

**Week 48: "Satan's Accusations"**  
**Day One— "Satan's Accusations"**

**Read Zechariah 3 (p.1055)**  
**Read Commentary (p.1056)**

**Reflect**

Philip Yancey writes, "In adolescent years I thought of repentance as something like courtroom interrogation. I, the accused, was sitting on the witness stand while a prosecuting attorney constructed a case against me. Anything I said might incriminate me. If I admitted a failure or defect, the attorney (or God, in this case) would seize on it as proof of my guilt."

Do you see God more as a prosecuting attorney or as a loving Father?

**Dig**

In Zechariah 3 who is the accuser—the prosecuting attorney, so to speak?

Was Joshua guilty? In other words, was there some truth to the accuser's statements? (v.3)

What is the Lord's response to the accusations of this 'prosecuting attorney'? (v. 2)

What was the Lord's response to the accused? (v. 4,5)

If Satan is our prosecuting attorney, who is our defense attorney? (See I John 2:1b, p. 1466)

What happens when we stop listening to the accusations of Satan and the condemnation of our own heart? (see I John 3:21,22, p.1468)

**Apply**

What accusations of Satan are you letting wrongly condemn you? Take time to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal these areas to you and then out loud proclaim the words of Romans 8:1: "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

**Week 48: "Satan's Accusations"**  
**Day Two— "Jesus, Our Advocate"**

**Read Hebrews 7:23-28 (p.1428)**  
**Read Commentary (p.1429)**

**Reflect**

Think of a time when someone spoke up on your behalf or came to your defense. Put into words the emotions that you felt.

**Dig**

Compare the permanent priesthood of Jesus with the temporal priesthood of the Old Testament by reading the following verses from Leviticus 4 and 5 (pages 112-115)

As you read, put yourself in that era—what would have to be done to atone for the sins that you've committed this week?

When a community sins: 4:13-21

When a leader sins: 4:22-24

When an individual sins unintentionally: 4:27-28

Other specific sins such as thoughtless sins or sins of omission: 5:5-7, 11

Contrast that with the following passages:

Hebrews 7:25-26 (p.1428)

I John 2:1-2: "But if anyone does sin we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world."

Colossians 1:21-22 (p.1376)

## Apply

Hebrews 4:15 says that we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Approach God's throne of grace with confidence and confess any sin that the Holy Spirit reveals to you. Conclude your confession by praying (or singing!) these verses from Psalm 51: Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

## Week 48: "Satan's Accusations"

### Day Three— "The Narrow Way"

Read Matthew 7:13-23 (p.1085)

Read Commentary (p.1086)

## Reflect

Which path are you on—the wide or the narrow one? What kind of fruit are you bearing (ref. v.18)?

## Dig

What is so appealing about the wide path? What is the truth about the wide path? Look at the following verses to note first the appealing nature of the wide path and then read further to see the reality of that path:

<b>How it seems</b>	vs.	<b>Reality</b>
Ps. 10:5-6 (p.597)		Ps. 10:12
Ps. 37:1, 7b (p.616)		Ps. 37:9-10
Ps. 49:16 (p.625)		Ps. 49:17-19
Prov. 7:21 (p.701)		Prov. 7:22-27

Prov. 14:12 (p. 707) summarizes these verses well: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."

A narrow path that is bordered by commands sounds confining and restricting. What does scripture say?

John 15:10-11 (p.1222)

Psalm 119:32 (p.671)

## **Apply**

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any ways that you have been tempted to leave the narrow path or have not focused on Who is waiting at the end of the narrow path. Ask him to enable you to "run with perseverance the race marked out for [you]" and to "fix [your] eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of [your] faith." (Hebrews 12:1-2, p.1435).

## **Week 48: "Satan's Accusations"**

### **Day Four— "The Unpardonable Sin"**

**Read Mark 3:22-30 (p. 1127)**

**Read Commentary (p. 1128)**

## **Reflect**

Have you ever feared that you have committed the "unpardonable sin"? If so, what were the circumstances that led you to believe this?

## **Dig**

What exactly is the unpardonable sin described in verse 29?

Why is this such a severe sin? See the following passages for insights into the work of the Holy Spirit:

John 6:63 (p.1208)

Romans 8:14 (p.1290)

Romans 8:9 (p.1290)

John 14:26 (p.1221)

John 16:13 (p.1223)

If Christ lives in you, you have heard the Holy Spirit's prompting to listen to Jesus' voice. What assurance do you find in John 11:27 (p.1216)?

## **Apply**

Psalms 103:1 (p. 659) says "Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name!" Spend some time praising God that "as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103:12) and that "nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:39, p. 1291)

## **Week 48: "Satan's Accusations"**

### **Day Five— "Betrayal and Restoration"**

**Read John 21:15-19 (p. 1231)**

**Read Commentary (p. 1230)**

## **Reflect**

Earlier Peter had denied knowing Jesus not once, but three times. When have you—either verbally or more subtly—denied knowing Jesus or his power within you?

In grace, Jesus gives Peter the chance to negate his earlier denial and to instead give testimony to his love for Jesus. How would you answer the questions that Jesus asked Peter in this passage?

## **Dig**

Go back a few pages to read Peter's betrayal of Jesus (John 13:38; p. 1221 and John 18:15-27; p.1226).

Put yourself in Peter's place—what emotions must he have been feeling as he heard those questions

asked of him? What thoughts and memories might have been going through his mind as he pondered how to respond?

What words would you use to describe how he must have felt when he heard the rooster crow? How would those emotions affect his ability to serve Christ?

Now, with this as background, look again at Jesus' questions of Peter in John 21. What is the significance of Jesus' asking his question three times?

What difference do you notice between the question asked in verses 15 and 16 and the question asked in verse 17?

Commentaries point out that the Greek word for "truly love" refers to a love that encompasses both emotion and will, whereas the word for "love" refers to a spontaneously-erupting love. When placed in difficult or challenging situations, is your first instinct to love Jesus?

### **Apply**

If you agree with the statement of belief written in the commentary, read it out loud as a declaration of your relationship to Christ.