

A Tactic of Satan – Stealing Time

As I have worked and studied over the last 19 years as a child of God, that is, as one who has believed in Jesus Christ, I have come to realize a few things about how Satan works. Some of the things I realized were monumental in their implications. Others, not so much. But, all are significant in that Satan uses them to ensnare men in such ways as to keep man from ever coming to the truth.

The evidence of Satan's strategy is contained in the point the Lord Jesus Christ made about the wide gate and broad way versus the strait gate and narrow way:

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. (*Matthew 7:13-14*)

Moreover, if someone does come to the truth and believes the Gospel, then Satan has a set of tactics to render them impotent for spreading the truth they have found. Since Satan is the father of lies and a deceiver, the tactics he has are almost endless. It really doesn't matter to him if one tactic seems to conflict with another tactic he uses (or even if it actually does conflict), because the point of his working is to keep man from the truth. In this, we must ever remember that Satan hates man, because man is made in the image of the LORD God, and Satan hates the LORD God. Hence, we must remember that Satan is continually trying to overthrow the LORD God.

Yes, Satan was cast out from being one of the covering cherubs beside the throne of God. Yes, we can be assured that Satan

knows he cannot overthrow the LORD by force:

And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, **Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.** And he said unto them, **I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.** (Luke 10:17-18)

However, if he can prove the LORD God unrighteous...

Thus, he tries that very strategy – to prove the LORD God unrighteous. All he has to do is succeed once, and he has won. Nevertheless, we can rest assured: He won't win. He can't, because he cannot really understand what it means to be omniscient and to love equity. The LORD God LOVES equity and is omniscient. Hence, the LORD God is, and will remain righteous. ((Loving equity is loving righteousness, as righteousness is defined in Scripture as being '*equal in all your ways.*' For an understanding of that, you are encouraged to read Appendix A: Righteousness, which discusses righteousness and what it is by the definition of Scripture.))

Nevertheless, Satan works to win. His greatest effort is on this earth, among men. At once and the same time, Satan wants man to worship him (being narcissistic he really wants man to worship him), but he hates man and wants to utterly destroy him because man is made in the image of God. These are two entirely contradictory goals.

As an aside, did you ever notice that tyrants and dictators behave exactly the same way as Satan? They to want the worship of those under them, but they also destroy those under them in a totally arbitrary fashion. In a tyranny and dictatorship, no one is safe. Someone may be the favorite of the tyrant one day, and be killed the next for little to no reason.

So it is with Satan.

Nevertheless, Satan obviously believes that the more men he can get to "turn away" from the truth, the stronger his case

against the LORD. Hence, he has several tactics that he uses in his strategy against the LORD. All are directed at man:

1. *False religion*
2. *Focus on knowledge*
3. *Focus on self*
4. *Focus on a "significant other"*
5. *Focus on things*
6. *Stealing time*

Now, we should understand that all the above fall under the auspices of the three things set forth in I John, chapter 2:

Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. **For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,** is not of the Father, but is of the world. (*I John 2:15-16*)

And Satan, by right of conquest:

And I saw, and behold a white horse: and **he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.** And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse *that was* red: and **power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another:** and there was given unto him a great sword. And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine. And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death,

and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth. (*Revelation 6:2-8*)

Is therefore the god of this world:

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. (*II Corinthians 4:3-4*)

We must remember that Satan doesn't care what you do, so long as you never come to the truth. The reason this works as a strategy is because the default end of man is destruction in Hell, and we have only our time on earth to come to the truth:

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: ... (*Hebrews 9:27*)

Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. **Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.** (*Acts 4:10-12*)

Because every single person on earth requires salvation and justification before God, there is a built in advantage for Satan in his efforts to destroy the LORD God by man:

Each and every person on earth has a limited time to come to the truth and be justified before God by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes we, each and every one, only have X amount of time. Our

time is limited – and Satan knows that all too well.

Thus, Satan sets about to steal your time and mine – and he uses everything in the world to do it.

You see, we cannot recover our time. Once it is gone, it is gone – for good. This makes what we choose to spend our time on, exceedingly important. If Satan can get us bound up in dealing with this thing, and then with that thing, then we will never spend the time necessary to come to the knowledge of the truth.

We will never take the time to really try to understand what the LORD God is asking of us and requiring of us. We must understand that the LORD requires that we love the truth, and that we are willing to sacrifice for the truth. That is one of the points raised in Hebrews 11:6:

But without faith *it is impossible to please him*: for he that cometh to God must believe *that he is, and that **he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*** (Hebrews 11:6)

This takes time. Satan knows this. Therefore, if he can, Satan will get the unbeliever wrapped up in everything in the world so that they have no time at all to learn anything about the LORD God and the salvation offered through the Lord Jesus Christ. After all, Satan doesn't care what you believe, so long as you never come to the truth.

For the believer, Satan wishes to get them tied up in everyday, mundane, but oh so necessary things, so that they never bear the fruit the LORD is desiring of them. They don't learn beyond salvation. They can't witness and tell others. They can't explain salvation, because they don't know it well enough to do so. This is the point the Lord Jesus Christ made to Martha when she fussed about her sister Mary:

Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him

into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. **But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.**
(Luke 10:38-42)

Martha was letting her time be stolen from her. Here she had a once in a lifetime (indeed, once in all history) opportunity to be taught directly by the LORD Himself – and she was stuck on the mundane, everyday things. She was throwing away a golden opportunity.

Why?

Because the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ was only three (3) years. That is all. If she throws it away because she is hung up on being a good hostess... what shall we say to that?

REALLY? Yes, really. It really was more important to Martha to be a good hostess, than to sit and learn at the feet of the LORD.

Nevermind she has the rest of her life to be a good hostess to everyone that enters her house. She could drop it just this once for the wonderful opportunity to be taught by the LORD Himself.

But because she is just like the rest of us, she only sees the necessity of the duties of this life, and misses the necessity of the duties of eternal life. She is letting her precious time be stolen from her because her focus is entirely wrong.

Thus, Satan is successful. Why? Because it never appears that his hand is in it. Because it appears as a necessity of life

and the culture we live in. It certainly was for Martha. Culturally, she could not forsake being a good hostess. That would be bad form. What would people say? Oh, can't have it that people are whispering that Martha was a bad host when Jesus came to her house.

So she had to do it – and miss the teaching at the feet of the LORD Himself. You know, it strikes me that the Lord Jesus didn't care. He would rather have her being taught too. She can be a good hostess at some other time. Not being a good hostess just this once is not going to kill her, or her reputation.

Nevertheless, we think just like Martha. We have things in this life that *"have to be done"* and they cannot be shirked.

You know, if you face eternity tomorrow, it won't make one whit's worth of difference for this world – and Satan will have succeeded. But it will make every difference in eternity for you.

Don't allow Satan and the system he has set up in this world, to steal your time.