

The Enemy of Holy Living

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I watched a Twilight Light Zone the other week where this General became a leader of his country by overthrowing the government. He and his comrades were celebrating their victory. After awhile, they had the past leader come up. After they got done with him, he told the new leader about a special mirror he had in his room. When you looked into the mirror, it would reveal who would try to assassinate you. After the old leader was sent out to be shot, the new leader looked into the mirror and saw one of his friends standing in the mirror with a gun. The new leader had him shot. He looked in the mirror again and saw another friend in the mirror and this kept going till all his friends were killed. Now, he couldn't trust anyone. In fact, he started to look at everyone as his enemy. We don't like having enemies. We like to trust people if we can. It's not always possible, but when we view everyone as a potential enemy, we start to have a negative view of life itself. However, we can't go the total opposite direction either by seeing everyone as not our enemy. In fact, every person on this earth has at least one enemy. That one enemy is satan and more about him later. We have a hard time recognizing satan because he works under camouflage. The camouflage is this world. This is very dangerous because satan is the great enemy against people wanting to be holy people. This creates a problem because how can you protect yourself when you can't see your enemy or know where he is constantly. Satan knows this, so he likes to get to us by using the things of this world.

When we think of earthly or worldly dangers, we think about wind, fire, earthquakes, and other earthly things. We focus so much on earthly dangers, we stop focusing on spiritual dangers from satan. King David, who was a earthly king, knew all about earthly dangers as a king, but he was also concerned about another danger he faced every day. In Psalm 18: 16-24, ¹⁶He reached down from heaven and rescued me;

he drew me out of deep waters.

- ¹⁷ He rescued me from my powerful enemies,
from those who hated me and were too strong for me.
- ¹⁸ They attacked me at a moment when I was in distress,
but the LORD supported me.
- ¹⁹ He led me to a place of safety;
he rescued me because he delights in me.
- ²⁰ The LORD rewarded me for doing right;
he restored me because of my innocence.
- ²¹ For I have kept the ways of the LORD;
I have not turned from my God to follow evil.
- ²² I have followed all his regulations;
I have never abandoned his decrees.
- ²³ I am blameless before God;
I have kept myself from sin.
- ²⁴ The LORD rewarded me for doing right.
He has seen my innocence. (NLT – www.biblegateway.com)

To David, sin was the bigger danger because that effected his relationship with God. I believe David is talking about forces that were stronger than him (verse 17) which would be satan and his workers or demons. David wanted to be blameless before God and satan doesn't want that to happen. The best way for satan to attack us is to be under camouflage and he does that by working through the people and products of this world. Online gambling is becoming more and more popular. You can download an app on your phone so you can bet anywhere you are. Alcohol can be bought at most stores. Abortion pills can be mailed straight to your house. Satan likes to use schools to go after children by having human teachers teach children it's ok to change your sex, even though it goes against the laws of God. You see, our world is our enemy because satan uses the world to get to us. The problem is we have to live in this world and we can't get away from that. A. W. Tozer states this in his book titled, *The Dangers of a Shallow Faith*, "What then do we mean by the world when we say that real dangers come to the Christian through the world? The threat comes to us through human society outside the will of God. As long as sin remains, human society will be a threat to

the Christian soul. Human society's sin, unbelief, diversions, ambitions, however skillfully disguised, are a threat to the Christian soul. (A.W. Tozer)" It's also a threat to holy living. Some Christians say gambling isn't too bad since our nation seems to embrace it. I'll just make sure I don't go too far. Our world wants us to join their ranks and satan just uses them to reach us. We've talked about this Scripture a week ago, but we need to stamp it our phones and computers, John 17: 14-17, "¹⁴ I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. ¹⁵ I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. ¹⁶ They do not belong to this world any more than I do. ¹⁷ Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. (NLT – www.biblegateway.com)"

Do we really understand this – we are not to love this world and the things of this world. If I could get rid of my phone, I would. If I could get rid of my computer, I would. These things are not evil themselves, but satan uses them to work his evil through them. We don't see satan because he never really has to show himself. He has enough items at his disposal that he can stay in hiding all the time. So, we have to be careful on how we use the things of this world. Christian human books are great, but much false teaching has been started by these books. These human books are part of this world. What is not part of this world is God's Truth and we must make every effort to be enriched by His truth, not the world's truth which is guided by satan. So, Jesus knows we must live in this world and Jesus asks His Father to keep us safe from the evil one which is satan. This tells us that we can't take satan lightly because Jesus didn't. We don't belong to this world anymore than Jesus did and we must always remember that. It'll help us to keep ourselves in check with the help of the Holy Spirit.

So, satan uses this world to get to us. We have to remember satan is very sly and crafty. We must take him seriously. Many people today don't even want to believe there is a satan including Christians. I've always found this piece of Scripture very interesting in Jude verses 8-9, "⁸ In the same way, these people—who claim authority from their dreams—live immoral lives, defy authority, and scoff at supernatural beings.^[a] ⁹ But even Michael, one of the mightiest of the angels,^[b] did not dare accuse the devil of blasphemy, but simply said, "The Lord

rebuke you!” (This took place when Michael was arguing with the devil about Moses’ body. NLT – www.biblegateway.com). Michael, who was an angel as well, knew of satan and didn’t allow himself to drop down spiritually because Michael was a holy angel while satan is a fallen angel. Yet, Michael took satan seriously. Satan is real and wants to destroy you and keep you from being holy. He will try every method he has in this world to get to us.

Now, satan has different sides to him that helps him to get to us. We need to understand our enemy. We must always be ready for him. I like what General George Patton once said, “Never let the enemy pick the battle site”. If we don’t know satan, he will pick the battle site for us. Now, Scripture gives satan some names that helps us to better understand him. In some areas of Scripture, satan is called a dragon. We see this in Revelation 12: 1-4, “**12** Then I witnessed in heaven an event of great significance. I saw a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon beneath her feet, and a crown of twelve stars on her head. ² She was pregnant, and she cried out because of her labor pains and the agony of giving birth.³ Then I witnessed in heaven another significant event. I saw a large red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, with seven crowns on his heads. ⁴ His tail swept away one-third of the stars in the sky, and he threw them to the earth. He stood in front of the woman as she was about to give birth, ready to devour her baby as soon as it was born. (NLT – Biblegateway.com)”

We don’t have time to study the whole chapter, but satan is the dragon here who is able to catch the attention of the people and the governments of this world. You see, the dragon is the destroyer. He likes to use the governments in this world to do his work. If it wouldn’t be for the Lord, all governments would be controlled by the dragon. The dragon likes to wind himself into a government to take it over to do his destructive work. We have to make sure we don’t allow ourselves to be lead by a government to the destruction of our souls. Many churches took the side of Hitler during WWII. Many governments today are taking the side of Hamas. Just because a government says something, doesn’t make it right. A government isn’t going to make you pure and holy as Jesus called us to be back in John 17. God’s Kingdom is more important than any earthly kingdom including America even though we should be thankful to be born here. You see, the dragon weaves himself into governments and use them to do his bidding. We’re starting to see the rise of communism here in America that is very

anti-Christian. Satan can use communism to fight against the Church. The dragon likes to seek and destroy.

Satan is also called the serpent as well. We see this in the very beginning of the Bible with Adam and Eve. This is a different side to him that is different from the dragon. The serpent appears to not want to hurt you for the world. He gives you the nice words that will help to bring down your guard. He will tell you what you want to hear and he does this at your weakest moments as he tries to tempt you. He did this with Jesus in Matthew 4: 1-11, “¹4 Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the devil. ²For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. ³During that time the devil^[a] came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.”⁴ But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’^[b]”⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city, Jerusalem, to the highest point of the Temple, ⁶and said, “If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, ‘He will order his angels to protect you.

And they will hold you up with their hands so you won’t even hurt your foot on a stone.’^[c]”⁷ Jesus responded, “The Scriptures also say, ‘You must not test the LORD your God.’^[d]”⁸ Next the devil took him to the peak of a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹“I will give it all to you,” he said, “if you will kneel down and worship me.”¹⁰ “Get out of here, Satan,” Jesus told him. “For the Scriptures say, ‘You must worship the LORD your God and serve only him.’^[e]”¹¹ Then the devil went away, and angels came and took care of Jesus. (NLT – www.biblegateway.com)

To me, this is what is horrible about satan. As a serpent, he talks to you like he is your friend and he usually shows up when we have our guard down. This could be when we are sick or dealing with some type of horrible situation. Satan went after Jesus after he didn’t eat for 40 days – when Jesus was weak. Satan will do the same with us. When you are sick, he’ll whisper in your ear or put thoughts into your mind that God doesn’t love you or you must have done something to cause God to cause this bad thing to happen. Plus, satan will put thoughts into your head to get you depressed about life and yourself. In other words, satan will hit you when you are down. He is ruthless and has no mercy. Jesus kept throwing Scripture at satan every time satan tempted Him. Plus, satan even went after Jesus. Why do we ignore satan? We are easier to attack than Jesus. We give satan too much high ground to attack us constantly.

I like what we read earlier from General Patton about not letting the enemy choose the battle site. Holy living messes up satan's battle plans because it gives him less options to attack you. I don't want to make it easy for satan. He will attack you, but let's not make it easy for him. Let's make sure we stay on the high ground and the high ground is standing on top of Jesus and His righteousness. Holy living is high ground and makes satan work in difficult situations. If you go to Little Round Top at Gettysburg, you can stand on top of the hill. It bothers me to stand there and imagine Confederate soldiers trying to run up that hill in 98 degree weather under a shower of bullets from Union soldiers. The Confederates could not take that hill. There was too much for the Rebels to fight against. When we are fill with God's Spirit and living a holy life, we make it very hard for satan. So, let's make sure we are not letting ourselves get absorbed into our culture which satan will use to get us away from Jesus. Let's ask Jesus to help us stay on the high ground against satan our enemy. Jesus knows how to fight satan better than we do. Let's follow Jesus into battle.

Tozer, A.W. *The Dangers of a Shallow Faith*. Bethany House: Minneapolis, 2012