

A 60-day plan of being transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

Day #2: Understanding your greatest enemy: Satan (Part 1)

1. Carve out at least 30 minutes of quiet time with the Lord. Do not rush through this! Two of the greatest hindrances to developing a deep life with the Lord is lack of quiet time with Him and a hurriedness throughout the day that leaves little to no room for God. We must make time for what is truly important.
2. This is a graduated plan for the transformation of the believer's mind, feelings, volition, body, social orientation, and soul into Christlikeness. If you have not taken sufficient time to reflect on day #1, I recommend doing that before advancing to day #2. If you have gone through the lesson for day #1, I recommend examining what you actualized throughout the day. For example, did you reflect on Psalm 23 anytime during the day? Did you reflect on your sufficiency in God? Did you think about the Lord as your loving Shepherd and Provider? Did you reflect on the fact that God's plan for you began in eternity past and He has provided everything for you? Did you reflect on the fact that nothing can separate you from the love of God (Rom 8:38-39)? Did you memorize and recall any Scripture yesterday? If you did not actualize any of this yesterday, then I recommend going back to day #1 and trying it again. However, you should not feel like a failure because your worth is not tied to yesterday's "performance." Your worth/righteousness is in Jesus Christ, not in your performance. These suggestions are merely means of putting you in a position to receive more grace. However, apart from actualizing these truths in the life through grace, one's minds and emotions will not be transformed. Transformation does not take place by going to church a few times a week or in 30 minutes a day of Bible study and prayer. Transformation takes place through actualizing God's grace throughout each day.
3. Today we take a look at Satan, who is your greatest enemy. I don't mean that he personally is after you. I think he spends most of his time with world leaders, e.g., in Washington and the Kremlin. However, Satan has an elaborate philosophical system of controlling people's ideas, images, information, reasoning patterns, and emotions. He knows that if he can control the mind and the emotions, then he can control the person. Let us take a look at his diabolical system of thinking, his way of interfering with God's plan for your life:
 - a. Read Ephesians 2:1-3 slowly and several times outloud. Note the title of Satan and the extent of his realm. Note the kind of people Satan is now at work in. Note Satan's primary tools: lusts of the flesh and the mind. The solution will be found in overcoming both of these attacks the same way Christ did. This will involve spiritual disciplines that Christ practiced, which we will examine in future lessons.

- b. Read 1 John 3:8 slowly and several times outloud. This passage makes it clear that Jesus came to destroy Satan's works. This means that Jesus provides the means of overcoming Satan's diabolic plan to dominate your life.
 - c. Read John 8:31-44 and Rev 12:9. Note that Satan's mind-control over the world is through deception and how Christ enables the disciple to overcome this deception.
 - d. Read 1 John 2:15-16. This passage shows the 3 weapons that Satan uses to gain access to a person's mind and emotions. This three-fold method was used in the Garden of Eden, against Christ in the desert, and in your life and mine. All three weapons are used under the cover of darkness/deception.
 - e. Weapon #1: "The lusts/desires of the flesh." The deception here is that it appears "good," at least in the moment. Eve "saw that the tree was good for food." The temptation always comes in the form of something that seems good. It starts in the mind and then Satan tempts the flesh by saying "Go for it! Have it your way! Do it if it feels good." The philosophy of having it your way because it feels good is demonic and is how Satan controls the world.
 - f. Weapon #2: "The lust/desire of the eyes." Eve not only saw the fruit as good for food but pleasant to the eyes. This would include many things that are attractive to the eyes: riches, fame, etc. The person who does not find riches in Christ can hardly overcome temptations of the eyes, given all of the beautiful-looking things of the world.
 - g. Weapon #3: "The pride of life." We see this in the temptation of Eve "to be wise [apart from God]." Pride is one of the greatest killers of the spiritual life. And we are all smitten with it and cannot escape it apart from following the example of Christ. Perhaps the most conspicuous evidence of pride throughout American society is the idea of freedom to do whatever one wants. Earlier in American history, freedom was considered in the context of pursuing virtue. Today it is more or less freedom to do whatever one wants. It is not difficult to see how the idea to be your own person and do whatever you want is demonic. Moreover, this seems to be the diabolical philosophy of our age. There is hardly anything more Satan-like than being your own person, your own god apart from what God says.
 - h. Satan says to you "be free to do what you want . . . be your own person/god." Jesus says, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of the Lord and He will exalt you. Satan says you do not need God. Christ says you need God. Satan says you can't trust God completely. Jesus says trust Me and I will take care of you and even give you rest through transformation into My likeness.
4. Today's spiritual "exercise" (1 Tim 4:8). Focus on your riches in God's grace, especially if you find yourself thinking that you would be happy if only you had some earthly good. Humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, especially if you find yourself angry because your plan/kingdom is not going the way you think it should. Trust and love God

instead of looking for happiness in people or circumstances. Have a day of rejoicing in God regardless of the circumstances of life (Philip 4:4), as you partake of the life of God by living in His promises (2 Pet 1:4). The person who lives in the joy of the Lord will not fall to the pseudo goods that Satan offers. It is the unhappy person who is the perfect target for Satan's baits. Go to the Lord for fulfillment and you will not hunger for the slop bait (illicit lusts of the flesh) of Satan or his pride trap of believing that we deserve more than God has seen fit to give us.

*Testifying to the need of Christlike transformation,
Pastor Don*