

The Devices of Satan

Introduction:

1. 2 Corinthians 2:6-11; Eph. 6:11.
2. Concerning 2 Cor. 2:6-11:
 - a. In his first letter to the church at Corinth Paul rebuked the church for having among its membership a brother who had "*his father's wife*," I Cor. 5:1; a case of incest in the local church. Paul commanded that they deal with this brother in a forthright manner, I Cor. 5:4-5.
 - b. Between the writing of the first and second epistles to the church at Corinth the brother who had been withdrawn from had evidently repented; now it was time to forgive him and confirm their love to him, 2 Cor. 2: 7-8.
 - c. They needed to take this approach lest Satan should gain the "*advantage*," 2 Cor. 2:11, for Paul said "*we are not ignorant of his devices*."
 - (1) "*Devices*" is from *noema*, and denotes thought, that which is thought out. It refers to a well thought out plan that is "*especially for evil plans and purposes*," A.T. Robertson, **Word Pictures in the New Testament**.
3. Concerning Ephesians 6:11:
 - a. In the context of this verse Paul was stressing the necessity of Christian's armor, the reason being that we might "*be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*."
 - b. "*Wiles*" denotes "*cunning arts, deceit, craft, trickery*," Thayer.
4. These words together depict Satan as:
 - a. A schemer, a plotter, as one who is alert to every opportunity.
 - b. One who does not work openly, for he knows that his cause is indefensible, illogical, and unreasonable; hence, he cannot afford to parade under his true colors.
 - c. An enemy of Christians. Indeed he is! I Peter 5:8
 - (1) Satan recognizes no one as being too powerful or too righteous for him to attack or to tempt. Cf. Matt. 4:1-12; Hebrews 4:15.

Discussion:

I. Other Facts Concerning Satan. He is:

- A. Our "*adversary*," I Peter 5:8.
- B. Called "*the god of this world*," 2 Cor. 4:4.
- C. Called "*the prince of the power of the air*," Eph. 2:2.
- D. Called "*the accuser of our brethren*," Rev. 12:10. Cf. Job 1:6-11.
- E. Called "*the enemy*," Matt. 13:39.
- F. "*A Murderer*," John 8:44.
- G. A "*Liar*" and the "*father*" of lies, John 8:44

Note: In view of who Satan is, and his nature, it is not surprising that he would have evil plans for us; "*devices*" designed to weaken, or even destroy, our faith, and to lead us further and further from God. He has the worst possible intentions for each of us!

II. Some "Devices" of Satan.

- A. Deception, Genesis 3:1-6.
 1. Eve was deceived, I Timothy 2:13-14. Cf. I John 2:15-17.
 2. We are commanded to not be deceived, Gal. 6:7; I Cor. 6:9-11.
 3. Yet Satan, through his preachers, continues to deceive people every day, 2 Cor. 11:12-13.
 - a. This is why we are commanded to "*try the spirits*," I John 4:1.
 - b. This is why we should follow the example of the Bereans, Acts 17:11.
- B. Distraction, or diversion.
 1. Distraction through our work, Luke 10:38-42.
 2. Distraction through cares and pleasures, Luke 8:14.
 3. Distractions through desires that are at variance with God's will, James 1:13-15.
 - a. This is what happened to David in 2 Samuel 11.
- C. Division.
 1. God wants His people to be united! John 17:19-21; I Cor. 1:10-11; Eph. 4:3; Phil. 1:27.

2. Yet religious division is the norm; it is all around us, and many people even thank God for so many denominations, for this gives everyone the opportunity to worship in the church of his choice!
3. Divisions occur because of:
 - a. False doctrine, I Tim. 4:1-3; Eph. 4:4-6.
 - b. Conflicting personalities, Eph. 4:1-3; Romans 15:1,5-6.
4. But keep in mind the fact that it is Satan who tries to drive a wedge between God's people!

D. Doubt.

1. Heb. 3:12
2. Matt. 14:31.
3. Satan tries to take the word of God out of people's hearts, Luke 8:12.
4. Today, because of so many false teachers, teachers and professors of humanism, and evolution, Satan is having a field day! So many of our young people in particular, upon leaving home, are losing their faith.
5. We must do what we can to instill faith in the hearts of our children; the best way is by teaching them. Note Rom. 10:17.

E. Discouragement.

1. Numbers 21:4-5; Deut. 1:21,22.
2. Discouraged because of:
 - a. The bearers of bad news.
 - b. Adverse circumstances, Num. 21:4.
 - c. Constant criticism, Num. 20:2-5, 7-11.

(1) "If Christians spent as much time praying as they do grumbling, they would have nothing to grumble about.

F. Disappointment.

1. Because of being disenchanted, disillusioned, unfulfilled expectations, etc.
2. When things don't go the way we think they should we often engage in that "stinking thinking," and say to ourselves "what's the use."
 - a. Job had to be disappointed by his three friends, whom he called "miserable comforters," Job 16:2.
 - b. Paul was doubtlessly disappointed in John Mark, Acts 13:13, and Demas, 2 Tim. 4:10.
 - c. Think how disappointed Jesus was in Judas, Matt. 26:14-15, and Peter, Matt. 26:69-75.

G. Delay.

1. Acts 24:25; 26:18; Psalm 119:60.

III. How to win the Battle against Satan.

- A. Through knowledge, Psalm 119:9,11.
- B. By putting on the whole armor of God, Eph. 6:10,11.
- C. Resistance, James 4:7; I Peter 5:8-9.
- D. By Keeping things in perspective, Matt. 19:26; Romans 8:18,28; 2 Cor. 4:17.

Conclusion:

1. One of the best ways to rid Satan of control over your life is to start out by obeying the gospel.
 - a. This is not to say that Christianity is a life of ease and void of temptation, difficulty, or burdens, Matt. 16:24.
 - b. Yet two verses later, Matt. 16:26, we are made to see the importance of obedience.
2. Matt. 11:28-30

--Bobby Witherington, May 24, 2015