

Dealing with the Devil

Last week: The Devil's Devices

☞ There really is an enemy! **He often attacks when we are making progress in our spiritual walk.**

--Saint Francis... Satan is quite content for us to make any number of beginnings as long as we never complete anything.

We are sticking to the Word of God; teaching the truth; reaching out to hurt and lost people. We should expect the enemy to attempt to disrupt our progress. Let's not be naïve or ignorant!

☞ **The Enemy uses: Deception; Division; Distraction; Doubt; Discouragement**

We must be alert! His methods are often less than obvious and sometimes even covered in godly looking disguises.

*--Erwin W. Lutzer... No matter how many pleasures Satan offers you, his ultimate intention is to ruin you. **Your destruction is his highest priority.***

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He wants us to doubt and be discouraged. The enemy is trying to pick us off one at a time. We must be aware! Don't be deceived; don't be distracted. Resist his efforts at division.

2 Corinthians 2:11
we are not unaware of his schemes.

Judges 3 describes the nature of the enemy...

These are the nations the LORD left to test all those Israelites who had not experienced any of the wars in Canaan... the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. *(Joshua also includes Gergashites)*

Here is the nature of our enemy:

Canaanites = those that humble and subdue

☞ He wants us to live in **defeat**. This is his ultimate goal. His offers may sound appealing, but don't be fooled, he wants you destroyed. Defeat is often more about attitude than reality. The one in us is greater than the one in the world (1 John 4:4), but we often feel defeated. We sometimes start doubting God's promises and then become discouraged and defeated. The Israelites struggled with this issue, too.

Numbers 14:1-3 *after the report of giants in the land*

That night all the people of the community raised their voices and wept aloud. **2** All the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly said to them, "If only we had died in Egypt! Or in this desert! **3** Why is the Lord bringing us to this land only to let us fall by the sword? Our wives and children will be taken as plunder. Wouldn't it be better for us to go back to Egypt?"

God promised them the land, but then they started doubting God and were discouraged and defeated before they even began to enter!

But, 1 Corinthians 15:57

thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Hittites = one who fears

☞ He wants us to live in **fear**. Fear of failure; fear of the future; fear of embarrassment; fear of conflict; fear of what others may think. These all come from the enemy.

☞ **False Evidence Appearing Real**

Fear tends to paralyze us. That's what he wants; to stop our forward progress.

But, 2 Timothy 1:7

For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

Hivites = wickedness

☞ He wants us to live in **sin & wickedness**. He will tempt us, trying to cause us to fall into sin.

"Sin can take you farther than you want to go. Slowly, but wholly taking control. Sin will leave you longer than you want to stay. Sin will cost you far more than you want to pay."

But, 1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

Perizzites = dwelling in villages

☞ He wants us to **settle for less** than God's best. The enemy may allow some minor progress in the hopes that we will settle for that. But, God has big plans for us!

Isaiah 54:2-3

enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. For you will spread out to the right and to the left

This is the text God spoke to us about our future. God has big plans for us. Yes, we have seen some healings. Yes, we have added new believers. But, there is still more! Let's not settle!

Girgashites = one who arrives from pilgrimage

Similar to the idea of the Perizzites is this: thinking you "have arrived." This ultimately is talking about **pride**. The enemy wants us to think that we have all there is to have. When good things happen he wants us to get puffed up about it and think it was all our doing.

Obadiah 3

The pride of your heart has deceived you...

But, Proverbs 27:2

Let someone else praise you, and not your own mouth.

Amorites = bitter; or, a rebel; a babbler

The enemy wants us to become **bitter or rebellious**. This is about holding grudges against others for whatever reason. This is about rebelling against God's directions and requirements. He also wants us to **grumble and gossip**.

But, Hebrews 12:15

See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

And, don't forget how God personally handled grumblers in Numbers 14.

Jebusites = treading under foot

The enemy's schemes began with the Canaanites, referring to his desire for our defeat. And, it concludes with a similar thought: he wants us to become so *defeated* that he can walk all over us. Once we face some struggles, we will be tempted to **give up** and think we can't possibly succeed. The enemy wants to make a mockery of us, but God has promised that we would not be humiliated or ashamed. (Isaiah 54:4)

So, there's a real enemy. We know about his methods. **How can we overcome him?** Here's the good news...

Joshua 3:10

you will know that the living God is among you and that he will certainly drive out before you...

☞ **So, God defeats the enemy. But, what is our part?** Last week we talked about being **Aware, Alert and Armed**. Here's a few more...

Exodus 34:12-13

Be careful not to make a treaty with those who live in the land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you. **13** Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones and cut down their Asherah poles.

☞ **Don't align yourself with the enemy.**

Remember, Samson had 30 friends that were actually his enemies, and he married into the enemy's family. Delilah manipulated him and he played along with it. It was all part of his downfall.

Don't give in to his manipulations. You don't *have* to be defeated or fearful. You don't *have* to sin anymore. You *can* resist the temptation of pride. You *can* overcome bitterness and rebellion. You *can* control your tongue and avoid gossip and grumbling. You *can* persevere and not give up.

☞ Don't listen to the enemy. **Listen to God!** Our part is simple: Follow and obey! God does the rest. Remember, God himself will drive the enemy out! Simply surrender to him and abide in his presence!

The man who is fully surrendered to the Lord will never deliberately surrender to the Enemy.

Defeat, fear, sin, wickedness, settling, pride, bitterness, rebellion, grumbling, gossip, giving up... These are all from the enemy. Resist the enemy. Rely on God!

Here are a few more practical tips for dealing with the enemy:

☞ **Matthew 4:3-11 Quote the Word**

The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." **4** Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" **5** Then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. **6** "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you, and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.'" **7** Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" **8** Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of

the world and their splendor. **9** "All this I will give you," he said, "if you will bow down and worship me." **10** Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'" **11** Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him.

Jesus quoted the Word, and so should we. Did you notice that for every enemy I described, I referred to a Bible verse that opposes it?

2 Corinthians 7:10

☞ Godly sorrow brings **repentance** that leads to salvation and leaves no regret...

Sometimes, we simply need to admit we've played along with the enemy and repent.

Ephesians 4:26-27

☞ **Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry**, 27 and do not give the devil a foothold.

We don't think about anger as a device of the enemy. But it is and it's one way he gets a foothold in our lives. Last week we talked about avoiding division by dealing with matters directly and discreetly (cf. Matthew 18:15-17). Here's another one: when it comes to frustration and anger with your Christian brother, don't dillydally. Deal with it promptly!

Ephesians 6:11-18

Put on **the full armor of God** so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

☞ **Truth; righteousness; peace; faith; salvation; word of God; praying in the Spirit.**

Without these we are unarmed against a powerful foe.

James 4:7-8 does a good job of summing all of this up...

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **8** Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

☞ **Remember the Enemy!** He wants us divided, distracted, and doubting. He wants us sinning and settling; fearing and failing; grumbling and giving up.

☞ **Resist him!**

Repent!

Rely on God!