



## TWO-DOMAIN THEOLOGY HOW WE ESCAPE SATAN'S DOMINION

BY BOB DEWAAY

*"To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." (Acts 26:18)*

People are concerned that they may be demon possessed, cursed, or are somehow suffering because of Satan's activity. They often look for someone who can change their situation by casting out demons, identifying and breaking curses, and taking authority over Satan to stop whatever harm he may be doing. They typically do not realize that their concern should be about what *spiritual* domain they are in. Pagan shamans perform deliverance, break curses and have techniques to try to affect the well-being of their religious clients. But what they can never do is remove someone from the domain of Satan into the domain of Jesus Christ. Temporarily alleviating symptoms while remaining in Satan's domain does nothing about one's eternal destiny.

True escape from Satan is not about symptom relief or geographical boundaries. It is about leaving Satan's spiritual realm and entering the spiritual reign of God in Christ. This is a relational issue and nothing else. The two spiritual domains exist simultaneously and throughout the entire geographical world. There are physically sick and healthy people in both realms. There are happy people with happy lives in both domains. There are sad people with many difficulties in both spiritual kingdoms. But the spiritual well-being and eternal destinies of people are totally opposite depending on whether they

are in Satan's darkness or God's kingdom of light. Which kingdom is dependent solely on their relationship to Christ through the gospel.

### Not From Here

In John 18 there is a face-to-face confrontation between the domain of Satan and that of Christ. The Roman governor Pilate, under spiritual darkness, was urged by the Jewish authorities to put Jesus to death. Pilate only cared about politics and expediency. Pilate wanted to know whether Jesus was a rival king who could start a war. Here is Jesus' answer:

*"Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm." Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" **John 18:36-38a**<sup>1</sup>*

Pilate's area of rule under Rome was not challenged by Jesus being a king since His kingdom is not from "here."<sup>2</sup> His kingdom had to do with the truth,

something that was neither a concern or a threat to Pilate.

The NASB's interpretation of "not from here" to mean "of this realm" is correct because of what we know from elsewhere in John's writings. Being "of the truth" implies being in a different spiritual domain than the world and its followers who are from "the lie." Jesus also stated here that he came into the world, which means more than simply being born. This refers to His eternal pre-existence with the Father which was proclaimed in John's prologue. This also had to do with truth: "*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth*" (**John 1:14**). Victory over the world is not by armies, but by faith: "*For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith*" (**1 John 5:4**). Spiritually, the whole world is in hostile rebellion against God. Those who come to God through faith in the gospel of Christ are transferred into a new spiritual domain that is "of the truth."

Jesus told Pilate that He testifies to the truth and that those who are "of the truth" hear Him. This seemed irrelevant to Pilate but in reality it determines everything. Are we "of the truth"? According to John's first epistle, those who abide in Christ and love the Christian brethren find assurance that they are "of the truth" (1John 3:19). In 1John 2:21 John told his Christian readers that no lie was "of the truth" but assured them that they knew the truth. Those who serve Christ as King are those who have believed the truth of the gospel and therefore are "of the truth." They are in the spiritual domain to which Jesus referred when speaking to Pilate.

Earlier in John, Jesus told some superficial believers that they needed to be disciples who would abide in His word and be set free by the truth (John 8:31-32). What ensued was a virulent debate that revealed the true spiritual status of these fake believers: “*You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*” (John 8:44). They were in the domain of Satan which is characterized by “the lie” (literally from the Greek). Here we have the two spiritual domains: the truth and the lie. Those who are unconverted are under “the lie” because they are part of the domain of Satan even if they, like Pilate, had no interest in the possibility of spiritual domains.

When Jesus prayed for His disciples in John 17, He references the world and truth, affirming that true believers (Judas had already left) are not of the world:

*“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.”* (John 17:16, 17)

We are in the domain of truth because we have believed the truth, rejected the lie and are abiding in Christ’s word as those in John 8 were unwilling to do. The two domains are described in different ways, one of which is “of the truth” or “of the lie.” To be “of the lie” requires nothing more than being born into the world. Pilate was “of the lie” and so considered the truth to be of no consequence. All true believers are “of the truth” and are those who love the truth. Those who reject the love of the truth are not saved (2Thessalonians 2:10).

### From Darkness to Light

The Bible commonly refers to the two domains as “darkness” and “light.” This

is also found in John’s gospel:

*“This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”* (John 3:19–21)

People are in the realm of darkness by virtue of being lost sinners. Spiritual darkness is all they know. Jesus came as Light into the world. Those who “practice the truth” are those who come to the Light because of God’s work of grace. Notice the contrast: “deeds were evil” and “deeds . . . having been wrought in God.” To remain in the domain of darkness and refuse to come to the Light means being lost and facing judgment in eternity. There are only two spiritual domains, though described in different terms. Here they are light and darkness. The only way to exit the darkness is to have faith in Christ: “*I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness*” (John 12:46).

Please remember that these are spiritual domains, not geographical territories. Anyone anywhere can, by God’s grace, come to the light of the gospel. There is no government with a territory that is the domain of light. Some nations have more light than others in regard to common grace and the presence of Christians as salt and light. But the gospel of Christ can bring someone from the darkest possible place into the sphere of God’s light and make them a new creature. We will see this in Luke/Acts. Over the centuries, misled people have thought they could create the kingdom of God on earth through political action. They thereby confuse a lot of people and obscure the gospel. We will see the spiritual nature of the two

domains throughout scripture.

Conversion is described as going from darkness to light as described in Acts 26:18 cited at heading of this article. That passage was Paul describing what Jesus commissioned him to do. Here is another passage where Paul described the situation of darkness and light in regard to his message and preaching:

*“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness,’ is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.”* (2 Corinthians 4:3–6)

Spiritual darkness blinds the minds of those who do not believe the gospel. Paul clearly preached Christ so that there was no veiling of the message. Those who by God’s grace do believe are the ones who come out of the domain of darkness and into the light of Christ. These two spiritual domains coexist everywhere in the world. If we are serious about spreading the reign (domain) of God we will forthrightly preach the gospel everywhere. Having Pilate’s version of a kingdom will not convert anyone. People may not innately care about truth, but we must preach it nevertheless. Anything less will leave people in darkness.

Paul also describes conversion in this passage: “*for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light*” (Ephesians 5:8). This obviously does not mean lack of sun-light followed by opening a window or going outside on a sunny day. It means being in the domain of spiritual

darkness, hearing the truth of the gospel, believing the gospel and brought by God's grace into the spiritual domain of light (which only comes through Christ). Paul goes on to admonish the Ephesian Christians to live accordingly. We cannot do enough good deeds to enter the light, but having been converted by the Light, God changes us and we live lives that show forth God's light.

To show how consistently this is emphasized in the New Testament, let us consider how Peter used the same terminology:

*"But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR GOD'S OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;" (1 Peter 2:9)*

I discussed this passage in an earlier CIC article about the priesthood of every believer. But here we should consider that this "holy nation" consists of those who were called out of darkness and into God's light. This happens through conversion. This "holy nation" does not have geographical boundaries but exists whenever the gospel has been heard and believed. This royal priesthood exists in the realm of light that God has brought through Christ and coexists throughout the geographical world with Satan's domain of darkness.<sup>3</sup> Paul addressed Christians in Thessalonica using these terms: *"for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness;" (1 Thessalonians 5:5).* Christ and His apostles chose the terms light and darkness to describe these spiritual realities. Clearly they want us to know that we are either in one or the other domain whatever else might describe us.

### From Death to Life

Salvation in the two-domain theology revealed in the Bible is described as going from Satan's domain to God's.

This truth is also described as going from death to life. Those in Satan's domain are spiritually dead. That means they are alienated from God and strangers to the people of God. When God saves a person, they are removed from the realm of death and transferred to the domain of Christ where true life reigns. Consider what Paul wrote:

*"But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus," (Ephesians 2:4-6)*

"Dead" and "alive" here clearly mean spiritual life and death. To be spiritually dead is to be alienated from God. To be spiritually alive is to be born of God and abide in Christ. Conversion is going from death to life; it is not merely choosing a new religion.

In Romans 5 Paul tells us that this situation of spiritual death came through the sin of one man, Adam. In the Adam/Christ analogy, we also learn that what is gained in Christ (life) is "much more" or greater than what was lost in Adam:

*"For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17)*

The domain of darkness and death is the spiritual location of all who are in Adam. However, the greater ("much more") truth of being in the domain of life in Christ is received as a gift through the gospel.

John describes this as crossing over from death to life. He does so in the context of the reality that the "world hates us." When we are removed from the domain of death we have new life

which puts us in a different spiritual sphere than the rest of the world. This provokes serious animosity from the world. Here is how John says it:

*"Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death." (1 John 3:13-14)*

The line of demarcation between the church and the world is everywhere asserted in the New Testament. Sometimes it results in severe persecution and even martyrdom.

Many foolishly advocate that we change our preaching and practices to conform to the sensibilities of the world. They want to gain followers. But those who are truly alive in Christ will always be hated by the world. What happens is that church organizations and buildings are filled with many who are still under the domain of death and stay that way. This ruins the idea of Christian fellowship because Christians have little in common with those in darkness who now fill the church.

When John says "do not be surprised" the word he uses for "surprised" is *thaumazo* which is often used in the gospels and Acts to describe a response to a miracle or mighty work of God. It implies amazement at something extraordinary being witnessed. John uses an imperative to tell us not to respond like that to the world's hatred of us. We were told earlier in 1 John to not love the world. How implausible it is that we could safely reject this apostolic imperative and to set out to remedy the situation by becoming friends with the world? We cannot because if we are alive in Christ, we are in a totally different spiritual domain with a different Lord. We are under Christ rather than Satan. John implies that we quit being amazed that those who are in Satan's domain hate us. You know they will.

Another important truth revealed in this passage is that conversion is

described as passing out of one realm and into another. The term used in the Greek is *metabaino*—which means to go from one condition or location to another. I like to use “cross over” to translate this because it shows what truly happens. We cross over from the domain of death under Satan to the domain of life in Christ. John uses the same term to describe a change of spiritual condition in this verse: “*Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life*” (John 5:24). There has been a change of domains. Believers have been made alive and are no longer dead sinners. Though we are not yet in heaven, believers “have eternal life” because this not only implies the time period of such life (eternal) but the quality of it. We are already in the realm of God’s spiritual life even though we will still die physically unless Christ returns before that happens.

### A Visitation of God’s Reign

The visitation of God in the person of Christ is a theme in Luke/Acts. As we did in John with Pilate’s negative reaction to Jesus’ claim of kingship through truth, let us start with the negative aspect of response to God’s visitation found toward the end of Luke:

“*When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it, saying, ‘If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side, and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.’*” (Luke 19:41–44)

On the heels of the reception of Christ by the crowds narrated in Luke 19:37–

38 where they praise God for His mighty deeds, we have this tragic turn. The crowds praised God for the King and His royal entry, but Jesus soon laments the pathos of the situation. Jerusalem failed to recognize the crucial time (Gr. *kairos*) that was created by the visitation of God. This means that as a whole they did not receive the saving part of the visitation, but rather the judgment.

The same term for “visitation” (*episkope*) was used prophetically at the beginning of Luke in verb form (*episkeptomai*) to announce the coming of Christ to bring salvation:

“*And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: ‘Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant’*” (Luke 1:67–69)

This meant that God was bringing the prophesied intervention that came in the person of Christ. The mighty deeds of God done by Christ show that this is a visitation of God Himself. But even at the beginning where this is predicted, it is clear that there will be both salvation and judgment with this visitation: “*And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, ‘Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed’*” (Luke 2:34). Jesus’ lament showed that the opposition had prevailed in Jerusalem as a whole, but unexpected people had been saved.

The idea of such a visitation is found in the OT in regard to God coming to inspect the situation and bring either salvation or judgment. The Septuagint used the same terms for “visit” and “visitation” in key places. The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament describes how the term was used:

It denotes an unchanging attitude on God’s part. The word *episkeptomai* actualizes this atti-

tude. It is mostly used where we have the rendering “to visit.” It combines the various senses of “to visit, to look upon, to investigate, to inspect, to test, to be concerned about, to care for,” in description of the act in which the Lord in a special incursion into the course of life of individuals or of a people, mostly Israel, makes known to them His will either in judgment or in grace.<sup>4</sup>

That is exactly what happened in Luke. Grace came to people when none would have expected to find divine favor (like Mary) and judgment came to those who thought they already had God’s favor. This resulted in reversal (rising and falling). Jerusalem did not recognize the time of visitation, but that did not mean that there was no salvation. On the contrary, God’s salvation is spread to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

The events of Luke/Acts show how this visitation meant that no one’s condition was too horrible to be rescued by the in-breaking of God’s reign in the person of Christ. The NT use of “visitation” followed the usage of the term in the Greek OT:

This visitation takes place when God draws near to His people in its sin and distress, and shows Himself to be the Lord of history. It may entail the judgment executed by Him. But it may also consist in an act of mercy. The point is that He manifestly enters history. The word “to visit” may signify a visitation of both judgment and grace in the same sentence. Thus we read in Zech. 10:3: “*Mine anger is kindled against the shepherds, and I will punish (visit) the goats; for the Lord of hosts is gracious to (will visit) his flock the house of Judah.*”<sup>5</sup>

The time of visitation denoted salvation and judgment. God came on the scene of history in the person of Christ. But this also meant that people could be rescued from the domain of Satan’s dark-

ness. The beginning of Luke/Acts predicted this visitation, and toward the end, Paul narrated the role Christ gave him in it: “to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18). Jerusalem would be judged. But God’s visitation would mean transfer from the “dominion of Satan to God” to anyone who would believe the gospel.

Luke 4:18, 19 is thematic in Luke as Acts 1:8 is in Acts. Together they announce God’s purpose which is being fulfilled through Christ and His Apostles. Included is the forgiveness of sins which Paul mentioned as part of Jesus’ commission of him. Jesus announced “release to the captives”:

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are oppressed, To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord.” (Luke 4:18–19)*

The term for “release” is *aphesis*, which is the same word regularly translated “forgiveness” in the NT as it is in Acts 26:18. The sins which bound the sinner are removed, and the sinner set free. The word *aphesis* is used twice in Luke 4:18, the second time it is translated “set free” in relation to the oppressed. It denotes release, freedom, and forgiveness. God’s visitation meant that the reign of God drew near in the person of Christ, and the result would be either judgment or salvation. In the case of Luke 4:18, the people became angry with Jesus and determined to throw Him off a cliff (Luke 4:29).

Just as the people of Nazareth rejected Christ, and therefore the promised “release,” other enemies of Christ remained in the spiritual domain of Satan. Consider Luke’s account of

Jesus’ arrest:

*“Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders who had come against Him, ‘Have you come out with swords and clubs as you would against a robber? While I was with you daily in the temple, you did not lay hands on Me; but this hour and the power of darkness are yours.’” (Luke 22:52–53)*

The term “power” here is *exousia* which denotes the domain of Satan (Acts 26:18) in this context. There are two spiritual domains, Satan’s and God’s. The Jewish leadership that rejected Christ (like the citizens of Nazareth) remained in the power of darkness because they refused the “release” that Jesus offered. They did not recognize the day of visitation as Messianic salvation but rather stayed under God’s judgment. They preferred darkness.

### **Changing Domains is Not Merely Symptom Relief**

There are some incidents in Luke that reveal that the profundity of God’s visitation was not about temporary symptom relief, but complete transfer out of the power of Satan into the reign of God in Christ. One that stands out is found in Luke 5. Some people brought a paralyzed man to be healed by Jesus. But because of the crowd they let him down through a roof (Luke 5:18, 19). To their surprise, Jesus announced forgiveness of sins: “Friend, your sins are forgiven you” (vs 20). This caused the scribes and Pharisees to reason that Jesus blasphemed (vs 21). Their false ideas were refuted by the healing of the man:

*“Which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins have been forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Get up and walk?’ But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins,—He said to the paralytic—‘I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home.’ Immediately he got up before them, and*

*picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God.” (Luke 5:23–25)*

The response “glorifying God” is the proper response and shows the reception of Messianic salvation. Healing for a paralytic that was not accompanied with forgiveness of sins would do no good in eternity. The power of God revealed in the healing did not merely reveal a new option for therapy (physical or mental) but a new spiritual domain to enter. Forgiveness of sins always accompanies entering that domain.

Robert Tannehill correctly states “The healings are concrete realizations for needy persons of the salvation which the preachers announce in preaching good news of God’s reign.”<sup>6</sup> This is shown by the commission of disciples: “Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat what is set before you; and heal those in it who are sick, and say to them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you’” (Luke 10:8–9). But, the converse is also true:

*“But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; yet be sure of this, that the kingdom of God has come near.’ I say to you, it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.” (Luke 10:10–12)*

Those who witness God’s mighty deeds are to repent if they are to avoid judgment (Luke 10:13). For the most-part they did not. Tannehill comments: “Since the mighty acts are manifestations of God’s nearness in royal power, the proper response to them would be repentance.”<sup>7</sup> Just about any city or territory would be happy to have their sick healed (turning the disabled into productive citizens), but they did not want to submit to the domain of God. This rejection of God’s reign is epitomized

later in Luke in a parable that refers to rejection of His messengers: “*But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We do not want this man to reign over us’*” (Luke 19:14).

The danger is that many people want symptom relief if they can get it, but they do not truly go from the domain of darkness to light. They can get their “relief” but fail to glorify God. This is shown in the account of the cleansed lepers. In Luke 17:12-19, ten lepers cried out to Jesus for mercy. He sent them to show themselves to the priests and they were healed as they went. But only one of them responds in a way that shows far more than mere healing. He came back to Jesus “glorifying God.” This is a sign of having received salvation. Further, this was a Samaritan which reinforces the theme that the reign of God comes to people that the religious elite would not accept. To make clear that this man found more than symptom relief, we read:

*“Then Jesus answered and said, ‘Were there not ten cleansed? But the nine—where are they? ‘Was no one found who returned to give glory to God, except this foreigner?’ And He said to him, ‘Stand up and go; your faith has made you well.’”* (Luke 17:17-19)

“Made you well” is literally “saved you.” They all found healing, but one found true salvation. He left behind the domain of darkness and entered the domain of God’s reign in Christ.

A theme in Luke is that unexpected people find salvation while those who think they are right with God remain in darkness. This is driven home in Luke with the story of the immoral women at a banquet (Luke 7:36-50). In this amazing account, a Pharisee who invited Jesus was offended that this woman wept on Jesus’ feet and behaved in a way that was deemed unseemly at such a meal. Jesus replied with a parable about forgiveness, with the point that the one forgiven much loves much

(Luke 7:40-43). Jesus proceeds to announce that the sinner woman’s sins were forgiven. This prompted questioning among the Pharisees about Jesus’ authority to forgive sins. Jesus told the woman that she was forgiven and saved. She too had gone from darkness to light, from the authority of Satan to God!

This also applies to exorcisms. One of the most powerful accounts of exorcism is found in Luke 8:26-39 where Jesus does a great miracle in Gentile territory. This comes in a larger section where Jesus’ comprehensive power is displayed over nature (calming the sea), Satan (healing the demoniac), sickness (healing an issue of blood) and death (raising the synagogue official’s daughter). The message is clear that Jesus has power over everything that humans are subjected to (Luke 8:22-56).

The man of the Gerasenes displayed the most unclean and repulsive situation the Jews would ever encounter. He was possessed by demons, naked and living in the tombs (verse 27). The demons knew who Jesus was and spoke through the man. He was in shackles so that he could not run out into the wilderness (all of which shows what was despised and unclean). He had a legion of demons, showing utter bondage. The demons went into swine (more uncleanness). The swine go into the sea and drown (dead swine filled with demons in the sea is about as unclean and undesirable as could be imagined). There was hardly anything the Jews would want to avoid that is not mentioned in this scene of Luke. But the glorious point is that the man is totally delivered, healed, in his right mind and able to beg Jesus to follow Him (see verse 38). The villagers wanted Jesus to leave (verse 37). In what will be a preview of what God does in Acts, the healed demoniac is sent by Jesus back into his home to be a witness: “*Return to your house and describe what great things God has done for you’ So he went away, proclaiming throughout the*

*whole city what great things Jesus had done for him*” (Luke 8:39).

To proclaim the mighty deeds of God is what gospel preaching and prophecy are all about. Here is a most amazing person sent to witness for Christ. Much mischief has been done with this text by false deliverance teachers who portray Jesus as one who knew how to be a successful shaman. They say that you have to know the name of the demons to get them out. They say that you can force the demons to tell you information that will help you manipulate them. Those who abuse the text in this way miss the whole point. This man was removed by power of God out of the realm of Satanic darkness and transferred into the domain of God’s beloved Son. He was immediately sent to preach Christ and thus glorify God.

People who contact me and want a demon or demons removed are often uninterested in those things that are associated with the reign of God. They want symptom relief. They think that those who speak to demons and get manifestations are making good progress. What they do not or will not believe is that the demons are in Satan’s domain. Even if some shaman-like deliverance counselor can get manifestations or get symptom relief, it is all worthless if, in the bigger sense, they are still in the domain of darkness. Conversely, if one is delivered from Satan’s domain and under Christ, if some “messenger of Satan” becomes a “thorn in the flesh” they can simply go to Christ with the issue (see 2Corinthians 12: 7-12). So, dear reader, I want to know, are you in the domain of Satan or under the authority of Christ? If it is Satan, moving the demons around will not be of any eternal benefit. If you are under Christ, go to Him (Hebrews 4:16) and then live by faith, glorifying God.

In Luke/Acts those who respond by faith and willingness to follow Jesus are commended. They have the forgiveness of sins and glorify God. They are disci-

ples, not merely healed people with their problem solved. Robert Tannehill identified these issues in his great reading of Luke/Acts. Here is Tannehill's summary:

The healed person's response to Jesus after the healing plays a key role in the story, just as the sinful woman's response to Jesus is emphasized in 7:36–50. The emphasis on the response of gratitude to Jesus suggests that Jesus should not be forgotten once help has been received, for receiving help can and should be the start of a lasting relationship, as with Peter, who follows Jesus after the healing of his mother-in-law and the great catch of fish (5:11), and the healed women, who accompany Jesus on his journeys (8:2–3). Enjoying Jesus' benefits is not sufficient; his mighty acts must be seen as signs of God's reign, as calls to repentance and invitations to participate in God's purpose through bearing fruit steadily as disciples.<sup>8</sup>

What Jesus came to bring was the domain of God into the world that was under darkness. Relief itself is not the point. Being brought under the reign of God in Christ is what is truly and eternally important.

## Conclusion

We have covered many scriptures that describe the same reality: there are two spiritual domains on the earth. Everyone is in the domain of darkness by birth because of the sin of Adam. The gospel calls people out of this spiritual darkness and into the light of Christ. Those who have been removed from the domain of darkness live on the same earth and interact with those still in the world in the sense of in its sinful alienation from God. Thus the wicked world hates us. But we are trusting in Christ who forgave us and cleansed us by His blood.

John addresses this reality at the

end of his first epistle:

*"We know that no one who is born of God sins; but He who was born of God keeps him, and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." (1 John 5:18–19)*

That "we do not sin" means that we abide in Christ, and His blood cleanses us. We have forgiveness of sins. Here the promise is that Christ will keep us so that we do not commit apostasy and go back into the realm of darkness under Satan. In this state the evil one does not touch us. We are safe in Christ.

John also describes the reality that the sinful world in its totality lies in the power of Satan. This is not geographical, but relational. Those born of God live on the same earth and are scattered all over it. When John says "we are of God" he states that we are in a different spiritual domain than those under the evil one. That is the essence of two-domain theology. The kingdom of God is not a territory on earth ruled by Christians. It is a spiritual domain ruled by Christ.

This also does not imply symptom relief as the primary matter of importance. John addressed that in Chapter 5 of his gospel. A man complained to Jesus that he never got into the pool in time to be healed (John 5:7). Jesus healed him (John 5:8) telling him to pick up his bed and walk. But it was Sabbath, and the healed man was soon in trouble with the religious authorities. He did not even know who Jesus was and was apparently unconcerned with being a disciple or believer. He had his symptom relief. The point of the story is found here:

*"Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, 'Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.' The man went away, and told the Jews*

*that it was Jesus who had made him well." (John 5:14–15)*

He turned Jesus in to the authorities! What could be worse than being sick and disabled for 38 years? By now we should know the answer. Staying in Satan's domain of darkness and ending up in hell would be worse.

We must repent and believe the gospel and thus exit the domain of Satan and enter the spiritual domain of God in Christ. That way whatever this world is like for us, we shall be whole for all eternity and that with an imperishable body. We will be with Christ forever.

## End Notes

1. All Biblical citations are from NASB 1995.
2. The Greek simply says "not from here"; the NASB states "not of this realm" which is, I think, a good interpretation of Jesus' meaning. Also the Greek simply states "you say that I am a king" implying the affirmative.
3. When considering how to write this article I thought of using either 'domain' or 'realm' to describe these spiritual kingdoms. I chose domain for the title because it is found in some English Bibles that way. I purposely use both terms in the body of the article because both accurately describe the areas of spiritual authority the Bible is talking about. The word "reign" is also a good one. Whatever words are used, there are two spiritual kingdoms, one that is Christ's and the other Satan's.
4. Beyer, H. W. (1964–). G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley, & G. Friedrich (Eds.), *Theological dictionary of the New Testament* (electronic ed., Vol. 2, p. 602). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.
5. Ibid.
6. Tannehill, R. C. (1991). *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation: The Gospel according to Luke* (Vol. 1, p. 88). Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid. 96

### Critical Issues Commentary

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