



“SEE GOD, NOT ghosts!”

Matthew 14:22-27

I. INTRODUCTION

After suffering a 33-0 loss to the New England Patriots on Monday Night Football on October 21, New York Jets’ starting quarterback, Sam Darnold, confessed, “I’m seeing ghosts!” What Darnold was trying to communicate was that the different schemes the Patriots’ defense showed on the field during the game made him see things that were not there! Darnold’s admission was significant because he was mic’d up during ESPN’s telecast of the game on his way to career highs in interceptions and career lows in completion percentage and passing yards. Darnold’s comments went viral and became the source of social media, trolling, and media attention. However, there’s one thing that Christians cannot afford to miss about Darnold’s confession! Evil spirits and demonic activity are real! Like Darnold, even the disciples thought they saw a ghost! But, did they!?!

More than 29 million Americans celebrated Halloween last Thursday and spent nearly \$9 billion on costumes and candy according to the National Retail Federation. Many donned costumes and entertained perceptions and beliefs of being someone or something else, even if it was “just for fun.” What are you perceiving and believing? Today’s sermon examines how Darnold and the disciples were in the same boat (literally)! The disciples thought Jesus Christ was a ghost! While this is not a sporting event, if we plan to win in the game of life, we must trust the Holy Spirit to help us discern the difference between what’s real and what’s fake? That means we must review our game plan (the Bible) with our head coach, Jesus Christ, to expose the enemy’s defensive schemes and strategies so we can pick apart the kingdom of darkness. So, choose to **“See GOD, not ghosts!”**

II. DEMONIC PROPERTIES

- A. All angels of God were originally of the same nature.
- B. As spirits, angels have: 1) understanding; 2) affections; 3) liberty; 4) power of self-determination; and 5) strength and power.
- C. Their knowledge equals their strength and power, and they never grow weary!
- D. Evil angels’ emotions: 1) full of pride; 2) arrogance; 3) haughtiness; 4) self-aggrandizement; 5) envy; 6) cruelty; 7) rage.

III. DIABOLICAL PLANS

- A. Darkens and decays our love of God. **Genesis 3:1**
 - B. Abhors love of neighbor. **1 John 4:20**
 - C. Being an enemy of righteousness. **Acts 13:10**
 - D. Awakens evil passions & entices our sin nature. **Romans 7:19-20;**
James 1:13-15
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IV. DISTORTED PERSPECTIVES

- A. The “breadwinner” is not the “boogey man!” **v. 21 cf. v. 26**
 - B. Brain activity is lowest during the fourth watch. **v. 25**
 - C. Contrary winds create conflict in the cerebrum & cerebellum! **v. 24;**
Ephesians 4:14
 - D. **F**alse **E**vidence **A**ppearing **R**eal! **2 Timothy 1:7**
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V. DIVINE POWER

- A. Jesus never laid hands on the demon-possessed!
 - B. Don't let your demons speak (much)! **Matthew 8:16; Mark 5:9**
 - C. Jesus' power operates within us! **Mark 16:17-18**
 - D. Keep the Word in your heart! **Psalms 119:11**
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VI. CONCLUSION

Are ghosts more real than God in your life? Like many of us, the disciples witnessed Jesus perform many miracles. Yet, they still thought He was a ghost! While demons and demonic powers are real, they are not the equal, evil opposite of God!!! In other words, they are not omnipotent, omnipresent, or omniscient! God gave us dominion and authority over the earth, including the prince of the air, the devil! So, **See GOD, not ghosts!**

Sources: Outler, Albert C. “Sermon 72.” In *The Works of John Wesley Volume 3: Sermons III (71-114)*, Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1986.

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