

“Don’t Underestimate or Overestimate the Enemy”

This article is from the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Feb. 8, 2025.

By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I gave a presentation titled “Don’t Underestimate or Overestimate the Enemy.” I organized the material into three major concepts.

Not underestimate the enemy

Notice how the devil sought to thwart the Son of God.

- Matthew 4:1-2—When the Son of God was to be tempted by the devil, He fasted for 40 days and nights.
- Matthew 4:3-4—The tempter used control techniques to goad and to challenge the Son of God. The tempter said: “If you are the Son of God . . .”
- Matthew 4:5-7—The tempter again used control techniques to goad and to challenge the Son of God. The tempter said: “If you are the Son of God . . .”
- Matthew 4:8-10—The tempter had a proposal to stop the suffering in the world.

Notice that the devil asked the Son of God if he could sift Peter.

- Luke 22:31—The Lord told Peter that Satan had specifically asked to have access to Peter with the goal of sifting him as wheat.

Notice that the devil has a clear objective.

- 1 Peter 5:8—The devil walks about as a roaring lion—seeking whom he may devour.

Not overestimate the enemy

Notice the power of the Son of God.

- Jude 9—The archangel Michael knew the value of saying: “The Lord rebuke you.”
- Revelation 12:11—They overcame the devil by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.

- Revelation 12:17—The offspring of the woman keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.
- Luke 9:1—The Son of God called His 12 disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons.
- Luke 9:49-50—Notice that the power of the Lord’s name is successful against the enemy no matter what the identity of the group is.
- Luke 10:1—The Son of God appointed 70 other people to travel in pairs before He arrived in those areas.
- Luke 10:17—The 70 returned with joy because even the demons were subject to them —when they used His name.
- Luke 10:18—The Son of God reminded them: “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.”
- Luke 10:19—The Son of God reminded them that He gave them power over serpents and scorpions (but the next verse expressed a major truth).
- Luke 10:20—“Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this that the spirits are subject to you—but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

Permission and restrictions

The history of the Lord working with Job is revealing.

- Job 1:8—The Lord invited the devil to tempt Job.
- Job 1:11—The devil proposed a specific affliction for Job.
- Job 1:12—The Lord gave the devil permission and restrictions.
- Job 2:3—The Lord again invited the devil to tempt Job.
- Job 2:4-5—The devil again proposed a specific affliction for Job.
- Job 2:6—The Lord again gave the devil permission and restrictions.