

Satan's Opposition to God's Word

Why do ye not understand my speech? even because **ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil**, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and **abode not in the truth**, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? **He that is of God heareth God's words**: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God (John 8:43-47).

The Jewish leaders were opposed to God's Word by the simple fact that they were in league with the devil who is also opposed to God's Word. Satan has been opposing God's Word from the very beginning

1. By speaking directly against it.

- a. We must understand that satan is a liar and God's Word is TRUTH. Jesus stated this a few verses before He gave us a revelation of satan's nature:
 - 1) Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free (John 8:31, 32).
- b. We see Satan going directly against God's Word in the Garden of Eden when Satan all but called God a liar (Gen. 3:1-7)
 - 1) Christians are in danger of allowing Satan to do the same thing to their minds today.
 - 2) But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Cor. 11:3)
- c. There are people claiming to be Christians but are teaching and preaching things that go directly against the Word of God. Even when shown Scripture that contradicts their viewpoint they will ignore the Bible and continue to promote their ideology. Some have even made statements such as "Scripture is overrated," or "The Bible is not the only means for knowing God and His will" or "God doesn't answer to Scripture"
- d. One person who promoted a distorted view of God's sovereignty was shown Scripture that refuted their doctrine. They replied by saying, "Do you realize you are using Scripture as a witness against God's sovereignty?"
- e. Of course, this promotes a defeated Christian lifestyle for those who adhere to such teaching. Instead of fighting the good fight of faith based on God's Word, they will submit to the lies of satan (Eph. 6:17, 18).

2. By adding traditions that clearly nullify it, destroying it's effectiveness in the life of the recipient.

a. There is much traditional teaching in the churches today that seem to replace the Word of God. Many value their traditions over and above God's Word. Traditions unfortunately make the authority of God's Word empty and useless in the lives of individuals who accept them:

1) But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. **Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.** Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (Mat. 15:3-9)

2) (AMP – v. 6) So for the sake of your tradition (the rules handed down by your forefathers), you have set aside the Word of God [depriving it of force and authority and making it of no effect].

3) There are some who actually teach disobedience to God by citing church traditional teaching over and above God's Word. This leads people into danger.

4) Some of the traditions that teach that God wills sickness and disease on good Christians for loving purposes, that all things, good and evil, are somehow the result of God's sovereignty, and many other such traditions will make the truth of God's Word of no effect in our lives. We will not see that satan is behind the negatives of life and will instead blame god because we lack knowledge of His Word. This is exactly what Satan wants.

b. The Bible calls traditional teaching "doctrines of devils." We must refuse to accept such teachings:

1) Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and **doctrines of devils**; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. (1 Tim. 4:1-7)

3. By stealing it from the hearts in which it is sown into.

a. Satan opposes God's Word by stealing it from our hearts as we provide Him opportunity:

- 1) When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. (Mat. 13:19)
- 2) Satan is always looking for opportunities to devour us (1 Pet. 5:8-10) and it is up to us as to whether or not we provide that to him (Eph. 4:27). We provide Satan with opportunity to steal God's Word from us when we fail to understand it.
- 3) Adam Clarke: "Μη συνιεντος, perhaps more properly, regardeth it not, does not lay his heart to it." Our lack of attempt to grasp the meaning of God's Word and take it in allows Satan to successfully snatch the seed from us.

b. Notice that this is the "Word of the Kingdom." It is understanding this word of the kingdom that enables us to know our rights as citizens of this kingdom and to recognize Satan as an already defeated enemy:

- 1) For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual **understanding**; That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness; Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: (Col. 1:9-13)
- 2) (NCV) God will strengthen you with his own great power so that you will not give up when troubles come, but you will be patient.
- 3) Martin Luther: "The kingdom of this world, or the devil's kingdom, is the kingdom of iniquity, ignorance, error, sin, death, blasphemy, desperation, and everlasting damnation. On the other side, the kingdom of Christ is the kingdom of equity, grace, light, remission of sins, peace, consolation, saving health, and everlasting life." (Watchwords for the Warfare of Life, p. 118)

c. Satan battles against the "word of the Kingdom" with every bit of might he can muster. This is because the word of the kingdom is the announcement of his defeat and the victory of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Messiah over all of his works. The battle is centered on information. Satan is defeated and has no real power over those who have knowledge of this defeat. If he is able to keep them blinded and ignorant concerning this defeat, then he is able to continue his torment of them unopposed.

4. By bringing circumstances that run contrary to it's promises.

- a. Trials and tribulations also come as the result of God's Word:
 - 1) Mat. 13:20, 21
 - 2) Satan is behind our trials and persecutions. These are negative circumstances intended to keep us from standing on God's Word (1 Pet. 5:8-10; Rev. 2:9, 10; 12:12, 13)
- b. Some misunderstand the book of Job by teaching that God ordained all of the circumstances surrounding Job's dilemma. On the contrary, Satan initiated the idea of bringing the circumstances in opposition to God's Word concerning Job:
 - 1) Job 1:8-12
 - 2) And Jehovah saith unto the Adversary, 'Hast thou set thy heart against My servant Job because there is none like him in the land, a man perfect and upright, fearing God, and turning aside from evil?' (Young's Literal Translation)
 - 3) Barnes: Margin, "Set thine heart on." The margin is a literal translation of the Hebrew. Schultens remarks on this, that it means more than merely to observe or to look at - since it is abundantly manifest from the following verses that Satan "had" attentively considered Job, and had been desirous of injuring him. It means, according to him, to set himself against Job, to fix the heart on him with an intention to injure him, and Yahweh means to ask whether Satan had done this.
 - 4) We see from the Biblical evidence that Satan brings circumstances in people's lives in order to oppose God's Word. The circumstances that Job dealt with were not God's idea nor were they His suggestion. On the contrary He appears perturbed about what has happened to Job (Job 2:3)
- c. Satan brings sickness to bodies in order to oppose God's promises of healing and health:
 - 1) "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?" (Luke 13:16)
 - 2) "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Gal. 3:29).
 - 3) You and I are children of Abraham because of our relationship with Jesus Christ, which also makes us heirs to God's promise. The lexicon says an heir "in Messianic usage, one who receives his allotted possession by right of sonship." An heir has a right to his or her inheritance.
- d. Satan will bring several types of circumstances in order to destroy our faith in God's promises.
 - 1) Eph. 6:10-12 – The *evil day* is any day in which you are attacked with *evil*.

- 2) He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, He is my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.... There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. (Psalm 91:1-4, 10)
- 3) The New Living Translation translates Psalm 91:3-4 this way: *“For he will rescue you from every trap and protect you from the fatal plague. He will shield you with his wings. He will shelter you with his feathers. **His faithful promises are your armor and protection.**”*
- 4) Satan will bring negative circumstances in our lives to destroy our faith in God and His promises. How we react to the circumstances that Satan brings determines whether or not God’s promises will work for us. If we claim the promise in the midst of the circumstances then God will come through. If we accept the circumstances as opposed to God’s Word then we will not receive His help. It is not up to God to bring the promises to pass but it is up to us claim them by faith in spite of contradicting circumstances.

5. By hindering any revelation of it from coming forth and taking place.

- a. Satan's angels will fight against God's angels in order to keep them from bringing the revelation and understanding of God's Word to us:
 - 1) Daniel 10:12-14, 21
 - 2) The prince of Persia appears to be one of the regional princes of Satan spoken about in Ephesians 6:10-12.
- b. Obviously the devil did not want the angel to successfully fulfill his mission in bringing Daniel the insight that he sought and attempted to hinder him.
 - 1) If God does not reveal something to us immediately we are not to accept this as a denial of God's willingness to do so nor should we believe that His will is to remain unknown and mysterious. The true reason for a lack of revelation could very well be a principality fighting against one of God's agents who has been sent to bring the needed information.
 - 2) We learn from Daniel the need to persist in prayer and not give up until we have received the insight we are seeking. Too many of God's people have believed the lie of Satan that what we are praying for is not the will of God since it did not happen immediately.
- c. Some have made a mistake here in teaching that we are to engage these princes directly. There is no indication that Daniel did this nor do we find any New Testament examples of such a practice. However, as we pray directly to God He will send divine assistance in dealing with regional princes.
 - 1) While Christians do possess authority over the devil and demons, we are to exercise our authority within the sphere that God has revealed to us in Scripture. We should not go beyond Scripture and practice things that have no precept or example within Scripture.

6. By blinding and darkening our minds to it.

- a. One of the difficulties that we face in evangelizing the lost is due to the fact that Satan keeps them blinded to truth and makes it difficult to see their need for salvation:
 - 1) 2 Cor. 4:3, 4
 - 2) Satan darkens the understanding of unbelievers because he is doomed and wants as much company as he can possibly get (Eph. 4:18; Mat. 25:41).
 - 3) There are some that teach a doctrine of predestination in which it is God's will that some are saved but also desires that many are lost. This doctrine teaches that God decided this before He ever created anyone.
 - 4) This teaching is blasphemous and unscriptural. It is God's desire that all be saved. Any hindrance to the salvation of any individual is due to either our failure to evangelize or Satan's ability to keep them blinded to the truth of God's Word (1 Tim. 2:4; 1 Pet. 3:9; Luke 8:12).
- b. It is the "gospel of peace" or rather the "good news" that Satan opposes. In Ephesians 6:15 we are told, "*And on your feet wear the **Good News** of peace to help you stand strong*" (Easy to Read Version)
 - 1) The gospel is news that informs us that the evil works of Satan no longer need to have dominion over us. In the Bible, the preaching of the gospel/good news is always accompanied by healings and deliverance from demonic oppression (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mark 16:15-20; Luke 4:18; Acts 8:4-8; 14:7-10; Rom. 15:19; 1 Thess. 1:5).
 - 2) This gospel/good news that miraculously destroys the works of the devil is "the gospel of the God's kingdom" (Matt. 10:1-8; Luke 9:1, 2; 10:8, 9). It is no wonder that Satan fights so heavily against it.

7. By twisting it and enabling people to misapply it as he attempted to do with Jesus.
- a. Satan enjoys hacking up the Word of God in order to promote certain doctrines that would not line up with a clear reading of God's Word.
 - 1) Matt. 4:5-7
 - 2) How many times have detractors of faith teaching used this very satanic tactic by challenging one of us to prove Mark 11:22-23 by sending a mountain into the ocean? The first thing that pops into my mind is our Lord's temptation by Satan.
 - 3) Satan may either misquote a passage or refer to a passage correctly but twist it in a way to move someone to apply it in a way in which God never intended.
 - 4) Satan's tactic is to discredit the Word of God. If someone claims a promise and it does not "work" for them then they call God a liar or appeal to His sovereignty (as if His sovereign will is opposed to His revealed will). If he can move people to misunderstand the Word by twisting it, he can destroy faith and even cause tragic situations in the life of the deceived.
 - b. Satan has deceived many a person into false doctrine and presumptuous sin by misquoting Scripture to them. Many misquote God's Word to promote false doctrines. Here is one example:
 - 1) Not too long ago while debating with someone on the issue of "eternal security" the person misquoted a flurry of "prooftexts" to make his point. The person wrote: *"Even when we believe not, He remains faithful, He can't deny Himself. He will not forsake us."* However, when we actually look at the passage the person is quoting from, we see something different:
 - 2) If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: **if we deny him, he also will deny us**: If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself. (2 Tim. 2:12, 13)
 - 3) It makes a world of difference when a person actually reads the Scripture. Rather than teaching OSAS, the passage you misquote goes directly against OSAS. However, Satan has lead numerous people to hell by misquoting Scripture and providing a false security.
 - c. 2 Cor. 12:7 concerning Paul's famous thorn is another text Satan twists.
 - 1) This passage is taught in a way that detracts from Satan's work in the context and implies that God gave Paul a sickness for His glory.
 - 2) Yet every where in the Bible that speaks of thorns is almost always a reference to trials and persecution at the hands of other human beings (Num. 33:55; Josh. 23:13; Judges 2:3). A search through any concordance or Bible software will reveal that "thorn" never equals "sickness."

- 3) Nonetheless, Satan has used this passage many times to keep Christians passive in their sickness and cause them to refuse not to trust God for healing.
- d. To defeat satan in this area one must take the time to learn God's Word. Do not simply accept the Word because someone quoted it. Check it out for yourself. Read the whole chapter from which the passage is quoted from. Cross reference it with other passages. Make sure that the "application" being suggested is not in conflict with other passages of scripture. Sometimes this may require doing an exegetical study using Greek and Hebrew word studies.