at those Old Testament scriptures I referenced earlier. Ezekiel 28, and verse 14 – God says:

**Ezekiel 28:14** – *You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God. You walked on the fiery stones. You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, until wickedness was found in you. Through your widespread trade, you were filled with violence and you sinned. I drove you in disgrace for the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth and I made you spectacle before kings.* That's how it started. He was a guardian cherub. There were three – and now just two. His name was Lucifer.

Isaiah 14, verse 12:

**Isaiah 14:12** – *How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn. You have been cast down to the earth – you who once laid low the nations. You said in your heart, “I will ascend to heaven. I will raise my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on a throne in the mount of assembly on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds. I will make myself like the Most High.” But you are brought down to the grave – to the depths of the pit.*

“I saw Satan as lightning fall from heaven,” Jesus said. He was there. He witnessed it. So, Satan, in a word, is jealous. He wanted to be God. It’s never going to happen. We mortals – weak and puny, made of dirt – will be God and over even the angels. And in his pride, Satan hates that truth more than anything else. And he wants to keep all men from it. Why? Well, in 1 John 3, it says:

**1 John 3:3** – *Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He is pure – just as Jesus is.*

In other words, this is the great motivation. We’re not going to sit on a cloud and play harps, and look on God’s face for all eternity – the beatific vision. The goal is *not* about getting to heaven, or even to have eternal life. It’s to *be* God – part of God’s family. And if we really understood what that meant, if we really got it, then we would not have a lot of the problems we have, because we would be *motivated* to overcome them. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as Jesus and God are pure.

So, Satan hides this from us, because he knows that if we ever find out about it – *we* being humankind – it would motivate us to overcome him and we would become driven toward God. You know that parable about the pearl of great price – the guy went and sold everything he had to get it, because he knew if he had that, he’d have it all? Well, that’s what that parable is about. It’s about becoming like God – or God – not *like* him, but God. He hates this truth and he’s created religion and societies to keep man from it and to keep it from man – to hide this truth from man. He’s created doctrines to lead people away from it.

You know, I know two major Christian churches that teach that man will become God, but when you talk to the members of these two churches, they don’t seem to know that their churches teach this truth. They think it’s strange or impossible. If they learn it, they don’t grasp the significance of it, because they’re all caught up in going to heaven. Some people even think they *will* be angels. Oh no! It’s going to be a *lot* more than that. No importance is placed on what we will be like, once immortal, for most people.



So that really is the big one. That's the devil's best kept secret. What else can we say? Well, think about this. Satan is furious that some people have been taught this secret – this mystery. And yet, in his mind, there is a way to get revenge on us. He will tolerate our learning about our destiny, so long as we never reach it. He would be satisfied if we would look over into the Promised Land, as long as we never actually cross over and enter in. So he has a plan for all who know. Let's read about it in Matthew 13. This is Jesus explaining how it works.

**Matthew 13:4-9** – *As he was scattering seed, some fell along the path and the birds came and ate it up. He's talking about somebody planting seed. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, but because the soil was shallow, then when the sun came up the plants were scorched and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.*

**V-18** – *Listen, then, to what the parable of the sower means. When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word at once and receives it with joy, but since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. The one who receives seed that fell among thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one receives the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. Good works.*

So, if Satan cannot keep the truth of our destiny from us, then he will try to divert us with other interests, problems, embarrassments, sins, trials, disappointments and conflicts. You know, God tells us that the church behaves much like a flock of sheep. We're called *the flock* over and over and over again in the Bible. We're told we have a Shepherd – Jesus – who keeps us together and watches over us – keeps our minds on the important things so we're not diverted – you know, we're to come to services and not forsake that, we're admonished to pray and to study the Bible so we know what God says, to serve God and others, to fellowship, to learn to live the law of God – all the things that keep us in the center of the flock. Every fall and every spring, however, sheep flocks migrate from one pasture to another, and on that pilgrimage, some sheep tend to get near the edges of the flock and then stray out away from it. They may still be in sight of the flock, but their position leaves them exposed. Often these strays and stragglers get picked off by predators. When this happens, the other sheep hardly notice. They just go on eating grass. We suffer a gradual attrition in the Church of God – constant trickle of people leaving. Have you ever wondered why? Have you ever wondered how someone could leave the church where they learned the big secret? No, we see the attrition and we hardly notice. We just go on about our business, not aware of the predator who would like to cut us out from the flock and rip us limb to limb, spiritually speaking.

We have people here today – some of whom have even grown up in the church and have known nothing else and known the secret all their lives – who have known this as long as they can remember – and they're totally naïve to the danger. They live life on the fringe – easy marks for that great predator who stalks us day and night, who has superior intelligence and powers of persuasion and temptation that we cannot withstand. He's done such a number on some of us that they can sit here and listen to it explained and not be moved toward the center. Think about it. Where are you?

Let's look in Hebrews 2:14.

**Hebrews 2:14** – *Inasmuch then, as the children have partaken of the flesh and blood, He Himself, likewise, shared in the same – that through death He might destroy him who has the power of death – that is, the devil – and released those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage. That's us. For indeed, He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham – whom we are in the church. Therefore, in all things, He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the things pertaining to God to make propitiation for the sins the people.*

And one more – Hebrews 4:14:

**Hebrews 4:14** – *Seeing then, that we have such a great High Priest, who has passed through the heavens – Jesus, the Son of God – let us hold fast our profession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was, in all points, tempted like we are, and yet, without sin. Wow! Let us, therefore, come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

I hope that you will not succumb to the devil's deception and to his influence. I hope that, when the going becomes difficult, you will turn where you can get the help that you need. See, knowing the secret, I know that no matter how hard it gets, it will all be worth it. And I hope that you know that, too.

Until next time, this is Bill Jacobs for LifeResource Ministries, serving children, families and the Church of God.