"We Do the Devil's Work When…"

(Selected Scriptures)
9/30/07



Introduction: **Be Spiritually <u>Alert</u>** (I Peter 5:8)

Satan sows tares among the wheat (Mt. 13:38; II Cor.11:13)

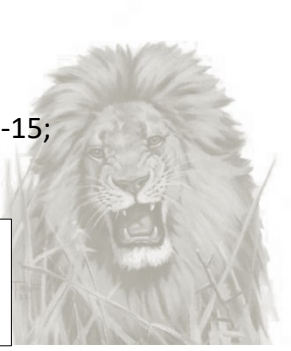
**** Beware that you are not working for "the other side"!***

I. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***
We <u>distract</u> <u>others</u> from hearing God's Word (Acts 13:7–f)
(The Devil <u>hates God</u> and anything that belongs to Him - Mt 16:23)

II. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***
We <u>disguise</u> <u>ourselves</u> and play a game of religious pretense (2 Cor. 11:14-15)
(The Devil is a <u>hypocrite</u> (He wears a mask) – 2 Cor. 11:14)

III. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***
We <u>disrespect</u> <u>the authorities</u> God places over us (3 John 1:9-11; cp. I Sam. 15:23; Num.16 – the Rebellion of Korah)
(The Devil is an <u>arrogant insubordinate</u> – Isaiah 14:13-14)

IV. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***
We <u>disseminate gossip</u> and <u>slander</u> the character of others (I Timothy 3:7, 5:13-15; Titus 2:5-10)
(The Devil is a <u>slanderer</u> – Rev. 12:10)



Satan seeks any "dirt" he can get to belittle Christ, Christians and Christianity

V. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***
We <u>distort</u> <u>the truth</u> and tell lies (Acts 5:3)
(The Devil is a <u>liar</u> – John 8:44)

VI. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***
We <u>disrupt the unity</u> of the church (John 17:9-f *v.15)
(The Devil (diabolos) is a <u>divider</u> of the brethren - James 3:14-16)

“We Do the Devil’s Work When…”

(Selected Scriptures)

9/30/07

Introduction: **Be Spiritually <u>Alert</u>** (I Peter 5:8)

***"Adversary"* -** One who stands against another. This legal term was used to describe an opponent in a lawsuit (mt. 5:25).

It describes someone who is out to get you for all you're worth.

Satan is the enemy of all people, especially those who belong to God.

Satan, who brings accusations against us constantly (Rev. 12:10), is seeking the fall of your character and the reproach of your testimony.

In short, he's out for your destruction.

***"Devil"* -** slanderer (*diabolos* - to cast in between) Satan is seeking to throw anything he can in between you and God, and you and others so as to divide and conquer. One way a lion hunts is to seek an animal that has been cut off from the pack, all alone, vulnerable, etc.).

***"As a <u>roaring</u> lion"* -** Why the roar?

1. To <u>intimidate</u> (strike the heart with fear)

2. Reveals the lion's <u>hunger</u>

***"Walketh about"* -** prowling around (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."*; cp. 2:2).

Satan, unlike God, is not omnipresent; he is on the move - swiftly soaring from place to place, country to country, city to city - zealously seeking someone who is without the protection of God (Eph. 6:13ff).

***"Devour"* -** to swallow down; to eat up

He devours people by leading them into anything that will hurt them spiritually.

One's faith in God's Word is the key point of his attack. If their faith is shaken, everything else will crumble on top.

Satan wants to devour you and those related to you, your family and friends.

Perhaps a pre-requisite to the points I will give for overcoming Satan would be the need for *"humility"* (note previous context - v. 5-6).

If God is not for you, you don't have a chance! God resists the proud.

Before you will receive the alertness, strength, and patience needed to deal with the foe, you must have the humility to see your need for such.

Those who thing they are "above" destruction are the surest candidates for it (I Cor. 10:12 - *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."*)

What Peter is calling for is a mental alertness, or a spiritual watchfulness so that we will not be caught off guard, by surprise or unsuspectingly by the enemy.

"Be sober" - be clear-headed, with nothing clouding your mind. Be serious and sensible about the potential dangers that surround you in the spiritual war you are engaged in (Eph. 6:12).

"The better we know God's Word, the keener our spiritual senses will be to detect Satan at work."

One lesson we can learn from the animal realm is the acute sense of danger felt by the deer, gazelle, etc., when a predator comes near (their keen sense of smell, their perceptive eye, their attentive ear makes them quite a challenge to the beasts of the forest).

"Be vigilant" - be watchful, awake
--Don't go to sleep
--Beware of spiritual drowsiness (those whose minds drift off when reading the Bible, hearing the Bible, or praying reveal a lack of desire for spiritual things and are prime "game" for the lion -- A fall may be around the corner)

As when driving a car late at night, we must fight against the temptation to go to sleep (tragedy awaits if we succumb).

EX: How Peter fell asleep in the garden, and this led to his denial (Lk. 22).

Satan sows tares among the wheat (Mt. 13:38; II Cor.11:13)

Mt 13:25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

**** Beware that you are not working for "the other side"!***

I. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***

We distract others from hearing God's Word (Acts 13:7–f)

(The Devil hates God and anything that belongs to Him - Mt 16:23)

Elymas the Sorcerer provides a full-blown (complete) description of a worker of Satan (a captive, pawn or puppet who will do Satan's will at His bidding):

1. His Identity (v. 6)

   a. He has power to attract attention ("magician")

   b. He bears a message ("false prophet")

   c. He is religious ("a Jew")

      (NOTE: Everyone whom Satan set up to hinder the gospel in Acts 13-15 was a Jew. I don't bring this up to belittle the Israelite nation, but to point out that when a people [a nation] rejects God they sell themselves over to Satan to do his bidding)

   d. He wears a false name ("BarJesus" = "the son of the Savior")

2. His Mission (v. 7-8)

   His mission is basically to obstruct, hinder, or be an obstacle to the proclaiming and acceptance of the Gospel.

   a. He stands in the way of those who proclaim God's Word

   b. He stands in the way of those who want to hear God's Word

      NOTE: Elymas was not just a passive hindrance, but one who actively and zealously sought to hinder.

      --"Withstood" = imperfect tense. He continually stood in the way. No doubt he was in Paul's face constantly and seductively trying to divert Paul from fulfilling his mission

      --"Seeking" = from a root which refers to zeal

3. His Characteristics (v. 9-10)

a. He is a deceiver

"Subtlety" - used of bait for catching fish

b. He is full of wicked motives

"Mischief" = false pretense, to be a fake, phony, or fraud.

c. He is just like his father (cp. Jn. 8:44 - "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murder from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

d. In his heart, he hates what is right

e. He lives to twist the correct ways of the Lord.

Those whom Satan sets in the way of people being saved today would be:

1) False teachers (ex: cults)
2) Close relatives/friends
3) Immoral people (who attempt to pull others down with them (EX: the harlot - Prov. 7:24-27; 9:17-18)

II. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***

We <u>disguise</u> <u>ourselves</u> and play a game of religious pretense (2 Cor. 11:14-15)
(The Devil is a <u>hypocrite</u> (He wears a mask) –

Mt 22:18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye <u>hypocrites</u>?
Mt 23:13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.
Mt 23:14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.
Mt 23:15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.
Mt 23:23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.
Mt 23:25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.
Mt 23:27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.
Mt 23:29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, <u>hypocrites</u>! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,
Mt 24:51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the <u>hypocrites</u>: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
Mr 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you <u>hypocrites</u>, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

III. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***

We <u>disrespect</u> <u>the authorities</u> God places over us (3 John 1:9-11; cp. I Sam. 15:23; Num.16 – the Rebellion of Korah)

(The Devil is an <u>arrogant insubordinate</u> – Isaiah 14:13-14)

> You can't belittle your pastor/teacher and expect your children to benefit from their ministry.
>
> Belittling those in authority does great damage to the respect of those who otherwise might learn from them. (V. Sawyer)

IV. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***

We <u>disseminate gossip</u> and <u>slander</u> the character of others (I Timothy 3:7, 5:13-15; Titus 2:5-10)

(The Devil is a <u>slanderer</u> – Rev. 12:10)

> Satan seeks any "dirt" he can get to belittle Christ, Christians and Christianity

Rev.12:10

"The accuser of our brethren" - Beware: Satan is an <u>initiator</u> of slander and gossip.

"Satan is the accuser of the brethren; let's leave the dirty work to him" (H.A. Ironside).

V. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***

We distort the truth and tell lies (Acts 5:3)
(The Devil is a liar – John 8:44)

When Satan fails in one attack (strategy), he always turns to another.

NOTE: In chap. 4, he tried to silence the church from an attack from the outside. When that failed, Satan decided to attack the Church from the inside, and use people who were part of the fellowship.

If he fails as the "devouring lion" (I Pet. 5:8), he then attacks as the "deceiving serpent" or an "angel of light" (II Cor. 11:3, 13-14).

He is both a murderer and a liar (Jn. 8:44), and we must be prepared for both attacks (Wiersbe, p. 59)

V. 5:3

The context seems to imply that Ananias and Sapphira were believers. "The fact that they were able to lie to the Spirit (5:3) and tempt the Spirit (5:9) would indicate that they had the Spirit of God living within." (Wiersbe, p. 64)

Satan cannot possess a Christian, but he can provoke wicked thoughts in their heart.

EX: David - I Chron. 21:1 - "And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel."

EX: Peter - Mt. 16:21-23 - "Get thee behind me, Satan."

"Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle that fits them all." (O.W. Holmes)

Satan lied to and through this couple. He is the "Father of lies."

His lying to Adam and Even led to their sin and spiritual death. His lying to Ananias and Sapphira also led to their sin and physical death.

VI. ***We Do the Devil's Work When…***

We <u>disrupt the unity</u> of the church (John 17:9-f *v.15)

(The Devil (diabolos) is a <u>divider</u> of the brethren - James 3:14-16)

John 17: 9

"I pray for them" – I intercede concerning them; I make request about them and them alone.

"I pray not for the world" – Here Jesus prays for the needs of the saints and not for the needs of the lost. Here, He prays for the elect and not for the non-elect.

The requests He makes do <u>not apply</u> to the lost heathen. Spiritual protection, sanctification, unity, and security only apply to those who are God's people; the heathen have no interest in such things.

"This does not mean that Christ never prayed for the world (cf. Lk. 23:34). But He prayed for the disciples because they were the chosen medium of reaching the world after He Himself left it (vv. 21, 23)." (Wycliffe, p. 1112)

v. 10

To belong to Christ is to belong to God and to belong to God is to belong to Christ (you don't belong to one member of the Godhead without also belonging to the other).

"I am glorified in them" - Through the lives of His people, Christ receives glory. Does your life glorify Him?

Jesus is concerned about the Spiritual <u>PROTECTION</u> of His People (John 17:11-15)

v. 11

In bodily form Jesus would no longer live on earth. However, He would be here in Spirit (the presence of the Holy Spirit).

"Keep" – Used in the sense of <u>protective oversight</u> (Wycliffe, p. 1112); the word means to guard or protect.

"Keep through Thine own name" – Guard or protect them by means of your own good nature.

Our protection is based on our Protector's attributes of love, mercy, grace, omniscience, omnipotence, wisdom, etc.

"That they may be one" – Not scattered and disunited as sheep would be away from their shepherd.

v. 12

Every single disciple was protected by Christ, with one exception: the one who never did believe, Judas Iscariot, the one identified with destruction (**"the son of perdition"**). Judas was a disciple but not a true disciple. A true disciple "keeps" Christ's words to the end.

John 8:31
Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

"Jesus was saying that the loss was not a reflection on His keeping power as the Shepherd of the flock. Rather, Judas had never really belonged to Him except in a nominal, external sense (cf. 13:10, 11)." (Wycliffe, p. 1112).

v. 13
Christ's concern for our protection and security is a reason for us to be joyful. Having a realization of God's care for us is the means to real, full joy.

v. 14
Because the Christian is not on the same team or same side as the world, the world will tend to hate Christians (SEE John 15:18-21).

v. 15
Despite the trouble believers would experience from the godless world, Jesus does not ask the Father to physically remove us from the trouble but to guard us from it, to protect us from it.

This is similar to what God promised the Church of Philadelphia –
Rev. 3:10
Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

"The evil" – the definite article points to a particular evil; namely, the evil one (or Satan).

Our prayer ought to be, "Deliver us from the evil one" (Matthew 6:13).

The devil can never steal a true believer away from Jesus Christ.

v. 20
Christ's prayer for sanctified saints extends beyond the first-century disciples, to all believers who would come to faith via the disciples' testimony in Scripture.

v. 21
Our oneness happens when we are a united team or "flock" set apart from the world. You cannot have Godly oneness with worldly saints. Sanctification must precede unity.

"One in Us" – Oneness is only possible because of the common relationship we have in God!

The believer's unity results in bringing the unbelieving world to faith. The world comes to realize that only God can produce a unity among diverse and numerous people.

Note: the unity of the early Church –

Acts 1:14
These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

Acts 2:1
And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 2:44
And all that believed were together, and had all things common;

Acts 2:46
And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

v. 22
This shared "glory" is not the shared glory of Christ's deity (which He had before creation – Jn. 17:5), but it is the glory of Christ's grace and truth which He deposits in the life of all of His children.

John 1:14
And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Such grace and truth is the secret to our unity.

John 17: 23
Christ's concern for our unity with each other is due to His concern for our unity with Him.

True unity is not <u>legalistic</u> in nature (not forced by sharing common rules); rather, it is <u>theistic</u> in nature (a result of our common relationship with God).

Not a mechanical unity (forced externals), but a spiritual unity (internal).

Psalm 133:1
Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

3 Essentials to Biblical unity:

1. Sharing a common relationship
   (the oneness of being, which comes "in Christ" - see: Eph. 4:1-5)

2. Sharing common convictions
   (a oneness of thinking which comes from the Bible - Amos 3:3; I Cor. 1:10)

   Agreement not necessarily in every detail or fine point of doctrine, but in the indisputable, clearly revealed essentials.

3. Sharing a common goal
   (a oneness of service which is focused on Christ)
   Sharing a common cause

God hates discord sown among the brethren.

It is Satan who sows tares of division (Mt. 13:39). He first divided man from God and then men from each other (Spurgeon, p. 171)

Disunity is so destructive because rather than working together you are working against each other.

Unity is:
1. Playing on the same team
2. Heading in the same direction
3. Serving the same Master

Four attitudes that promote unity:

1. Unselfishness (Acts 4:32 - "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.)
2. Humility (Phil. 2:2 - "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.)
3. Compassion & love (I Pet. 3:8 - "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous")
4. Peace (Eph. 4:3 - "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace")