

The Schemes Of The Devil

2 Corinthians 2:10-11

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Satan's efforts are not haphazard.

- 2 Corinthians 2:10-11, *"But one whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes" NASU*
 - "Schemes" *noema* "that which is thought out ... hence, a purpose, device" (W.E. Vine).
- *"Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil"* (Ephesians 6:11 NASV)
 - "Schemes" *methodeia* (from which we get our English word for "method") which Vine defines as "... craft, deceit ... a cunning device, a wile ... lit., (with a view to) the craft of deceit."

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Deception:

1 Corinthians 6:9, *"Or know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with men"*

- 1 Corinthians 15:33, *"Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals."*
- Galatians 6:7, *"Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."*
- 2 Timothy 3:13, *"But evil men and impostors shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived."*

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- Titus 3:3, *"For we also once were foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another."*
- James 1:16-17, *"Be not deceived, my beloved brethren. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights ..."*

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- Revelation 18:23, *"and the light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the princes of the earth; for with thy sorcery were all the nations deceived."*
- Revelation 19:20, *"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought the signs in his sight, wherewith he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image: they two were cast alive into the lake of fire that burneth with brimstone"*
- Revelation 20:10, *"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet; and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."*

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- Deception is at the heart of all that he does and his schemes are centered around the idea of making that which is wicked to appear righteous and that which is error to appear as truth.
- Paul warned of *"false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ."*
- And he said, *"No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds."* 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
- Without a love for truth, we will also be taken captive by his deception. Colossians 2:8; 2 Thessalonians 2:10

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Change the way we think. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

- From the time of Adam and Eve in the garden, Satan has attacked the way we think. Genesis 3:4-5
- Satan has won when we think like the world.
 - Mind set on "the things that are on earth." Colossians 3:1-2; Philippians 3:17-21; James 3:14-17
 - Accept what is sinful. Isaiah 5:20-21, "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"
 - No longer disapprove of what is contrary to God's will or "approve the things that are excellent." Philippians 1:10; 4:8; cf. Romans 1:32; Ephesians 5:8-11

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Every scheme of the Devil starts with the way that we think! Matthew 15:18

Proverbs 4:23-27, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; For out of it are the issues of life.

24 Put away from thee a wayward mouth, And perverse lips put far from thee.

25 Let thine eyes look right on, And let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

26 Make level the path of thy feet, And let all thy ways be established.

27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: Remove thy foot from evil."

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Discouragement.

- When we suffer for doing what is right. 1 Peter 1:6-7; 2:20; 4:16
- Used against Job. Job 1:7-12; 2:3-10
- Parable of the Sower. Matthew 13:20-21
- When we sin. 2 Corinthians 2:7-8
- Temporal consequences of our sin – quit. 1 John 1:9; cf. Acts 8

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Doubt.

- From the beginning, Satan sought to cast doubt in the minds of Adam and Eve. Genesis 3:2-4, "... Ye shall not surely die"
- "There are many ways to approach God." John 14:6; cf. John 8:24
- "There is no God, prayer is foolishness." Psalms 14:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." cf. 1 John 5:14-15; cf. Hebrews 4:14-16
- "There is nothing after death. We just cease to exist."
 - Reward: 2 Timothy 4:7-8, 18; Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17-5:1
 - Punishment: Genesis 3:4; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:3-4
 - Jeremiah 23:17 *Nothing new!*

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Discord among brethren. Proverbs 6:16-19

- Galatians 5:15, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (cf. Nehemiah 5)
- 2 Corinthians 12:20, "For I fear, lest by any means, when I come, I should find you not such as I would, and should myself be found of you such as ye would not; lest by any means (there should be) strife, jealousy, wraths, factions, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults ..." cf. James 3:14-16

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In matters of opinion let us follow the Lord, "For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men. So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another." Romans 14:18-19

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False security, apathy, and indifference.

- Must *"take heed lest we fall."* 1 Corinthians 10:12
- We can lose what we have gained in Christ. 2 John 8
- We can come short of *"entering His rest."* Hebrews 4:1
- We can leave our *"first love"* (Revelation 2:4) and become *"lukewarm."* (Revelation 3:16)
- The solution is to renew our efforts to be *"zealous for good works."* Titus 2:14

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False teaching.

- Satan is described as *"the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world."* Revelation 12:9
- He seeks to compromise and distort the truth of God's word which was *"once for all delivered."* Jude 3
- Paul adamantly warned, *"But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema."* Galatians 1:8
- We each are personally responsible to *"prove all things; hold fast that which is good; abstain from every form of evil."* 1 Thessalonians 5:21

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Conclusion:

- Satan's schemes are designed to give him the advantage to lead us into sin.
- Through a knowledge of his devices, we should be able to avoid many of his best tactics and fail to provide him with the opportunity to lead us astray. *"Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."* James 4:7

(NOTE: Satan never sleeps. He is a formidable foe! In these times of pandemic, cultural, racial, and political woes, let us never be so naive as to think Satan does not use these things to scheme against God's people.)