

Templates of Truth with Rick Smith
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What do the demons of hell know about God that many people today seem so naive about? Do demons know more than Atheists and Agnostics? There is a certain truth that they do, and James opens this significant insight to us in today's Templates of Truth.

Atheists deny the existence of God. Agnostics maintain that one cannot be certain whether or not God even exists. Many modern people who would never admit to either of those two positions claim that God is many things to many different people, and there are many avenues to God. No one single way is warranted. Others simply concede to some "higher power" or "God as you understand Him," but stop short of admitting to a one and only true God. These viewpoints leave a lot of liberality to any absolute conclusion about God. Accordingly, they leave a lot of room for living life as you please with no certain divine standard to guide or challenge you. That's the way many people today want it and like it.

You won't find that much leg room in hell, however! James declares a significant insight to the supernatural world of Satan and his demons when he says: *You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe and shudder* (James 2:19). The ancient world was not much different from our modern world in regard to the worship of gods and deities. Many idols and pagans were the focus of ancient religious cultures and worship rituals. Many world religions do the same in our day. But in the face of all that, God has always declared Himself as the one and only real God. All the others are mere men, women, animals, inanimate stone statues, wood & metal carvings, or just imaginary fantasies. They have no real physical, emotional or spiritual life. The prophet Jeremiah said that they are *delusion because (they are) wood cut from the forest...like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, and cannot speak; they must be carried because they cannot walk! Do not fear them, for they can do no harm, nor can they do any good...but the Lord is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King* (Jeremiah 10:3-10). Is it not totally amazing that the demons of hell understand and *believe* this, yet many people today do not?

The word James uses for *believe* is a unique Greek word. Belief is only one aspect of its meaning. The word also carries the idea of a personal commitment of one's life based on the belief, followed by a lifestyle that demonstrates that commitment. That summarizes in many ways the whole theme of James' epistle – to be a doer of the Word, and putting faith into action through righteous works. That is the kind of belief we have in God, but it is not the kind of belief that demons have. They know who God is and they know He is the one and only true God, but they have no commitment to God – they serve their master, Satan, and the world of darkness. Many people today believe all the right things about God and the Bible, but they have made no real commitment of their life based on those beliefs. Their life, therefore, demonstrates no allegiance to God and His ways. Yes, just like the demons, a person can believe all the right things about God, and still spend eternity in hell.

James says these demons *shudder*. That is another unique Greek word. It refers to the kind of terror that causes your hair to stand up. It indicates the kind of fear that anticipates a fate that is

so dreadful, it causes body tremors. Why would demons have this kind of fear over their belief in God as the one and only true God? It is because they know the fate God has already determined for them, and they know it is real. Along with Satan, they will be *thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where...they will be tormented day and night forever and ever* (Revelation 20:10). Atheists don't believe there is any such place. Agnostics aren't for certain that such a horrible place could even exist. Others who do embrace some concept of God assume He is such a loving and forgiving God, He would never send anyone to such punishment. The demons of hell are not so ignorant or naïve! They KNOW the truth and they shudder in its reality.

Since there is nothing the demons of hell can do about their fate, they do the only thing they can do. They work to keep the atheists, agnostics and people who place their faith & belief in anything and everything except the one and only true God, convinced they are right and OK. They don't quake in their boots over their rejection of God. They rally to the theme, "you believe what you want to believe, and I'll believe what I want to believe." There is only one belief in hell, and it knows God is real. Oh that the world would learn a lesson from demons!

That's today's Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in Christ Jesus.

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