

“THE WORKS OF THE DEVIL”

INTRODUCTION.

This lesson is entitled “The Works of the Devil.” It is said that Jesus came to destroy “the works of the devil” in 1 John 3:8. The devil is always at work—sometimes as a roaring lion, and sometimes as a wolf in sheep’s clothing. Satan caused the fall of the human race, and though warned of God of his defeat by the “seed of woman” (Gen. 3:15), he put forth every effort to destroy the Lord. He worked by and through wicked man to get this done, from the time of His birth until His crucifixion on the cross. What he did to destroy man, actually brought about the one thing that could SAVE mankind—the precious blood of Jesus that was shed at the cross. As long as the world stands, that blood will continue to save. That blood was the purchase price of the church (Acts 20:28), and as long as we have the word of God which is the seed of the kingdom (Luke 8:11), salvation IN the church is still available for mankind.

Now, the devil works on the church and individuals to cause their souls to be lost. In this lesson we shall explore the plans of Satan to destroy souls.

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, the devil WORKS TO KEEP PEOPLE OUT OF THE CHURCH.

A. Satan surely knows he was unsuccessful in preventing the church being established.

1, Jesus knew His blood being shed would not stop the church from its being built.

Matt.16:18

2. The word “eternal” is often used to described the church or kingdom, for it will always be available for mankind on earth, and will ultimately be taken to heaven. 1Cor. 15:23-24

B. One work of the devil is to KEEP PEOPLE OUT OF THE CHURCH.

1. One way he does this is to **create substitutes for the church.**

a. He offers “idols” as a substitute, giving them a “god” they can SEE with their eyes.

1) When Moses was upon the mount to receive the 10 commandments, the people wanted Aaron to make them a god that they could see.

2) Multiplied millions on the earth today worship idols they can see with their eyes, such as are seen in Hinduism, Shintoism, Catholicism and all sorts of idolatrous movements.

b. Many educated men in America often involve themselves in **secret lodges.**

1) These lodges have a flavor of religion, and assure their members that if they keep their aprons clean, they **will be received** into the great lodge in heaven when their life on earth is ended.

2) This religious flavor brings satisfaction to many, and even some in the church **also** enter into these lodges (or false religions) for social or business advantages.

c. One big substitute for the church is that of **denominationalism.**

1) The scripture foretold an apostasy of the church, when men would depart from the truth of the Bible for the doctrines of men. Matt. 15:9; Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 4:1

2) Now, in addition **to** the church “of Christ,” there are well over 35,000 separate and distinct denomination “of men”, that sooth the religious desires of the lost, with false and unwarranted claims that they **can go to heaven** by being in these denominations.

- 3) The divided state of the religious world goes against the prayer of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane, and drives many people away from the truth. John 17:20-21
 - a) The **basis** for “oneness” is the **word of the apostles** as is recorded in the New Testament. v. 20
 - b) The ultimate **purpose** of this unity is to convert the world to Christ. v. 21
- d. Then, the substitute of **material riches** keeps many people so busy that they have little or no time to concern themselves about the church and salvation. Luke 12:15-21; 8:14
- e. Then, the substitute of **physical and/or sinful pleasures** keeps many so content with their lives that they are not interested in their souls’ salvation and destiny. Luke 8:14; 2 Tim. 3:4; Heb. 11:25
- f. Next, the substitute of just **being good morally** and perhaps generally keeping the ten commandments, makes many content with themselves as they are, without being in the church.

II. 2nd, the devil WORKS TO TAKE PEOPLE OUT OF THE CHURCH.

- A. If people persist in believing and obeying the gospel and getting **into** the church, the devil does not leave them alone, but begins a process that causes many of them to fall away and lose their church connection with God. 1 Pet. 5:8
 1. He wants people to err from the truth and lose their souls. Jas.5:19-20
 2. He wants people to fail to add the Christian graces, to keep them out of heaven. 2 Pet. 1:5-11 (Discuss as needed)
- B. Satan has ways of getting people out of the church.
 1. One way is to **lure them back** through the attractions of the flesh. 1 John 2:15-17; 2 Tim.,. 4:10
 2. Another way is to **make denominations of men** so appealing through easy plans of salvation, beautiful secular music and entertainment, that they will cease to stand up for the truth of God, and spiritual activities. 2 John 9-11
 3. Still another way to take people out of the church is to cause them not to attend all of it’s assemblies, and to be passive in all that is done, letting others take the lead and not do anything except attend when it is convenient.
 - a. Every member of a physical body needs to function regularly, to remain alive and useful.
 - b. Even so, every member of the spiritual body (the church) needs to take an active part in the church if at all possible, to stay alive and grow.

III. 3Rd, the devil WORKS TO CREATE LUKEWARMNESS IN THE CHURCH.

- A. The Lord does **not** want Christians to be lukewarm and indifferent. Rev. 3:14-20 (study)
- B. Satan has several ways of creating lukewarmness.
 1. One way is to cause them to think they do not have to attend all the assemblies of the church, causing them to lose interest in good works and worship. Heb. 10:24-26
 2. Another way is to stop reading and studying their Bible daily. Acts 17:11; 20:32

3. Still another way is to cause them to be hearers only, and not doers of the word of God. Jas. 1:22; Gal. 6:10
4. Yet another way is to cause them to give priority to the temporal things of the world and put the church second. 1 Tim. 6:9-10; Matt. 6:33

CONCLUSION

- I. We beg you, do **not** let Satan have his work in your life.
 - A. If you are not a Christian, become one by confessing your faith in Jesus, repenting of sins, and being immersed in water to enjoy salvation.
 1. Your soul is too precious and valuable to be lost. Matt. 16:26
 2. Your defense against the devil is to be a strong Christian—serving the Lord.
 - B. If as a Christian, your life is not right, won't you repent and pray for pardon?
- II. If you are subject to the invitation of the Lord, we plead with you to respond—right now, while we stand together and sing, for your encouragement.

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