

HOW THE DEVIL WINS

(2 Cor. 2:6-11)

Introduction:

1. As Paul said so long ago, God's people are not unmindful of Satan's ploys. He has been using the same sad playbook from the very beginning. It is a sad one because it is so old and basic, and because of how effective it has been and continues to be (Gen. 3:4-6; 1 John 2:15-17; Matt. 4:1-10).
2. Knowing your opponents (and "devil" means "the adversary") playbook is a sure fire way to succeed. Why then does man keep failing?
3. Let us this morning consider two of the most common ways the devil wins, so that we will be armed against them.

Discussion:

I. Getting people to deny their need for salvation.

- A. Satan has been very successful in getting people to deny God (Rom. 1:16-32).
 1. He has encouraged people to construct their own gods.
 - a. Gods made up from imagination (mythology of China, India, Egypt, Greece, and Rome-Rom. 1:23).
 - b. Gods made up by changing the nature of the one true God (Judaism, Islam, "Christian" denominations-Rom. 1:23, 25, 28).
 2. Of late he has been successful in having people deny the concept of God.
 - a. The rare (and usually hypocritical) atheist whose outrageous statements made from presupposition not evidence gives cover to the pseudo-theists (those who believe in a god of their own making-Rom. 1:18-22).
 - b. The animists/mystics who deify life itself (Rom. 1:25).
- B. The root of all sin finds its source in Satan's lie in the garden (Gen. 3:1-6).
 1. With no God, our immoral behavior can be justified. Usurping God produces a moral authority for all that men want to do.
 2. Consider Is. 44:6-9ff; 45:5-14, 22-25; cp. John 6:68.

II. Getting people to forsake their salvation.

- A. When the church acts like the denominations.
 1. When brethren pick and choose which commands of God are to be obeyed and which can be ignored (Jas. 2:7-12 which is followed by a refutation of faith without works).
 2. The commands of God encompass every second of our lives and every breath of our bodies (both of which are from God Himself!).
 - a. We speak of modesty often and yet brethren dress immodestly.
 - b. We speak of respect for God often and yet brethren often show blatant irreverence for God and His Assembly.
- B. The root of this abomination, brethren acting like non-Christians, is worldliness.
 1. Admittedly, one of the greatest challenges of being a Christian is living in the world and yet remaining not of the world (John 17:14-21). But the old illustration is still true: boats are made to be in water but water should not be in the boat. So too, the church is to be in the world but the world is NOT to be in the church!
 2. Brethren are allowing the lies of Satan to rob them of their salvation.
 - a. Choosing assembling with the world over assembling with the saints (Heb. 10:25).
 - b. Choosing to value the treasures of the world over the treasures of heaven (Matt. 6:19-21).
 - c. Choosing self-pride over the glory of God (Jer. 9:23, 24; Rom. 5:1-4).
 - d. Choosing ease of living here over the reward for labor there (Luke 16:25; Matt. 6:2).

Conclusion:

1. Such a tired old game plan, brethren. Surely we can see through it and be saved.
2. Understanding our need for a Savior and the means of being saved is the first step (Matt. 11:28-30). Living life as Jesus' own is the second step (Gal. 2:20).
3. Invitation.

MORE ON “HOW THE DEVIL WINS”

1. Selfishness is the greatest lure by which the devil deceives us.
 - A. Satan tempts us with our own deepest desire, to be God (Gen. 3:1-6).
 - B. This desire is the root of all sin, because it is the first step away from submission (Is. 45, 46).
 - C. To pretend that our denial of God is actually based on high-brow scientific facts is the epitome of usurping God’s throne (Rom. 1:18-32; Col. 2:8).
 - D. This cop out is just a way to escape judgment. If there is no God then there is no one to whom I must answer for my actions. Children say, “there are no parents = there are no rules!”
 - E. Look at what must be “scientifically” accepted in order to accomplish this usurpation.
 1. I have to believe that everything came from nothing, or that the universe is eternal (both of which are scientifically refuted).
 2. I have to believe that life came from non-life (which is scientifically refuted).
 3. I have to believe that life evolved into every higher complex forms (scientifically refuted).
 4. I have to believe that humans are not fundamentally different from animals (scientifically and observationally refuted).
 5. I have to believe that morals are external and relative (observationally refuted).
 - F. All this denial is, is a childish attempt to wish away parents so that we can do what we want.
2. Selfishness is also the greatest lure in getting Christians who Know better to throw away their salvation.
 - A. There eventually comes a time when our desires conflict with God’s teaching and we usurp God and follow our desire.
 - B. There comes a time when we feel that we are better than others, and somehow were not and are not in need of a Savior, and we start acting as if we are the Lord and Master.
 - C. Our wants here and now outweigh our desire for the there and then.
3. Ephesians 5:1-21ff.

**REMEMBER, CHRIST
HAS WON!!**