

Knowing Your Enemy

Presented on 5/14/09 by Jade Stanley

Introduction: As Christians we need to be aware that we are in a battle and that we have a very real enemy. It is easy as a Christian to get busy with our day to day lives and forget that we have an enemy who wants to prevent us from fulfilling our destiny. The enemy, of course that I am referring to is Satan or the devil. In 2 Corinthians 2:11 Paul warns us saying, “lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.” From this scripture we can see that knowledge is a crucial step to overcoming him. By understanding our enemy we are better equipped to fight the good fight of faith. When a country is going to battle it is important for them to know as much about their enemy as possible. This usually includes understanding the people they are fighting as well as their tactics. Today I want to equip you for the battle by sharing with you a little about who Satan is, his goals, and his tactics.

1) Who he is

Revelation 12:7-13, 17

⁷ And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them^[a] in heaven any longer. ⁹ So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. ¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. ¹² Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” ¹³ Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *Child*.

¹⁷ And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.^[b]

A) He is a living being

1. George Barna: In his survey he stated, "The Devil, or Satan, is not a living being but is a symbol of evil." He then asked those who have identified themselves as being Born Again, "Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with that statement?"

32 percent agreeing strongly, 11 percent agreeing somewhat and 5 percent did not know.

Of the total number responding, 48 percent either agreed that Satan is only symbolic or did not know!

2. Look at vs. 7-9 above

B) He is the accuser: vs. 10

We can clearly see that he is a deceiver & an accuser,
In fact the name Devil- from diabolos “an accuser, a slanderer”

C) Enemy of man: vs. 17

This is confirmed again in Gen 3:15 where we read that:

¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

2) What he wants to accomplish

The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy

1. John 10:10: ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

A) Steal

1. What does he want to steal?
 - a. In Matt 13 we see the Parable of the sower

Matt 13:19: ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand *it*, then the wicked *one* comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

- b. Wants to steal the word
2. Why does he want to steal the word?
 - a. Non-Christians: to keep them from getting saved
 - b. Christians: keep them from growing spiritually, and prevent them from producing fruit

Example: it seems like when you get a new revelation you are often tested in it right away.

How many of you have left class having learned something and then were tested in that very area within days?

Seems to happen frequently in the area of healing

It is at those times that Satan is trying to steal the word that was sown and trying to convince them that God's word is not true.

B) Kill

1. kill dreams, vision, hope
2. kill people physically, take lives before their time
 - a. get people to speak death and curses over themselves

C) Destroy

2. the plan of God for your life

3) His tactics

Football illustration:

Do you win football games with just a good offense? No, you need a defense.

How does that defense normally prepare? They study tapes of the other teams plays and strategies.

Much in the same way, knowing the devils tactics gives us an advantage in the battle.

The first tactic we are going to cover, which is one of the most common tactics is:

A) Lies and Deception

1. John 8:44⁴⁴ You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.
 - a. Makes sense that he would use lies since he is the father of lies
 - b. An example found in Gen 3 when Satan tempted Eve
 - i. Hath God said
 - ii. Very 1st trick he used
2. Gen 3:1-5,¹ Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”
3. (additional material) 2 Cor 11:3³ But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity^[a] that is in Christ.

B) Temptation

1. In Luke 4 we read the story of Jesus being tempted in the wilderness
 - a. Luke 4:13¹³ Now when the devil had ended every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.
 1. Jesus had been fasting – a moment of weakness
 2. Offered bread – knew what would be tempting
2. (additional material) 1 Cor 7:5⁵ Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
3. (additional material) 1 Thes 3:5⁵ For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.

C) Physical affliction

1. Acts 10:38³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

It is very evident from this scripture that there is a direct correlation between the devil and sickness. Sickness is often an attack not an accident.

2. Luke 13:10-16 ¹⁰ Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise *herself* up. ¹² But when Jesus saw her, He called *her* to *Him* and said to her, “Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity.” ¹³ And He laid *His* hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. ¹⁴ But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, “There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day.” ¹⁵ The Lord then answered him and said, “Hypocrite!^[b] Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead *it* away to water it? ¹⁶ So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound—think of it—for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?”

To recap what we have learned

We established in these passages that:

- We do have a real, living breathing enemy called the devil.
- We must be aware of his plans because he is on a mission to steal, kill and destroy mankind.

In order to accomplish this we see him using:

- deception,
- temptation and
- physical affliction.

We are warned not to be ignorant because being aware is the first step towards resisting the devil and sending him fleeing.

Appendix: (This is additional material that was cut for time.)

1) Who he is

Satan- his name is translated from the word “adversary”

Devil- from diabolos “an accuser, a slanderer

Raised himself in pride against God: Isaiah 14:12-14

¹² “ How you are fallen from heaven,

O Lucifer, ^[b] son of the morning!

How you are cut down to the ground,

You who weakened the nations!

¹³ For you have said in your heart:

‘ I will ascend into heaven,

I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;

I will also sit on the mount of the congregation

On the farthest sides of the north;

¹⁴ I will ascend above the heights of the clouds,

I will be like the Most High.’

Fell from heaven: Luke 10:18

18 And He (Jesus) said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven.

2) What he wants to accomplish:

D) Seeking to devour:

1 Pet 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because^[a] your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

E) Take captives to do his will:

2 Tim 2:26 ²⁴ And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, ²⁵ in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, ²⁶ and *that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.

John 13:27 Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”

Acts 5:3 But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back *part* of the price of the land for yourself?

Eph 2:2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

F) Keep people from receiving Christ:

2 Cor 4:4 whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

3) His tactics:

Matthew 4:1-10

¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."

⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, '*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*'"^[a] ⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,

⁶ and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

'He shall give His angels charge over you,' and,

'In their hands they shall bear you up,

Lest you dash your foot against a stone."^[b]

⁷ Jesus said to him, "It is written again, '*You shall not tempt the LORD your God.*'"^[c]

⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me."

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you,^[d] Satan! For it is written, '*You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.*'"^[e]

J. O. Sanders offers this summary of the strategies of Satan:

Strategies of Satan with unbelievers:

- 1) blinding the minds of the unregenerate (2 Cor. 4:4).
- 2) snatching away the good seed of the word (Matthew 13:19).
- 3) lulling the unbeliever into a false sense of security (Luke 11:21).
- 4) laying snares for the unwary (2 Timothy 2:25-26).
- 5) masquerading as an angel of light (2 Cor 11:13-14).
- 6) deceiving those whose minds are not subject to the Word of truth (Rev 12:9).
- 7) mixing truth with error (Matthew 13:25-8).

Strategies of Satan with believers:

- 1) annihilate the church or neutralize its witness from within (Acts 5:1-6).
- 2) virulent persecution from without.
- 3) smother its witness by according it great popularity.
- 4) disturb the unity of the church by creating discord and division
- 5) subversion of the church through apostasy and heresy (2 Peter 2:1-2).

J.O. Sanders, [Satan is No Myth](#), Moody, 1975, p. 72ff.

Statistics and Research

Even those who claim to be Born Again are not necessarily firmly grounded in the truths of the Bible. In his book which provides a statistical analysis of religious beliefs in America, George Barna cites several fascinating statistics which are based on a national survey.

In chapter four he states, "The Devil, or Satan, is not a living being but is a symbol of evil." Then asking that segment of his survey respondents who have identified themselves as being Born Again, he states, "Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with that statement?"

The Born Again population reply with 32 percent agreeing strongly, 11 percent agreeing somewhat and 5 percent did not know. Thus, of the total number responding, 48 percent either agreed that Satan is only symbolic or did not know!

What Americans Believe pp. 206-212, [Watchman Expositor](#), Vol. 10, No. 4, 1993, p. 31.