

How the Devil Works

Danny Box

Peter wrote, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8). As long as we are in this earthly body we will have Satan as our adversary. His manner is subtle, "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ" (2 Cor. 11:3). Not only is he subtle, he is full of tricks: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). We also read in Ephesians 6:16 that he is constantly throwing fiery darts our way trying to get us to stumble. But how does the Devil work? What does he do? Note the following:

The Devil tries to keep every soul out of the church. The Devil does not want any one to be saved, and he knows that people are saved who have been added to the church through obedience. So what does he do? He does anything he can do to get people not to believe the truth of God's Word. If it takes tempting people with a man-made religion, or another gospel he will do it because he knows that if a person hears the gospel preached they will be told what it takes to be saved. The Devil will try to show that being a part of the body of Christ is not essential to salvation. He will ridicule and misrepresent the church. Yes friends, he will do everything in his power to keep every responsible soul out of the church.

The Devil tries to get you back into the world. If he cannot keep you from obeying the gospel, then he will do everything he can to get you back into the world. He does this by making the world and the things of the world appealing. He does everything he can to weaken your faith. He causes you to become discouraged. He will get your companions to corrupt you. He will rise up false teachers from among the church to entice you. He will do whatever it takes to destroy your faith and get you back into the world.

But if he cannot keep you out of the church, and if he cannot get you back into the world, the Devil then will try to make you useless to the church. He does this by encouraging you not to study the Word so that you will not grow in the knowledge of the Lord. He tries to confuse your priorities so that you will not put the kingdom of God and His righteousness first in our life. He uses any devious trick that he can to render you useless and worthless in service to the Lord. The Devil knows the working Christian is pleasing to the Lord and because of their effort, others will be converted to the Lord and the church will grow and he does not wish this to happen.

- Beacon, Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL -

The pleasures of sin are for a season, but its wages are eternal.

News & Notes

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Each Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

PANTRY: Dinty Moore Beef Stew.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER: Rick Beck was rushed to the hospital last Thursday with a possible stroke.

SICK & SHUT-IN: At Home: Derek Thompson, David Strum (Karen's husband), Jim & Marilyn Hadley, Mike West, Barbara DeLong, Claudette Miller, Cheryl Renfro Walker. **Fox, Pepperberry Suites, Chester:** David McCoy. **Weston, WV:** Rick & Sharon Beck, 807 Camden Ave., Weston, WV 26452.

You Preach First!

Cecil May, Jr.

The first sermon preached each Sunday is not by the pulpit preacher but by you. You preach a message about the importance of the Scriptures when you bring your Bible. You preach a message of good cheer when you say "Good Morning!" to those you meet when you park your car and when you are in the hallway and classroom. You preach a message of hope and joy when you sing enthusiastically during the song service. You preach a message about the power of prayer when you fervently enter into our time of prayer together. You preach a message of respect when you listen attentively while the preacher is speaking. You preach a message of love when you smile, say "Hello" and introduce yourself to visitors. You preach a message of faith when you give your offering.

Many messages are preached before the preacher stands up to bring his message. If your message is positive and consistent, then the message from the pulpit will be much better received. Come each Sunday prepared to preach your sermon. - Gospel Gazette online -

Identity Theft

By Joe Slater

According to the Federal Trade Commission a fraction more than two people's identity is stolen every minute on average in the U.S. Specific incidents range from credit card fraud to buying cars or taking out loans in someone else's name. Whole companies exist to warn you of suspicious activity and protect you in case your bank account gets drained, or someone racks up a huge debt in your name (all for a fee, of course).

What about your spiritual identity? If you're a Christian, you aren't the same person you were before you came to Christ; you have a new identity. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Satan may bludgeon you with your past sins to steal your new identity. Paul instructed the Corinthian church to forgive and comfort their formerly incestuous brother "lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:6-11). Satan would have liked nothing better than for the repentant brother be "swallowed up with too much sorrow" (v. 7), thus giving up on being a Christian at all. Paul himself was painfully aware of his wicked past but refused to surrender his new identity in Christ.

I wonder if any of the Corinthians said, "Well, I'm just not sure he was sincere!" Folks tend to look with a jaundiced eye at the repentance of people who have committed outrageous sins. But what makes us think we should question anyone's sincerity? Do we doubt the sincerity of others whose sins are more like our own?

Don't let Satan steal your identity! You aren't who you used to be. At the same time, don't be the devil's accomplice in stealing anyone else's identity in Christ. - Bulletin Gold -