

A Chinese Military strategist in 500B.C. wrote these words in his famous book: "The Art of War:"

"If you know the enemy and you know yourself, you need not fear the result of a hundred battles," Sun Tzu wrote. "If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained you will also suffer a defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle."

We focus thoroughly on knowing ourselves. We work on our faith and living holy lives. And that is important. But if we don't know our enemy, every step forward will be followed by a step back. So, let's focus on knowing our enemy: Satan. We'll devote both lessons to this today.

Tonight we'll look at "Hearing Your Enemy" – and examine the messages he sends to you through inner monologue, people in your life, or the buzz of our culture. But first we have some facts we need to discuss.

I. Satan is Real

- a. He has been largely fictionalized, which then leads to him being marginalized.
- b. His best strategy is to go undetected – for others to believe that He doesn't exist.
- c. Does it matter if we believe in the Devil? It does! If there is no devil, then WE are God's enemy. All sin and evil is OF US and BY US. How can I ever find a way to be right with God? But if the devil does exist, then HE IS THE ENEMY OF GOD... and we just need to learn to reject him!
- d. **Genesis 3:1-6** – He has been around as long as human beings. He is evil, and he tries any deception, any promises, any word changes to draw us to him.
- e. **Job 1:6** – acknowledged by God **1:7** – Roams about the earth **1:9-10** – Believes the worst in us
- f. **Job 1:12** – is allowed by God to test our faith **2:7** – will push things as far as he can.
- g. James 5:11 – Note that Jesus acknowledges the historical character Job.
- h. I find this optimistic news – that he exists and stands as the enemy of God. Because it means that we are not. We are still holy and can be right with God, we just have to abandon Satan!

II. Satan is Defeated

- a. Let's be clear. He is deceptive and successful in many ways, but he is a loser. He lost.
- b. We saw this in the Genesis story: **3:15** – God spoke of Jesus crushing his head!
- c. We saw this in the Job story: where Satan was ONLY allowed to do what God approved!
- d. **Luke 10:17-19** – There is so much we don't know here. But this we can surmise – He was in heaven with God, but not God. He was defeated LONG AGO, being cast down from heaven.
- e. **Matthew 25:41** – His eternity is set – HELL. There is no hope for him, except to get others.
- f. **I Corinthians 15:55-58** – Sin and Death are his power. And Christ has already defeated them and will extend that victory to all of us, once and for all, in the judgment!
- g. So he cannot do as he wishes or overpower ANYONE. Or avoid HELL. He is a loser!

III. Satan is on a Mission

- a. It is not heaven or hope for himself; it is hopelessness for you. He wants you to suffer as well.
- b. **I Peter 5:8** – 3 Things: He is your ADVERSARY – He stands against you. It may feel like he is offering you something or liberating or empowering you ... he is not. All sin is ADVERSE.
- c. He is YOUR adversary - He's not casting out some wide net hoping random fish come in. He knows you. He wants you. He targets situations and people and choices in your life.
- d. He is a PREDATOR – His goal is not to be friends. His goal is to devour you. Have you noticed SIN does that? DESPAIR does that? He doesn't want to hurt you, he wants to DESTROY you.
- e. **Matthew 4:1-4** – He waits until weak moments, challenging times. Then he strikes.
- f. **Genesis 3:1-6** – All of this is seen in the first story! He was adverse to what was good. He was specifically adverse to a singled out person. He wanted to destroy their home and their lives! He waited until the right time and place. He made it about HER. But it was about HURTING HER.

He knows that one sin here or there, one fruit eaten, one destroyed relationship or one despair event won't be enough. If he does his worst, we'll still walk away and go back to God. So he has to have a bigger plan:

IV. Satan has LOFTY GOALS

a. He wants to be your FATHER

- i. We learn things from our fathers. Good and not so good. We can say we aren't going to be like our dads in certain ways, but the imprint and habits become who we are.
- ii. **John 8:44** – He was a liar from the beginning and lying became the Pharisee way.
- iii. **John 8:39,42** – He doesn't care if you deny him as your father, so long as his imprint of character, his way of operating, becomes a part of your character DNA.
- iv. Doesn't that sound scary!?!?! Like lying. We lie here or there, then we cover up this or conceal that. Before you know it, I am a liar, almost by default... he becomes my father.

b. He wants to be your RULER

- i. He aspires to royalty, where people do what he says and follow his will.
- ii. **Ephesians 2:1-3** – In fact, that's the way it once was. And he loves that. Have you ever met a prince or king who didn't thrive on control or power?
- iii. He wants to direct your life! That's what sin is ... he hides it under the idea of "you are doing this for you" but we are doing this for HIM to fulfill his desire – our destruction!
- iv. I do not want that. But I know him now. I know what he wants and I say NO!

c. He wants to be your GOD

- i. Satan has the ultimate god complex. If what we believe about him is correct, he was made by God but aspired to more power. He lost heaven. So now he wants to make this world his heaven, the place where all live for him and he shapes us into his image.
- ii. **II Corinthians 4:3-4** – A god can hide the people from seeing any other God, like Jesus. A god can create a deceptive environment and control the people.
- iii. Christ is the good news of Grace, the God of Light! Satan is the god of darkness and wants to LAY A VEIL over your eyes and keep you IN THE DARK!
- iv. I will not let him do that. I will see SIN as his lordship in my life and darkening my sight!

Conclusion: The TRUTH does not work in Satan's favor. He is not our Father, our Ruler or our God. He lacks the power or right to those things! No matter his Goals or Mission, He is Defeated!

So, **Genesis 3** – he has to lie to you. He has to get you to believe that sin is somehow good for you.
In **Job 1-2** – he has to convince God to test you, and hope that those tests crush your spirit
Though God, our God, our Ruler, or Father believes both Temptation and Testing will make us stronger!

The curtain is pulled back. He's not an all powerful OZ. He's a scared and defeated small being that uses deception to manipulate. KNOW YOUR ENEMY! THE ENEMY OF GOD! And choose GOD!