

The Devices of Satan

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WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF SATAN'S DEVICES

(II Corinthians 2:11)



Introduction:

"Satan uses all manner of stratagems to turn souls from the truth. There are at least seven means found in the Scriptures: A *sieve* to sift them – Luke 22:31, *devices* to trick – II Corinthians 2:11, *weeds* to choke – Matthew 13:22, *wiles* to intrigue – Ephesians 6:11, *the roaring of a lion* to terrify – I Peter 5:8, the *disguise of an angel* to deceive – II Corinthians 1:14, *snare*s to entangle – II Timothy 2:26." - J. Sidlow Baxter

In our text, the Apostle Paul uses what is called in modern English the "editorial 'we.'" As he said, "We are not ignorant..." he spoke for any and everyone, but he was not naive to think that everyone to whom he wrote was aware of Satan's evil devices.

Concealed until Revealed

Satan works covertly and fears exposure by the light of the truth of the Word of God.

❖ A Divine Admonition:

Be you not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17). We are admonished to know **what is going on in this world and in our lives.**

Paul exhorts: *Awake you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light* (Ephesians 5:14).

Be not as the horse, or as the mule, that have no understanding: (Psalm 32:9).

I hesitate to say this, but I speak the truth—average Christians have no idea how Satan works and cannot discern his methods. Their lack of knowledge and understanding is appalling. The Christian who does not take the Word of God seriously enough to deliberately allow the truth to permeate his mind is in a position of serious disadvantage. He is on his own, so to speak, without the ability to discern and resist the **repressive work** of Satan in his life. He is as vulnerable as a lamb among wolves. Let's consider *two major areas of Satan's work*:

A. The Means of the World.

Again I point out the lack of biblical knowledge of Satan's work as a great problem in the lives of God's people. Do you have an idea of the kind of world you live in? The Bible calls it, "*this present evil world.*" It began when Adam rebelled against God and became corrupt in his nature. This nature of human corruption became the catalyst for Satan's world—and it continues as the foundation upon Satan works. Mankind was put at a disadvantage, and Satan took advantage of it. He has built his kingdom of corruption to oppose God and His kingdom of righteousness. Satan's world is an organized system of evil spirits named by Paul in Ephesians 6:12. It is his government by which he controls humanity. Wherever there is a municipality—seat of government—Satan has assigned a principality to rule. Don't take lightly the rule of Satan in human affairs and lives. He works in every segment of society to establish and shape our culture.

The Apostle John issues God's command to not love the world. He does not mean the world of humanity, nor the earth, nor people. We are not to love nor befriend the world of evil opposed to truth and righteousness. God's

love is not manifest in the stars, the planets, the gold, the silver and precious gems, but was manifest at Calvary where **He gave His Son to die for us**. As God loves us, Satan hates us and in his cruel hatred, he has established his world and planed our culture to operate on and by the fallen nature of Adam that we inherited.

Do you know why humanity suffers? Consider the devices of Satan—how he is working to bring about our demise with heartache, sorrow, grief, and pain from which Christians are not exempt. Jesus told us that Satan came *to steal, to kill, and to destroy* (John 10:10).

Satan's world is an evil world that breaks every commandment of God. It is impure, deceitful, dishonest, and hateful. It **conforms and controls**. The spiritual darkness that originates with him covers you like a dense fog. **You may be in it, but not of it—or you may be in it and also of it. But you don't have to be of it.** You may walk in the light as Jesus is in the light—even in the midst of darkness. But the dangerous tragedy is rejecting or neglecting the light by ignorance or by not yielding your will to the will of God.

Dear Christian friend, be aware that worldliness is far more than engaging in what is termed worldly activities. It goes much deeper. It is being **conformed to the standards** of the world that are contrary to biblical righteousness. Paul tells us that to be a friend to the world is to be an enemy to God. Satan's world forms your ideas and opinions to establish its standards—then works to conform your life according to its norms. Paul admonished, *Be not conformed to this world, but be you transformed by the renewing of your mind* (Romans 12:2).

I don't mean to imply that everything in our culture is wrong—but the system that creates it is evil. So we must be knowledgeable and wise to detect what is of Satan's evil world. I hope you are aware of the great progress of Satan's devices on several fronts in the last few decades. He has succeeded in getting the Supreme Court to legalize: Abortion – (Satan is a murderer); Homosexuality and same sex marriage – Satan is an advocate of sexual perversion. Satan hates God's **plan and place for the family**. Regarding **the Bible**—Satan has sought to close every door to truth in society, including our schools. He fears God's authoritative Word of salvation and righteousness to this world.

Remember, as believers we have been **redeemed** by the shed blood of Jesus who in His death on the cross bruised the head of Satan, stripped him of his rights that he usurped, cancelled his claim of death against us, and sealed his doom and destiny to the lake of fire. Now we will discover further...

B. The Methods of the Mind.

Satan targets the mind to repress us.

The primary target of Satan and his evil spirits is the mind. The mind of the believer can be a productive tool of Satan in his opposition to Godly principles—or the mind of the Spirit-filled Christian can be counter-productive to his devices and pose a threat to his evil kingdom's work. We are told, *Keep your heart (mind) with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life* (Proverbs 4:23). For this reason Paul commands, *Be not conformed to this world. But be you transformed by the renewing of your mind* (Romans 12:2). And Paul commands, *Be renewed in the spirit of your mind*. Proverbs 23:7 tells us, *As a man thinks in his heart (mind) so is he*. Included in the nine-fold cluster of the fruit of the Spirit is **Temperance**. This has to do with control and I call it the **stewardship of the mind**. **And it has to be continuous, for Satan is unrelenting in his efforts to seize control of our thought life.** The mind, normally, never ceases to record images and sounds that Satan can trigger to repress us.

Now to reveal Satan's methods of the mind I want to use the word, *"repress."* The dictionary gives us a string of words to define it. And these words describe **the repressive work of Satan**:

RESTRAIN, KEEP UNDER, SUPPRESS, PUT DOWN, KEEP IN CHECK, CONTROL,
CONTAIN, RESTRAIN, CONSTRAIN, HOLD BACK, INHIBIT, SUBDUE, DETER, FRUSTRATE

He Represses to Oppress.

These are Satan's objectives of his oppressive work. It has these affects upon us. Primarily, **Mental Bondage**. Now let's consider Satan's schemes that reveal specifically *his repressive work*.

❖ It Devours our very Life .

Peter tells us that, *He walks about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour* (I Peter 5:8).

❖ It Disrupts our Peace.

The mind is a wide open gate that receives whatever we will accept. Satan is a *killjoy – a prophet of doom* who fills our minds with negative thoughts, causing fear and doubt.

❖ It Destroys our Influence.

Peter asked Ananias, *Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit* (Acts 5:3). Sapphira followed the example of her husband and both of them came under God's judgment in death. As leaders in the Church, they lost not only their influence, but their lives. This is extreme in Satanic repression.

❖ It Devastates our Service.

We are told that *the joy of the Lord is our strength*. To lose our joy is to lose our effectiveness in service to the Lord Jesus. Joy brings the power of the Holy Spirit, the result of obedience.

❖ It Delineates our Character.

Demonic agitation causes us to become a **worrywart with a fussy disposition**. We then lose the character of the Christlife. He weighs the mind down with care and so preoccupies you until you have no capacity to experience the joy of the Lord.

❖ It Degrades our Spiritual Life.

When the fruit of the fruit—the expression of Christ—is not operative in us, we are in a state of spiritual degradation.

Conclusion:

This is a spiritually sick world and Christians are not exempt from the diseases and afflictions impose on us by its prince. To close this article let me emphasize that Satan does not need anything new. He has all the wiles he needs—he has planned these two methods of attack:

1. He Attacks Us Physically.

Satan takes advantage of our Physical Weakness. He **aggravates to frustrate**. He agitates our physical problems to cause mental stress. Therefore every situation must be surrendered to God. We must **rely** on God's omniscience, **rest** on His omnipotence, and **reckon** on His faithfulness.

2. He Attacks Us Mentally.

We are told in the Proverbs, *As a man thinks in his heart so is he* (23:7). Satan works to confine us to our thoughts and impulses and thereby inflicts cruel oppression in the form of prolonged mental distress in the subconscious part of our minds. Therefore plead the operation of the Holy Spirit who applies the blood of Christ to break the Satanic bondage and cleanse your mind. What we receive in the mind becomes the stimuli for future thoughts, therefore keep the biblical filter in place.