**PRINCIPLES OF DEALING WITH THE DEVIL**

Sunday School Lesson 10

*Bible Principles for Daily Living*

1 Peter 5:8

8/14/2022

**Introduction:** Let’s begin this morning by stating a fact. The Devil is real. The book of Peter uses the word “adversary” when it describes the Devil to us. The word adversary means opponent. An opponent is someone who is working against you. Sports teams are adversaries, hero/villain duos are adversaries. Two beings working toward opposing goals. The Devil is our adversary, and an adversary is most definitely not a friend. God threw him out of Heaven, and now he roams the earth as a lion on the prowl. He is not idle, rather he is seeking for anyone that he might devour. Lions prey on the weak and feeble. If you have ever watched a nature documentary, you will notice that the hunting lion always attacks the slowest of the herd, the stragglers. The Devil likewise preys on the weak Christian who is not as strong as another or who is ignorant of the attack. Today, I’d like to observe several principles regarding the Devil and how to deal with his many attacks. The Devil is constantly attacking, and if we are not confident in our own defense, we will not be able to withstand the wiles of the Devil. As we observe these principles, take note of them, and I believe that you will be better equipped to deal with the Devil.

1. **WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THE DEVIL.**
2. **Notice that we need to understand the position of the Devil (1 John 3:8; John 8:44; Job 1:12; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Luke 10: 18).** One of the most important parts to dealing with an adversary is to understand them. The strategy to defeat the opponent is to calculate their next move, and to do so, you must understand them. The Devil was an archangel in Heaven until he became too prideful and believed that he should be above God. Isaiah 14 speaks of the five “I Will’s” of Satan when he was in heaven. Because of this sin, he was expelled from heaven and was cast down to earth. He now has a position on earth as the prince of the power of the air. He is the opposite of what God stands for. God is truth. Satan is deceit. God is perfection. Satan is sin. Satan was given power on earth, and he uses it to try to deceive nations. He deceived Eve in the garden and brought sin into the world. The Devil is the embodiment of sin, lies, and death; we must understand his position as our adversary.
3. **Notice that we need to understand the goal of the Devil (John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9; 2 Corinthians 4:4).** We must first understand the position of the Devil; then we can see the goal of the Devil. When playing against an opponent in basketball, it helps the players to play correctly if they know where their goal is and where the opponent's is. John 10:10 shows us that Satan wants to steal, kill, and destroy the lives of Christians. It likens him to a thief in that verse. A thief comes in at night when he is not expected, and he comes with no other intent than to harm those he is stealing from. We see in 1 Peter that the goal of Satan is also to devour. Satan’s goal is to destroy the lives of those who should be serving the Lord. Not only is his goal to destroy and devour, but it is also to blind the eyes of the people so that they do not come to the knowledge of the saving grace of God. As the adversary, the goal of Satan is to stop the spreading of God’s Word at all costs.
4. **WE NEED TO NOT WELCOME THE DEVIL.**
5. **Notice that we are not to give place to the Devil (Ephesians 4:25-31; Ephesians 4:17-22; Psalm 109:6).** Ephesians 4:27 says, “Neither give place to the devil.” After looking at the goal that the Devil has, we need to be careful not to give him a place in our lives. The verses before and after verse 27 give examples of how we can give place to the Devil. Verse 25 shows that we can give place to the Devil when we speak lies. We can give place to the Devil by not controlling our anger, by being lazy, by speaking corruptly, and by grieving the Holy Spirit as verses 26-30 show us respectfully. Last week in our study of principles for daily living, we discussed the topic of the Christian walk. Verse 17 speaks of putting off the old man and putting on the new. When we give place to the Devil, we are welcoming him into our lives. We are supposed to have taken that old man off.
6. **Notice that welcoming the devil is to leave God unwelcome. (Matthew 12:43-45, 2 Timothy 4:10; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17).** This may seem like a very simple thought, but it is needful to understand. If we give place to the Devil, then it is very easily deduced that Jesus is now unwelcome. Understanding the position of the Devil again, we know that he and God are enemies. Have you ever been in the same room as two teenagers who dislike each other? Teenagers are good at picking sides, and if you are friends with one, you are then put at enmity with the other. When we give place to the Devil and welcome him in, we are in turn moving God out for the time. In 2 Timothy, Demas loved the present world more than the eternal kingdom of God and he forsook the Christian walk by inviting the Devil in. Consider carefully who you are welcoming into your life.
7. **WE NEED TO REBUKE THE DEVIL.**
8. **Notice that there is a difference between “resist” and “rebuke”. (James 4:7; Matthew 4:1-10; Zechariah 3:2).** James 4:7 says that we are to resist the Devil. We have the ability to tell the Devil “No.” Unfortunately, the problem with many Christians is that we don’t do it. We must not give into him. The Devil does not make us do anything. “The Devil made me do it” is not a valid statement. You may have been tempted by the Devil, but he did not make you do anything. We are to resist and say “No.” “*If sinners entice thee, consent thou not.*” Remember, though, that there is a difference between resisting and rebuking. As we discussed, to resist is to deny, but rebuking someone means to harshly criticize them. Jesus rebuked the Devil when He was tempted in Matthew 4. Satan tempted Him with food, power, and pride. In response, Jesus called him out and rebuked Satan, so he went away. You can resist the Devil and deny him, but we are to follow the example of Christ and rebuke him as well.
9. **Notice that knowing scripture will help us rebuke the Devil (Matthew 4:1-10; John 8:31; Psalm 119:11).** This is another simple thought here. We are to use scripture to rebuke the Devil. Again, in Matthew 4, we find Jesus fasting in the wilderness, and He is confronted by the Devil. He begins to tempt Jesus, and when tempted, Jesus responds to the Devil with three words: “It is written...” As Christians, we are to hide God’s Word in our hearts. The book of Psalms says, “Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” We memorize scripture to help us when we are tempted. We can rebuke the Devil and not sin against the Lord. Our logic is no match for Satan, but the Word of God is. There is nothing we can do in our own strength to defeat the Devil. When we rely too heavily on our own strengths and not on God’s, we will quickly find ourselves flat on our face. God’s Word is to be memorized by His people as a tool against the Devil.
10. **WE NEED TO PREPARE FOR THE DEVIL.**
11. **Notice that we are in a spiritual battle, and it is important for us to be prepared. (Ephesians 6:11-18; 2 Timothy 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8).** We are at war with the Devil. As believers, we are fighting against the Devil on a daily basis. As it would be silly for a soldier to go to war without any preparation, it would be the same if a Christian was not prepared to fight. Ephesians 6:11-18 speaks of the Armour of God. When we go into battle, it is a spiritual battle. We need to have the correct preparations to fight in this war. We are to put on the whole Armour of God to be successful in battle. Not only are we to be dressed correctly, but our minds ought to be focused on the task at hand. The book of 1 Peter says we must be sober and vigilant. We need to be on the lookout and prepared for the Devil to come. When the Devil does come, we are to fight the good fight and resist and rebuke him.
12. **Notice that we are on the winning side (Romans 16:20; 1 John 4:4; John 16:33; 1 Corinthians 15:57; Ephesians 6:10).** The final thought should be an uplifting thought. No matter how hard the battle or what the circumstances may be, God will come through. As the popular hymn says, “I am on the winning side, yes! I am on the winning side!” The Devil in the end will be defeated, and Jesus will be victorious. There are two things the Devil can never overcome. The first is the blood of Jesus Christ. The second is a Christian that simply will not give up. Understand the position we are in. There is a battle that is waging around us, but if we can see the Lord at the end of it, we can persevere, and fight the good fight as Paul wrote about. 1 John says, “Greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” The Lord is greater than the Devil. There is victory in Jesus!