

Satan's Insidious Attacks On The Church

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The first verse of Genesis 1 introduces mankind to the existence of God, "In the beginning God." The first time Satan introduces himself to mankind is in the garden of Eden in the form of a serpent (Gen. 3:1-6). The first time he is mentioned by the name of Satan is in Job 1:6-12. "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them..." Therefore, one cannot believe in the existence of God and not believe in the existence of Satan!

Various terms are used throughout the Scriptures to describe the "evil one" that opposes God and His children: Satan, "adversary" (Zech. 3:1), The devil, "slanderer" (Matt. 4:1; Rev. 12:9), "The god of this world." (2 Cor. 4:4), "The prince of the power of the air." (Eph. 2:2), "The father of lies." (John 8:44), "Murderer." (John 8:44), "The great dragon." (Rev. 12:9), "Serpent." (Rev. 12:9; 2 Cor. 11:3), "Deceiver." (Rev. 12:9), "Beelzebub the prince of the devils." (Matt. 12:24), "The wicked one." (Matt. 13:38), "The prince of this world." (John 12:31), "Ruler of darkness." (Eph. 6:12), "The tempter." (1 Thess. 3:5), "Accuser of the brethren." (Rev. 12:10), "The enemy." (Matt. 13:39), "A roaring lion." (1 Peter 5:8), "Belial", "worthless, wicked." (2 Cor. 6:15), "Angel of the bottomless pit." (Rev. 9:11).

Satan's ultimate destination, along with his angels, as well as all whom he is able to destroy, is everlasting, unending damnation in hell (Matt. 25:41,46). As one seriously contemplates these facts, he cannot help but tremble at the very thought of being lost!

As powerful as Satan is, he can be resisted and overcome, "*Be Sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith...*" (1 Peter 5:8-9). This is why Christians are to "*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.*" (Eph. 6:11).

John's inspired words truly give us strength to press on, even in the hottest of confrontations with the evil one. "*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*" (1 John 4:4). In addition to this, God has not left His children defenseless. On the contrary, "*According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.*" (2 Peter 1:3). It is truly comforting to know that God is with us every step of the way in our journey to

heaven as we “walk in the light” (1 John 1:7). “...I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” (Heb. 13:5).

The Bible gives numerous examples of Satan’s insidious attacks on the body of Christ: Persecution (Acts 4, 5, 9,19), Certain brethren making circumcision a condition of salvation (Acts 15), Conspiracy of certain Jews to kill Paul (Acts 23), Forming of factions (1 Cor. 1), Brother living in an incestuous and adulterous relationship and the church accepting it (1 Cor. 5), Making a gluttonous feast of the Lord’s supper (1 Cor. 11), Some denying the resurrection (1 Cor. 15), Perverting the Gospel of Christ (Gal. 1), Peter siding with the Jews (Gal. 2), Two sisters at odds with one another (Phil. 4), Works of the flesh (Gal. 5), Malicious use of the tongue (James 3).

Satan wants to ultimately destroy every soul so they will be with him and his demons to suffer eternal punishment. Satan is the father of all lies. He is constantly tempting the Lord’s people through the “*lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.*” (1 John 2:16). He greatly rejoices when children of God live by the “iron rule” and not the “golden rule” (Matt. 7:12). He and all of his demons rejoice when the “*lust of the flesh*” (Gal. 5:19-21) reigns in the heart of Christians instead of the “*fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance.*” (Gal. 5:22). The father of all lies is constantly trying to divide the body of Christ through bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, evil speaking and malice (Eph. 4:31). When this takes place, evangelism, benevolence and edification come to nothing and thus we find ourselves in a ditch.

Be assured that the devil knows every faithful Christian. He knows you and he knows me. If he can get us to yield to him (Rom. 6:16), then doubt, discouragement, envy, strife, hatred, jealousy, covetousness, as well as all works of the flesh, will put us well on the road to destruction. Even when this takes place, those who have gone back under Satan’s rule can repent of their sins and be restored (Gal. 6:1-2; James 5:19-20; Jude 23)!

Through Christ’s death, burial and resurrection, Satan has been “bound,” thus destroying his works (1 John 3:8; 2 Tim. 1:10; Heb. 2:14-15). Every Christian has been given assurance that we can overcome any and all temptations if we will look for the way of escape. “*There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.*” (1 Cor. 10:13). John wrote, “*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even*

as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.” (Rev. 3:23).

Remember, God, Christ and the Holy Spirit wants every Christian to be with them in heaven (Rev. 22:17)! Brethren, don't allow Satan to distract you from serving the Lord! Continue to *“fight the good fight of faith”* (1 Tim. 6:12). *“Put on the whole armour of God”* (Eph. 6:11). *“Be “unmoveable, always, abounding in the work of the Lord.”* (1 Cor. 15:58). You will hear the welcome words of the Savior one day, *“Come, ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”* (Matt. 25:34).

May the hand be on us all who truly following His footsteps.

Katoro Geita, church of Christ,

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