

Subject: *Biblical Truth about Satan – Part 5*

Scripture: *2 Corinthians 4:1-7*

The NCAA college basketball tournament is underway and we call it “March Madness.” Teams are careful to scout their opponents to learn their strengths and weaknesses and win the game. Our battle with Satan is not a game and the stakes could not be higher. That’s why we need to know our enemy and his tactics. It’s important to see Satan for who he is and one clear way to understand him is to see him in contrast with Christ.

Satan is a created spirit being, but Christ is the creator.

Satan is temporal, but Christ is eternal.

Satan is darkness, but Christ is light.

Satan is a liar, but Christ is the truth.

Satan is a counterfeiter, but Christ is genuine.

Satan is evil, but Christ is righteous.

Satan is our enemy, but Christ is our ally.

Satan is our accuser, but Christ is our advocate.

Satan slanders, but Christ intercedes.

Satan is proud, but Christ is humble.

Satan enslaves, but Christ liberates.

Satan destroys, but Christ builds up.

Satan is a thief, but Christ is a giver.

Satan is a murderer, but Christ gives life.

The Activity of Satan in the World

Job 1:7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles (methods, tricks, hidden agenda) of the devil.

2 Corinthians 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices (schemes, plots, strategies).

1. Satan controls the present world system
2. Satan rules over a vast evil kingdom
3. Satan accuses and slanders
4. Satan causes suffering
5. Satan tempts
6. Satan distracts
7. Satan hinders God’s work
8. Satan murders and destroys
9. Satan counterfeits

10. Satan blinds and deceives the mind (2 Cor. 4:3-4; 11:3)

Every military leader studies intelligence reports on the enemy before he enters the battle. The intelligence report on Satan is in the Word of God. We have an advantage in battle if we have advance information and act on it.

The devil's main target is the human mind. This is the battlefield. He tries to get us to think contrary to God's Word and act contrary to God's will. Thomas Watson said: "If he can keep us from believing the truth, he is sure to keep us from obeying the truth." As we see in the parable of the sower and the seed, Satan will steal the seed before it gets into the ground of the heart. As we see in the Garden of Eden, Satan will cast doubt on God's Word ("Hath God said?"). He will replace God's Word with false ideas ("You shall not surely die, but you will be like god, knowing good and evil").

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

God tells us what to do, but Satan says to do what you want.

God tells us that we are sinners in need of salvation, but Satan says you're not that bad.

God tells us that Christ is the only way to heaven, but Satan says we all live in the same world and nobody is perfect, so we will all live together in eternity.

God tells us to have simple childlike faith in His Word, but Satan says to use human reason and do what is logical.

God tells us to fear Him and submit to His authority, but Satan says you are the master of your own fate and the captain of your soul.

God tells us to test the spirits to see if they are of God, but Satan says there is some good in every religion and you need to be tolerant and inclusive.

God tells us to trust in Him at all times, but Satan says you can make it without God's help.

He convinces people that the Christian faith is just a crutch for weak minded people, but a crutch is exactly what you need if you're a cripple.

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

One modern translation reads: "But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ."

11. Satan captures and enslaves (Acts 26:18; 2 Tim. 2:25-26; Col. 1:13)

Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. This was Paul's commission from Christ to the lost.

2 Timothy 2:25-26 ²⁵ In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; ²⁶ And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. The devil uses a snare (trap) much like a hunter would use to capture and kill his prey.

Colossians 1:13 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Freedom from Satan only comes to those who are saved and depend on God's Spirit and His Word.

12. Satan causes discord and division (2 Cor. 2:10-11; Eph. 4:26-27)

One of God's greatest blessings is unity. One of Satan's greatest tactics is to disrupt unity, to divide and conquer churches and families. God uses people as peacemakers, Satan uses people

to disrupt peace and destroy it. In 1 Corinthians 5:1-11, a church member had been disciplined by the church. This action was taken to maintain a standard of holiness in the congregation. As a follow up Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 2, that the church should receive this repentant member back into the fellowship.

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 ¹⁰ *To whom ye forgive any thing, I forgive also: for if I forgave any thing, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes forgave I it in the person of Christ;* ¹¹ *Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.* If believers were unwilling to forgive completely, Satan would cause strife and division in the church. Even on a personal level, harboring anger gives the devil an opportunity to cause trouble.

Ephesians 4:26-27 ²⁶ *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:* ²⁷ *Neither give place to the devil.* Unresolved anger and bitterness give the devil a possible toe hold or even a foothold or maybe a stronghold. Someone said, “Give the devil an inch and he will be the ruler.” Don’t leave a crack in the door.

Our Defense against Satan

1. Rest in God’s sovereignty (Mt. 6:13; Lk. 22:31-32; Rom. 8:31; 1 Jn. 4:4)

Matthew 6:13 *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.* Literally, we are to pray “deliver us from the evil one.”

Luke 22:31-32 ³¹ *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat:* ³² *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

Satan is powerful, but God is all-powerful. Satan is alive and active, but God is omnipresent. Satan must operate within God’s ordained limits. If Satan could steal our faith and our salvation, he would, but he can’t because God is on our side.

Romans 8:31 *What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?*

1 John 4:4 *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

*Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right man on our side,
The man of God’s own choosing.*

*Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He—Lord Sabaoth His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.*

2. Remain in God’s Word

1 John 2:14 I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one.

We must know what the Bible teaches about God, about ourselves, about sin, about salvation, and about Satan. Satan's greatest weapon is our ignorance of God's Word.

3. Resist Satan

1 Peter 5:8-9⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:⁹ Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

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