

What Can Satan Do to Us as Believers, If We Don't Seek God's Protection?

Matthew 6:13b/1 Peter 5:1-11

What Can Satan Do to Us, as Believers, If We Don't Seek God's Protection?

That is our focus today.

Today the most cunning terrorist in the Universe is stalking us as Christ's followers.

As we open to 1 Peter 5 we learn that Satan is not only God's adversary, he is ours.

He is coming after each of us who leave the door open to him.

He can devour us at any time we let the defensive perimeter down.

He is able to penetrate any safe room, secure location, and security system.

He is un-seeable, un-detectable, and un-stoppable: except by one security system, God's.

The Only Security System Against the Devil is: God's

This morning as we continue our study of the Lord's Prayer we have come to this topic:

What Can Satan Do to Us, as Believers, If We Don't Seek God's Protection?

Satan can swallow us, devour us, and render us useless for God's purposes, if we let him.

Open with me to 1 Peter 5.

1 Peter 5:1-11 (NKJV) The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. 5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you. 8 **Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith,** knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. 11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Pray

Living for Christ in a Hostile World

Peter is writing to the most advanced cultural region of the First Century. The Roman Province of Asia was an amazing concentration of the greatest buildings and engineering infrastructure of the Roman Empire.

Here is the epicenter of Roman Culture God was building his church. Each day the

believers faced the hostile world. Each chapter of 1 Peter has the repeated theme of followers of Christ resisted by the surrounding world.

But then in chapter 5, Peter sums up all the ways Satan wanted to defect the church by devouring the members of Christ's Body. In these first eleven verses of chapter 5, Peter speaks to all of the various members of the body, young and old, leaders and members.

With the sobering warning of Satan's goal to devour us comes the explanation of how to resist the Devil. Asking our Father in Heaven to deliver us from the Evil One prompts obedient living.

Peter explains the indicators of obedient living. When any of these areas are neglected, they leave open a backdoor to the Devil.

Walk with me for a few moments through the key points of this vital passage about spiritual warfare. The central point of v. 1-11 is in v. 8-9.

Prayerful vigilance, walking in step with God is the key to avoiding the devouring attack of Satan.

We are to live the life of seeking daily spiritual protection from our Heavenly Father.

A life that gets protected by God is one that cultivates these godly attitudes.

The Chosen Attitudes of a Protected Believer

There are six indicators of spiritual health and safety that Peter writes about. They are each a chosen attitude. When they are present, they each can indicate the system is on and we are protected; or by their absence that we are in danger. What are they?

Submission, Humility, Trust, Self-Control, Vigilance, & Patient Endurance.

Satan will use everything he has against us to discourage us from the walk of faith. He just wants us to get tired of the struggle it is to follow Christ and give up, let down our guard and float.

Submission: a lack of submission leads to Satan devouring us v. 5a.

Humility: a lack of humility leads to Satan devouring us v. 5b-6.

Trust: a lack of trust leads to Satan devouring us v. 7.

Self-Control: a lack of self-control leads to Satan devouring us v. 8a.

Vigilance: a lack of vigilance leads to Satan devouring us v. 8b-9.

Patient Endurance: a lack of patient endurance leads to Satan devouring us v. 10-11.

1-Submission:

a lack of submission leads to Satan devouring us v. 5a.

5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. **Yes, all of you be submissive to one another,**

2-Humility:

a lack of humility leads to Satan devouring us v. 5b-6.

and **be clothed with humility**, for "**God resists the proud**, But gives grace to the humble." 6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time,

3-Trust:

a lack of trust leads to Satan devouring us v. 7.

7 **casting all your care upon Him**, for He cares for you.

God says take every care in your life and place it where? Put them all on Christ.

4-Self-Control:

a lack of self-control leads to Satan devouring us v. 8a.

8 **Be sober**,

Be sober, comes from one word, *grēgoreō*, which means “to watch,” “be awake,” and “be vigilant”. This word is used some 22 times in the New Testament, calling Christians to staying spiritually awake and keeping alert, in contrast to being spiritually indifferent and distracted.

5-Vigilance:

a lack of vigilance leads to Satan devouring us v. 8b-9.

be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Vigilance is the action or state of keeping careful watch for possible danger or difficulties.

Peter notes in v. 9 that we are not alone. Just as the Lord’s Prayer reminds us that we are a family with the same Father and a Body with the same head. We are going through the same struggles as all believers past and present have faced. We have the same goal, and we are not alone.

6-Patient Endurance:

a lack of patient endurance leads to Satan devouring us v. 10-11.

10 But may the **God of all grace**, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, **after you have suffered a while**, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. 11 To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Peter told the saints facing daily hostilities, after “a little while”. Just like he told them in 1 Peter 1:6, it may seem so long, but its really just a little while. Before the God of all grace. What a title. God has all the grace to take us through and keep us.

In 2 Cor. 1:3 He is the “God of all comfort”, and here, the “God of all grace”. We have everything we need to face hostility as we follow His call to eternal glory. God will Himself perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle us.

We Need the God of All Grace

Now do you see why the second half of the sixth petition in the Lord’s Prayer is very pointed?

Matthew 6:13b (NKJV) And do not lead us into temptation, **But deliver us from the evil one.**

We are to invite the God of all grace to protect us.

Remind yourself of who this Evil One is, and why we need God’s help. We resist:

The Ruler of this World

The Evil One is called the prince of this world.

John 14:30 (NKJV) I will no longer talk much with you, for **the ruler of this world** is coming, and he has nothing in Me.

The Evil One is called the prince of the power of the air.

Ephesians 2:2 (NKJV) 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,

The Evil One runs the whole world system as the wicked one.

1 John 5:19 (NKJV) We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies *under the sway* of the wicked one.

The Evil One has the whole world in his lap, he runs the whole system of this world.

The Deceiver of Eden

Think of it. The Evil One was able to talk the first couple out of their daily walks with their very own, personal friendship with Creator of the Universe. Satan convinced Eve, and then Adam that what he had to offer was better than everything God had already given them.

Think of what they were lured away from: knowing God personally, and hearing His voice as He came for walks in the Garden.

The Evil One tempted Adam and Eve when they were perfect and lured them away from God in Genesis 3. He is the deceiver of Eden.

The Devil of the Wilderness

The evil one is so brazen, so set on his ways that he actually tried to pounce on the Lord Jesus Christ at His weakest moment. The temptation in Matthew 4 is astounding when you step back and think about it. Satan knew who he was attacking, yet he did it anyway.

The Evil One even was willing to tempt Christ. He is the Devil of the wilderness.

The Disruptor of Ministry

Paul wrote some sobering words to the Thessalonians (1Th. 2:18) when he explained what kept him from coming to them. Listen to what Satan can do.

1 Thessalonians 2:18 (NKJV) Therefore we wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us.

In both verses the word ***egkopto*** is used. It is a military term for breaking up the road, or placing an obstacle directly in a pathway to impede travel. Satan was able at times to hinder the work of the Apostle Paul.

The Evil One was able to directly hinder God's servant Paul. He is a disruptor of ministry.

The Blinder of Minds

Satan can steal the Word that is shared with people when we witness.

Mat. 13:19 (NKJV) 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.

He also can actually blind people from seeing truth as they consider it in their minds. All his evil is basically worked through unregenerate people who make up his kingdom and that is the world system, and that is the source of temptation driven at our human flesh by this very sophisticated system.

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV) 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.

The Evil One tries to restrict the proclamation of the gospel by blinding the minds of people so the gospel cannot come to them.

So who is the evil one? From the Scriptures we can say that the Evil One is at least these four clear things:

The Ruler of this World in John 14.

The Deceiver of Eden in Genesis 3.

The Devil of the Wilderness in Matthew 4.

The Disruptor of Ministry in 1 Thessalonians 2.

The Blinder of Minds in 1 Corinthians 4.

Because of what we have seen we can understand why Jesus asked us to regularly ask God our Father to deliver us from the crippling, deadening power of the Deceiver, and the Devil, who is the Ministry-Disruptor, and the Mind-Blinder.

What Can Satan Do to Us?

Peter warns all of us that Satan prowls around, and when he finds one of those places as Paul called them, (Eph. 4:27), he has an opening from which to launch his attack where he can devour (1 Peter 5:9) believers.

There is why we pray daily for God to help us. The Evil One is:

He is the One who Devours Saints

Look again at 1 Peter 5:8 (NKJV).

Be sober, be vigilant; because **your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion**, seeking whom he may devour.

When he devours we find ourselves overwhelmed by doubts (the opposite of faith), we are immersed in fear (the opposite of hope), and we are consumed by selfishness (the opposite of love).

God wants us walking in faith, living in hope, and serving in love. Satan devours us to be overwhelmed by our doubts, chained by our fears, and driven by our desires. That is all the Evil One has to do and we are devoured, rendered useless to God.

The Spirit is grieved, our testimony fades, and our joy and peace evaporates. Downward we go. Next, look at James 3:13-18. The Evil One is also:

The One who Brings Confusion & Strife

Here we see how the Evil One can destroy the joy, peace, hope, and effectiveness of

believers.

James 3:13-18 (NKJV) Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵ **This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic.** ¹⁶ For where envy and self-seeking *exist*, **confusion and every evil thing *are* there.** ¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

God's wisdom from above brings confidence, but the Evil One brings confusion.

Examples of Satan's Attacks

Satan attacks individuals who allow him to (Acts 5:1-11).

Satan attacks couples who allow him to (1 Cor. 7:3-5)

Satan attacks who allow him to (1 Tim. 3:7)

Satan Attacks Individuals Who Allow Him To

Satan and his demons attack us as individuals.

Look at Acts 5:1-11. Here is a direct Scriptural example of two believers who through pride and deceit, allowed a place for the Devil.

Look what Peter said in v.3: "Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?"

I don't believe in a righteous Christian's life they have that access. In an obedient Christian's life I don't believe they have that opening. But somehow they can come and influence us through the system and if we're open to them and living in disobedience, they have some access to the controlling factors of our conduct. ¹

Satan Attacks Couples Who Allow Him To

Paul explained that Satan wants to disrupt marriages and families. He wants to tempt, derail, destroy, defile, and eventually divorce them. Look at one of the key ways he does so in 1 Cor. 7:3-5.

Paul tells us in verse 3,

"Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife," (that's talking about physically, sexually), "and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife doesn't have authority over her own body but the husband does, likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body but his wife does."

In other words, you need to give your body to your partner. Why? Verse 5:

"Stop depriving one another unless it's by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

"Nothing would make Satan happier than to come against a Christian couple and because one is holding back the physical relationship against the other, raise the level of temptation to that one struggling with self-control and destroy that family. And again, he can do that through the environment, through controlling the environment that person is in so they

¹ ibid.

are unduly exposed to wicked temptation. And if there's an opening in the life and disobedience, there is reason to think that he can somehow push the buttons even within us".²

Satan Attacks Leaders Who Allow Him To

When Paul laid out the standards for church leaders in 1 Timothy 3, he added this very interesting note. In v. 7 he says that Satan sets snares for leaders in the church.

1 Tim. 3:7 (NKJV) Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

He wants to entrap them in pride, in lust, in anger, in self-indulgence. Each of the spiritual qualifications for elders and deacons are there as a fence to keep church leaders out of Satan's snares.

As you pray, remember to pray for the elders and deacons of this church. We need God's protection. We must avoid Satan's snares, he sets traps for people in spiritual leadership.

Satan is Already Defeated: Resist Him

Hebrews 2:14 tells us that at the Cross Jesus destroyed the Devil (NKJV) so that he has been rendered powerless (NASB). Satan is defeated when we walk by faith in obedience to God. Satan has been rendered powerless

In 1 John 3:8 we see that Jesus destroyed the works of the Devil. He no longer can deceive, capture, and ensnare us when we walk in faith, obediently with God.

John goes on to tell us that the One within us is greater than the adversary outside of us (1Jn. 4:4).

All of these verses mean that we do not have to be defeated. We are winners not losers. Satan is vanquished, Christ has won. But that doesn't mean we are off the hook. We still must stay sober minded, discipline ourselves to follow the Lord, seeking His protection. We must resist the Devil for him to flee from us (James 4:7). If we do not seek and find God's protection, we will be devoured.

#428 "I Need Thee"

² ibid.