

Look Out! Here He Comes!

Dee Bowman

We live in a world of denial. Most folks have some small amount of what they call “spirituality,” but they have little or no Bible knowledge. They will affirm a belief in God, but when it comes to the devil, his ploys and his temptations, they seem to think he’s mostly just a sort of representative of what is wrong and not a real person. Much of this disregard for the devil and his ploys is based on little or no Bible knowledge. Surely anyone who has carefully read the Scriptures and considered their affirmations will admit that the devil is real, that he is active, and that he is totally committed to the incarceration and eventual destruction of mankind.

As a matter of fact, the causing of people to deny both his existence and his devices is one of the most effective ploys of the devil. As long as he can keep people in the dark about his existence it will be easy for him to take them where he wants them to go.

The fact is, everyone of us is engaged in a mortal battle with the devil and his forces of evil. The sooner we face that fact, the sooner we will be constrained to oppose his methods and deny him any control in our lives.

You can never relax when you’re engaged in combat with the devil. Did you know that the devil spends most of his time amongst the members of the Lord’s church? About 99%, I’d say. The other 1% of his time is spent just keeping what he’s already got in tow. For this reason it’s most important that we get to know something about the devil’s devices and how he uses them to seduce Christians back into the world and how he uses them to keep those who’ve never obeyed the gospel where they are—lost.

First, face the fact! There is actually such a person as the devil, and he knows your name. The fact that some people have the notion that the devil is only a myth or an imagination in no way changes the fact of his reality. Let me assure you that the devil is real! God’s word tells us that he exists, that he’s not just a force of evil, but an active personality, one bent on the work of beguiling and subduing persons toward evil.

In Ephesians 6:10, Paul exhorts that we make sure of the armor we wear, “...that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.” Paul implies emphatically that the devil is a personality, that he is actively plotting against righteousness and piety.

In I Peter 5:8, Peter warns us to exercise diligence and soberness, because the devil “...walketh around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” He’s always around somewhere.

And he is a formidable foe! We should never take him lightly or dismiss him frivolously. He’s always lurking on the periphery of all that we do.

Let us be impressed with another fact: the devil is intimately acquainted with man. He knows man to the extent that he can predict what appeals to him and how he can be tempted. For instance, he knows that man is capable of being deceived. Not only that, he knows what bait to use to insure the deception. He is aware, too, of the almost universal desire to obtain riches, and he uses that constant longing for more of what this world has to offer to deceive mankind. He knows that he can often subdue the human soul by flattering the ego or elevating personal pride. He is a promoter of indifference, and he likes nothing better than to cause a person to feel sufficient and satisfied with where he is—so much so that he no longer sees the need for participation in the Lord's work. Make no mistake about it—the devil knows your name!

And the devil never quits. He never declared a moratorium, nor does he work only 40 hours a week. He is always there, always working on some new plan designed to cause, some new plot he has cleverly devised. And when you repulse him and cause him to flee, he only retreats long enough to re-group and make a new and sometimes even fiercer attack. He is constantly chipping away at your strengths, too, trying to use even your strengths to bring you down by causing self-righteousness or inordinate feelings of self-esteem.

What to do? First, realize that you can't beat him by yourself. You begin by doing what Jesus did when tempted in the wilderness—you use the word of God (Matthew 4). It is your defense, your protection, your answer to all his advances, just as it was His. We can know his wiles and devices by studying the word of God (II Corinthians 2:11) and we can know his methods and predict his modes of attack—you can "resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). Look out, here he comes!