

Knowing the Truth 06

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:32

Can the Living Talk With the Dead?

Who are the spirits in spiritualism? Is it possible for the living to commune with the dead? There are a great host of people, who believe that the spirits of the dead are floating around about us, in our houses and even in close communion with us. People in all countries and in most religions, believe in the spirits of the dead being active and present with us. This is particularly true of the heathen or Pagan religions. There is a great deal of superstition in the religions of lands like Africa and India. American Indians believed in the spirits and in their return as well. Many of the pagan religions are actually spirit worship in various forms.

It is unfortunate that Christian people now believe the same sort of thing in a little different way. While it is true that there are spirit manifestations on numerous occasions, we should know who these spirits really are. Are they the spirits of our loved ones who have died?

Some people have likened our fascination with occult things with throwing a ball over a high wall and someone is throwing it back. But who is it? Is it a friend? These days we can think of it like getting emails from a stranger; there have been children who have been having email friendships with someone they thought was a child like themselves, but it was really a predatory criminal out to lure the child away from home so they could abuse and kill them! We need to know who is throwing those balls back!

We all know that Satan is a great deceiver. He is a very clever fellow. While he and his angels almost never appear in person, they have devised ways and means to reach men and women through the so-called spirits. Let me read what the Bible has to say about Satan. “Thus saith the Lord God; thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. . . . Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth . . . Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. . . . Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness.” Ezekiel 28:12, 14, 15, 17.

God says that Satan was full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. One time he was the leader of the angels in heaven. The Bible says that he was one of the covering cherubs. He stood next to the throne of God. Because of his great beauty he became very proud; in fact he decided that he should be equal with God himself.

In Isaiah 14:12-14 we read, “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High.”

Notice that Satan says I, I, I. The spirit of boastfulness and pride are very evident in these words. He said, “I am going to be like the Most High God.” Again he boasts, “I am going to establish my throne above the throne of God.” This is truly conceit beyond anything we have ever known. Satan thought that he could establish his throne above the throne of God. Satan began to spread the spirit of rebellion against God among the angels in heaven. He worked to cause them to become dissatisfied with God and his government, and he promised them all kinds of pleasures and ‘freedom’, if they would follow him. But when some of them did, he used them as his slaves.

Because of his rebellion there was war in heaven. Think of it, war in heaven! It startles us when we hear of wars on this earth among the nations, but to think that there was once a great war in heaven! It was between Christ and the angels of God, and Satan and the angels that chose to follow him.

“There was war in heaven: Michael (Christ) and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was

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cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan *which deceiveth the whole world*: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accuseth them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” (Speaking of the martyrs who overcame Satan and his snares, and gave their lives for their belief in Christ and His word). Revelation 12:7-11.

Satan was cast out of heaven. As he and his angels were cast out of the pearly gates, he hissed his wrath and vengeance back to God, and made it known that he was determined to fight God to the bitter end. Satan was cast out into this earth; and as the Bible says, ‘Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.’”

Satan hates God, and everything that pertains to God. He hates God’s truth, and he has in every way endeavored to pervert it. He works through all possible means to corrupt the truth of God, and to corrupt those of us who have been created by God in the image of God. We are told in Revelation 12:9 that Satan has deceived the whole world. Many and varied are his deceptions. Almost every important truth taught in the Bible has been counterfeited by the devil. His counterfeits are clever. They are so clever that we are told that he “deceiveth the whole world.” Can’t you see, friends, how it behooves us to study God’s word with great diligence to know the true and the genuine from the false and the counterfeit?

Now Satan has no scruples against using the lowest forms of deception to lead men astray. Jesus warned us regarding him as follows, “Ye are of your father! the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it.” John 8:44. Christ tells us that Satan is a murderer and a liar.

Some people think that the devil is just a joke. You see drawings of cute little red devils with pitchforks. People dress up in devil costumes for parties. Satan would like to have us believe that he is a great joke. But, dear friends, he is not funny! Some get the idea that he is a strange looking monstrosity, a horned creature with a tail and a pitchfork in his hand or an evil goat figure. Satan is not an ugly creature, but he can appear that way if he wishes, but God did not create him that way. He was perfect in beauty. He is not a clown, but he is a real being full of wisdom, shrewdness, and cleverness. He is the master of deception. He does not hesitate to destroy if he gets a chance, for he is a murderer. He can appear beautiful also; the Bible says ‘like an angel of light.’”

We know that he must be a clever fellow for Revelation 12:4 reveals that he drew one-third of the angels of heaven with him in his rebellion. If Satan could deceive angels dwelling in the presence of God, think of how easily he is able to deceive the people of this fallen planet.

Can the devil perform miracles to deceive men? Why yes, he can. The angels have miracle working powers, and Satan is an angel. In Revelation 16:13, 14, it says;

“I saw three unclean, spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, *working miracles*, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”

In the 16th verse it says, “He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Notice that it says that they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world.”

Satan is performing many astounding miracles in our day. Unfortunately, many people are persuaded more by miracles than by the plain truths of God’s word. Satan is clever enough to mix just enough truth with his error

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to deceive the majority of the people. The Bible even tells us that Satan has ministers who appear to be righteous, who work for him.

In Revelation 13:14 it says, "And he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do." Whenever we hear of great miracles being performed, we should be careful to test the ones who claim such miracle working powers, by the Bible test. God tells us that the best way to test such individuals is to see if they speak according to His law, and the testimony of His prophets. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

Satan has misled some of the outstanding characters of world history through Spiritism, evolution and astrology. Kaiser Wilhelm and Hitler are good examples of this. Kaiser Wilhelm was led by the greatest spiritualist medium on the European continent, Madam Schoen. Practically all the battles of World War 1 were the result of the influence of this outstanding medium. It is a known fact that Adolph Hitler was largely influenced in his decisions by members of the occult. God says that it will be the spirits of devils that will lead the nations on to their final ruin.

The Bible tells us that Satan can even appear as an angel of light before men. 2 Corinthians 11:14 "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 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 and those ministers who work for him can do works that appear to be very righteous. Jesus warned that there would be great signs and wonders or miracles in these last days, and if it were possible, these things might deceive even the very elect of God. May God help us to be careful that we will not be swept off our feet by great signs and wonders.

First Lie

The first great lie that the devil told in this world was to Eve in the Garden of Eden. The Bible says, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3:1-5.

Now God had plainly told Adam and Eve that they were not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for if they did they would die. But the woman added 'not to touch it' on her own. By misquoting the Word of God she gave Satan an advantage.

But what did Satan say? "The serpent said unto the woman, ye *shall not surely die*." God said that man would die if he disobeyed. Satan said, no, ye shall not die.

We might call this the first séance that was ever held because Satan used a medium. He appeared to Eve in the form of a serpent. The serpent was a very beautiful creature in that day. It did not crawl upon the ground, but had wings and flew like a bird. Eve was fascinated by the beauty of the serpent and by his wisdom, inasmuch as he was able to speak to her. She believed that perhaps he was telling her the truth when he said, "Eat this fruit and ye shall be as God, and your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall know good and evil, and shall not die."

This is the first time that the immortality of the soul is taught in the Bible; but notice that it is not taught by God. God says that man is mortal, and that the results of sin are death. But Satan said, No, ye shall not die. Strange though it may seem, there are more people who believe the devil's lie than who believe God.

Going back to ancient times we find that the nations of old time believed in the immortality of the soul. The Greeks, the Persians, and the Romans all believed in this. But this is not just a doctrine of ancient times. It is also becoming a very prominent doctrine in modern times. Large numbers of Christian people believe that the

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dead are not dead; that there really isn't any death. They believe that what we call death is not death at all, but the entrance into a better, fuller life. I cannot help but believe that these false ideas, often glamorized on movies, TV and in novels, may well contribute to many of the suicides that occur among young people as well as old. Being a ghost is made to appear fun and attractive.

Let me read a statement by an outstanding spiritualist, E. W. Sprague, "Spiritualism says that the dead know more than the living. 'And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die.' Genesis 3:4. This, as in many other Bible passages, the devil told the truth, and the Lord is in error."

So the spiritualists claim that the devil told the truth back in the Garden of Eden and that God told a lie. In other words, the devil was right and God was wrong. It seems not to make any difference to most people that there is death all about us in this world. There are millions of graveyards. Everything decays, rusts, or waxes old. Even in the things of nature we see death constantly before us; the flowers dying, the trees shedding their leaves, the grass losing its color and many other things. God said that this earth would suffer death as a result of man's sin. Satan said that it would not. It is strange that more people believe Satan than God.

People do not realize that they are being deceived by the devil. In fact most people would declare up and down that they are not subject to his deceptions, but, dear friends, the Bible says that he will deceive the world. Satan is working as he never worked before. He knows that his time is short. He has now succeeded in getting practically all the religions of this earth to believe that there is no real death. Men believe that death is just the laying down of the body, and the taking on of a new life, superior to the one that we now have. If this were true, then why would not men all wish to die as soon as possible in order to be ushered into this better life? My friends be not deceived!

Remember we are fighting a super-human adversary and only by the help of God can we expect to overcome this enemy. God tells us in Ephesians 6:11-13, that we are not fighting against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, the powers of darkness. We are actually struggling against evil spirits -- the spirits of devils. It is impossible for us to overcome them in human strength. Only in the strength of God we may be victorious.

Spiritualism is one of the greatest deceptions of our day. The religions of the world have left themselves wide open to this deception because of popular belief in the immortality of the soul.

Where did modern spiritualism have its beginning? In the United States, it had its beginning back in 1848, in Hydesville, New York, in the home of the Fox family. This family rented a house and moved into it and soon noticed that there were unusual noises, such as rapping and knocking, and many other unusual sounds. There were two daughters in the family. They slept together in one room, and when the noises awoke them at night, they would call their parents, and the father would get up and check the windows and everything else. When he returned to his bed the noises would begin all over again.

One night Kathryn, the oldest girl, after listening to a persistent knocking, cried out "Here split-foot do this." She snapped her fingers twice, and immediately there were two sharp and distinct knocks in answer to her. She then asked him to knock again, and she would indicate how many times, and the answer would always come as she indicated. Finally the girls worked out a code to transmit messages back and forth.

A woman, who had worked in the house years before, later came to hear the rappings and thought there was a man, a travelling peddler, who had been murdered, buried down in the basement of the house. Mr. Fox and another man dug there and they did find a small piece of a man's skull with hair attached, but that was all. It was not until 1904, long after the death of the Fox sisters, when in the ruins of the old house a false wall collapsed where some children were playing and between it and the real wall was found the crumbling skeleton of a man and a large peddlers box. But, friends, please realize that whether a man was buried there or not has no bearing on the happenings, because we know that the Dead know nothing! They do not return to rap on walls and haunt houses!

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The Fox sisters had stirred up quite an interest in what they were doing. People started coming from everywhere to see their demonstrations. They had so much success in communicating with the spirits, that they made it a profitable business. They even traveled out of the United States to demonstrate. Public appearances were made in a number of places. They continued putting on these demonstrations until the last years of their lives. This was the beginning of popular spiritualism in America. Soon it spread to England and other countries. Séances became very popular entertainment, particularly in London. There are literally millions of people who are followers of spiritualism in England.

Séances are usually held in darkness or semi-darkness. Voices are heard that are said to be the voices of loved ones of those who are gathered at the séances. Sometimes there are rappings, and other unusual phenomena take place. Even apparitions appear that have the likeness of deceased loved ones of those who are present. Spiritualism has now become a religion. However, it denies the blood atonement of Jesus Christ, and many of the books of the Bible are said to be false, particularly those that tell us the truth about the dead!

While a good deal of what is done in the spiritist meetings may be branded as trickery, the fact remains that when you have subtracted all of the tricks and deceptions, there is still a lot of things that are unaccountable. Some of the keenest and most critical minds have pronounced these manifestations to be genuine demonstrations of the supernatural.

One of the tricks of the spirits is to appear on photographs. I have seen a number of photographs that were taken of people, and when they were developed a face or faces of deceased loved ones would appear on the pictures. The only explanation that can be given is that it is one of the devil's tricks. It is always a dangerous thing for people to play around with the devil and his tricks.

Unfortunately there are people in some lands who are devil worshipers. Missionaries from India tell of the miracles that people do under the influence and power of the devil. It is an absolute truth that people walk on red hot coals of fire or put their feet and hands into flames without getting burned. Those who practice voodoo perform these miracles all the time, There are some who have been known to lie on beds of razor sharp spikes that would cut right into the flesh of most people, but the devil worshipers are not injured at all. We are told by the missionaries that when the devil worshipers, by some miracle, turn to Christ, they are often attacked by unseen adversaries; there have been cases where they have been beaten, and bones have been broken.

Jesus tells us of people in his day that were possessed with demons. When the Lord saw that there was a desire to be released in the hearts of those poor creatures, he would command the demons to leave them. The Bible records how people would be torn or thrown violently to the ground by the devil before he would give them up. (Mark 1:26; 9:29, 26).

There are many cases of people who claim to have seen ghosts of deceased loved ones. Sometime ago a colporteur who was out selling religious books encountered a woman whose son had been lost in World War 1. The woman was a widow living alone. She told the colporteur of the wonderful experiences she had when her son would appear to her from time to time. The colporteur asked her if she was sure it was her son. She said she was, because he looked exactly like her son, and he smiled at her as he used to smile when he was living, and he would speak to her just as he used to do.

The colporteur advised her that the next time she had this experience she should challenge this spirit in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to tell her who he was. She was reluctant to do this, but finally she promised because she wanted to convince the colporteur that it was really her son. Six weeks later the colporteur returned to that home to deliver a book he had sold to the lady. She told the colporteur that she had had the most unusual experience. "Well," she said, "I found it hard to question what I thought was my boy, but finally I asked him in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to tell me who he was." "What happened?" asked the colporteur. "Well, sir," she said, "a complete change came in his appearance. A horrible look appeared on his

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face, and he seemed to literally fling himself out of the room. But as he left my presence, I heard the words flung back at me, 'the devil.' "

There are many people who tell that they see the spirits of their loved ones. In fact one outstanding religious leader in the protestant world wrote an article in the *Readers Digest* claiming that our loved ones are living in a spirit world, and they can appear to us again. But friends, The Bible clearly tells us that the dead know nothing and they cannot communicate with us. Our dead relatives or ancestors are asleep in their graves and cannot talk to us. The devil and his angels are the ones doing these things.

Satan and his angels can appear in the likeness of our loved ones. The Bible tells us that he has come down to this earth to deceive the world. Truly he has done that very thing. More and more people are being attracted to the theory that we can communicate with the dead and it is logical that people would be attracted to this false theory when they are taught in the churches that the dead are really alive and living in a better world.

Dear friends, if you are having such an experience; if you think you are seeing or hearing the departed spirit of your mother, or husband, or wife, or son; or daughter, or ancient ancestors—whoever it may be, quietly kneel in prayer and ask the Heavenly Father in the name of the Lord Jesus, to show you who and what this thing really is, and to protect you from it. The Lord counsels us to try the spirits, but it is not a good idea ever to speak to them or respond to them if they speak to you—instead better to ask the Lord to deal with it.

It is not wise for Christians to dabble in anything that borders on the occult. Some people go to fortune tellers and soothsayers of various types. We are playing with the devil, when we do.

The story is told of a family where the mother and daughter were spiritualists. Strange things used to happen at their home. They would communicate with the spirits all right, but these were not the spirits of dead loved ones. They could make tables rise so that it was impossible for a human being to push them back down again. Later on this mother and daughter became fortune tellers in a gypsy tea garden in New York City. People who had their tea-leaves read, and thought that it was just entertaining—a very innocent thing. Little did they realize that they were playing with individuals who were in very close connection with the evil angels. We do need to recognize that the devil is real, and that he is working to deceive men. There are many who will not believe the truth regarding his deceptions.

A man who was the editor of *These Times magazine*, printed an article entitled "Are There Ghosts?" It gave the Bible teachings on the condition of man in death and mentioned that so-called ghosts are actually the spirits of the devils. They were evil angels impersonating people. A woman wrote in and said, "I don't believe what you said in the article. I have a sister who appears to me in my room and she smiles just as my sister always smiled, and she comes to visit me, and looks at me, and stays for a few moments and then goes away. I don't believe that this is an evil spirit; I believe it is really my sister." See how people are willing to ignore God's Word and be deceived by the devil? Actually it isn't hard for the devil to deceive men; even Christians like his tricks. Without a doubt these so-called spirits of the departed are the spirits of the devils trying to trick us.

But what about the experience that King Saul had when he went to the witch of Endor? Did not he actually see a likeness of Samuel, called up in that séance? Well, the witch of Endor told him she saw something coming up from the earth and it appeared as an old man covered with a mantle. Saul couldn't see it but he assumed it was Samuel. According to the record, the spirit that was called up was an old man. Now if Samuel was in heaven, he would have received the immortality of youth. He would not have appeared as an old man. Neither would he have been brought up from the earth, as this spirit claimed to be; if he had been in heaven, he would have been brought down.

Spiritism certainly cannot use this experience to substantiate its teachings. If one reads the entire story, Saul went to the witch because God would not communicate with him any longer because of his rebellion and wickedness. This witch was a wicked woman; God certainly would not use a wicked woman to communicate with Saul, when He refused to communicate with him directly or through priests or prophets.

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Saul lost his life from doing this; he actually ended up killing himself. He sure gained no comfort from consulting this witch; indeed the evil spirit discouraged him even more than he already was. The Bible tells us: "So Saul died for his transgression which he committed against the LORD, even against the word of the LORD, which he kept not, and also for asking counsel of one that had a familiar spirit, to enquire of it;" 1 Chronicles 10:13.

Leviticus 19:31 says, "Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards, to be defiled with them: I am the Lord your God." In Deuteronomy 18:10-13 God says, "There shall not be found among you any one that . . . useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a necromancer (a necromancer is one who claims to be able to talk with the dead). For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord. . ." God says that those who consult the spirits or necromancers are an abomination unto Him.

That is good enough for me, friends. How about you? If God says it is an abomination, then we had better leave it alone. Again God says in Leviticus 20:6 and 27, "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people. . . A man also, or woman, that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them." God makes it clear that those who delve into this spirit business are worthy of death.

Can spiritualism call itself Christianity? Is it Christianity at all? Clearly it is not; it denies the blood atonement of Jesus Christ, It denies the fact that God says that man is mortal. It denies the inspiration of many parts of the Bible. Personally, I cannot believe that the spirits that come into the darkened rooms and carry on with so many strange tricks can be the spirits of our departed loved ones. No dear friends these are not the works of our deceased loved ones. They are the works and the tricks of the devil.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle hails spiritualism as a new revelation, and yet he admits that it is an unreliable one. Here is what he said. "Apart from all these limitations we have, unhappily, to deal with absolute, *cold blooded lying* on the part of wicked or mischievous intelligences, Everyone who has investigated the matter has, I suppose, met with examples of willful deception, which occasionally are mixed up with good and true communications, There is nothing more puzzling than the fact that one may get a long, connected description with every detail given, and that it may prove entirely to be a concoction." – *The New Revelation* page 123. Notice that even this confirmed spiritualist tells us that the so-called spirits lie, sometimes they tell big lies. Can we believe that our loved ones appear in dark rooms and perform circus tricks, and then tell lies to us? How can true Christians believe in these deceptions?

What actually happens to a man when he dies? The Lord revealed more about death to Job, I suppose, than any other Bible writer. Job says, "When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return." Job 16:22. Again Job says, "The eye of him that hath seen me shall see me no more. . . He that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more. " Job 7:8-10. Job said that he would not be seen any more after he died.

When David lost his little son, he said, "Now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." 2 Samuel 12:23. David made it clear that the dead do not return. Some day we shall go to them, but they do not come to us now.

The truth is that the Bible tells us that the dead are not able to communicate with the living because they are not conscious of anything that is going on in the world. Here is what the Bible says, "The living know that they shall die; but *the dead know not anything*, neither have they any more a reward, for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished, neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun. . . Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might: for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave whither thou goest," Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6 and 10. Notice that the Bible says that while the living know that they shall die, *the dead know not anything*.

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There are many people who are putting their trust in ancestors or loved ones who have died. Some people actually believe that their dead parents are guiding them in everything they do. God tells us that the dead know not anything. They have nothing more to do with anything under the sun. The Bible says, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day *his thoughts perish*." Psalm 146:3, 4.

If the dead are not able to think, and God says their thoughts have perished, they certainly cannot influence us or have anything to do with us whatever. David tells us "*The dead praise not the Lord*, neither any that go down into silence." Psalm 115:17. They are not able to return to any kind of a séance or make any kind of an appearance. In fact they can't even praise the Lord because they know not anything.

Turning once again to Job, we read, "His sons come to honor, and he knoweth it not, and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them." When the children come to honor, Job says the parents perceive it not, Or if the sons and daughters are brought low, if they get in trouble, suffer sickness, accident, or pain, the Bible tells us that their parents do not see it. They perceive it not!

Dear friends, the dead are not in heaven, or hell, or paradise, or purgatory, or any other place but the grave. Jesus said, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which *all that are in the graves* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:28, 29. The dead are in their graves according to the words of Christ himself. They are awaiting the resurrection day. They are not in heaven or hell, but they are in their graves, unconscious, asleep. When Jesus referred to Lazarus at the time of his death, he said "Lazarus sleepeth." John 11:11

The Bible plainly teaches that both the righteous and the wicked will receive their reward and punishment at the end of the world. The saints will be raised from the dead and the wicked will be cast into the lake of fire to be punished for the deeds they have done in their bodies. Neither the righteous nor the wicked dead are living today. They are peacefully sleeping in the grave. There is to be a resurrection when Jesus comes.

If the dead are in their graves sleeping until the end of the world, then it is absolutely impossible for the living to communicate with the dead. Those who think they are communicating with the dead are actually communicating with the devil and his angels who are playing tricks on them. Satan will leave no stone unturned to lead us astray. If he can cause us to accept his lies, and to willfully reject God's truth, he will be satisfied.

Remember, there is a great controversy going on between good and evil. While we are surrounded by evil angels, we are also surrounded by the angels of God. We must refuse to submit to the power of Satan. We cannot allow him to gain any control over us. We must not allow the devil to suggest excuses to us for refusing to accept God's truth and obeying the Lord in all things.

Satan is particularly anxious to keep us from obeying God's commandments. He rebelled against the government of God in heaven, and he is still in rebellion against God's government of law and order. He will try to get you and me to disobey God even in one point if possible. O how much we need a closer walk with God! If you have not made a complete surrender of your will to God, Satan will know that, and he will do everything in his power to weaken your will so that you will not desire to do what is right,

Friends, I hope that you will realize your utter dependence upon Jesus Christ and the holy angels of God. If you do not then Satan will rob you of life eternal. Christ died to redeem us from the slavery of sin and the power of the devil. May God help us to cling to Him; Jesus is the only one who can deliver us. We must refuse to adhere to Satan's deceptions in any way, shape, or form even if they seem so pleasant and so real. Those who stand to the end will need to trust the Word of God even more than their own senses. May God help us to surrender our lives to Jesus; we can trust Him; He will never fail us!