

Destroying the Works of the Devil – Part 2

1 John 3:8 - *Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.*

Titus 2:11-14 - *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, v.12 training us to renounce ungodliness... and godly lives in the present age, v.13 waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, v.14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.*

Satan, the devil is a real enemy who leads demonic army to work against the people of God. The great news is that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil.

Last week, we said the devil works to steal the Word from the heart of God's people.

Mark 4 - The Parable of the Sower: He is a very opportunistic enemy.

If you don't do anything with the Word, which is being sowed like seed in the soil of your heart, Jesus said, the devil would steal it from you. You have to do something with the Word of God.

- 1) Prepare Hard – Break up the soil of your heart by loosening oneself from the cares of life.
- 2) Listen Hard – Be welcoming of the Word and the voice of God through the Scriptures.
- 3) Work Hard – Be doers of the Word and not only hearers (James 1:22).

If you take these three steps, the enemy will be prevented from stealing the Word of God from your heart.

The work of the devil is to steal the joy of our redeemed relationships.

Ephesians 4:22-27 - *... put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, v.23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, v.24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. v.25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. v.26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, v.27 and give no opportunity to the devil.*

The Opportunistic Devil

- 1) The devil works through deceitful desires.

v.22 - ... *put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires...*

a) What are deceitful desires?

- i) Lust is deceitful because it promises joy but fails to provide it. Satan knows this and it is one of the great lies of the enemy.
- ii) We live in a lust-filled world and Satan is exploiting the deception of deceitful desires.

b) Satan did not create sexual desire but he uses it to deceive.

- i) Sex is supposed to be beautiful and good and yet, the devil working in our generation, has twisted and corrupted it so that he is able to use it as a weapon against God's plan.
- ii) Give no opportunity to the devil to work against you through sexual desires.

1 Timothy 5:1, 2 (International Standard Version) - *Never speak harshly to an older man, but appeal to him as if he were your father. Treat younger men like brothers, v.2 older women like mothers, and younger women like sisters, with absolutely purity.*

c) Sin is a power, not just an action!

Romans 6:12 NIV - *Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.*

- i) Sin threatens to reign. It is not just the acts we do but the power that takes us captive through deceitful desires that brings forth actions.
- ii) Paul says when the desires of our body is captured by sin, those desires become weapons (Romans 6:13) of unrighteousness and Satan uses them against us.

Examples:

- (1) The desire for **food** (hunger) works well in us, but when sin captures it, the desire becomes gluttony, obesity, or bulimia or anorexia and it begins to rule our life for the sake of the enemy.
- (2) The desire for **drink** (thirst) works well in us, but when sin captures it, the desire may become alcoholism or even and unhealthy caffeine addiction, and that desire becomes a weapon of unrighteousness.
- (3) The desire for **rest and sleep** works well in us, but if sin captures it, the desire becomes slothfulness and laziness, which brings us to poverty and ruin.
- (4) The desire for **sexual satisfaction** is a wonderful gift of God until sin captures it. Then the desire becomes lust for pornography or masturbation or fornication or adultery or homosexual relations, and our sexual desires become the weapons of unrighteousness.

Note: All of these potential disorders are destructive to our relationships!

Good News: The reason why Jesus appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. Jesus came to dethrone the power of sin in our lives. We don't have to be controlled by the deceitful desires of sin.

2) The devil works through harmful words.

Ephesians 4:24 - *Therefore, putting away falsehood, let every one speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.*

a) Words have power.

i) James tells us the most deadly member of our body is our tongue.

James 3:6 NLT - *And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.*

ii) The tongue can be satanic and infectious.

b) The devil seeks to use our speech.

i) Jesus had told His disciples that He would soon suffer and die. This was a huge curve ball to them. Peter could not handle it! So, he began to reprimand Jesus!

ii) Jesus recognized the voice of Satan speaking to Him through Peter's words in Mark 8:33.

But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."

c) When we are under stress or when we've been thrown a curve ball by God, we have a tendency to complain about our circumstances and/or blame others around us.

i) You may think this is no big deal and you have a right to vent on everyone around you with your words but you may be actually be allowing the enemy to potentially set something on fire in your life.

ii) According to Jesus, Satan was using Peter's words because he was setting his mind on the things of man not the things of God.

This is the reason you are told in Ephesians 4:23 to be renewed in the spirit of your minds.

(1) Satan cannot work through your words if you will renew your mind on the things of God.

(2) This is a huge key: Setting your mind on the things of God will help you guard your words from the enemy.

3) The devil works through hurt feelings. Give not opportunity for the devil.

Ephesians 4:26, 27 - *Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.*

Be angry and do not sin because sin is not just an action; it is a power that Satan uses to work against us.

a) Anger is a secondary emotion. It usually signals that someone has hurt you or harmed you.

To get angry when someone hurts you or when something bad occurs is not sinful. The way we react in our anger is what can turn to sin that works against us.

b) How do you prevent anger from turning to sin?

i) Keep short accounts! Deal with the anger before the sun goes down.

ii) Give the situation over to God.

If you brood over a thing, you give the devil an opportunity to intensify your anger, causing it to become sin itself.

This then gives the devil a foothold, an opportunity for leading us into sin. When that happens, anger begins to control. A believer should always be controlling their anger rather than being controlled by their anger.

c) The devil would love to turn your anger into a deceitful desire!

He would do that by deceiving you to think that it is...

i) Acceptable for you to harbor ill feelings.

ii) Justifiable for you to separate yourself from one who has hurt you.

iii) Reasonable for you to retaliate.

Give no opportunity to the devil!

How does Jesus destroy the works of the devil? ...by grace!

James 4:6, 7 - *But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." v.7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

Be a grace giver and watch the devil flee from your life!