

Satan - The Adversary of Life

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Man was created in the image of God. Adam and Eve reflected God with spiritual, personal, moral, relational, rational, emotional and creative Godly attributes. They lived in perfect union, perfect harmony and perfect relationship with God. Their bodies, their relationship and their home were the perfect creation of God. Adam and Eve had unlimited potential to love, know, learn from and worship God, and to fill and subdue the earth and create heaven on Earth. In Genesis 1:28, God blessed Adam and Eve and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it."

God loves life and wants the goodness of life to multiply. Jesus tells us He came so that we "might have life and that more abundantly." Abundant means abounding, which means healthy, growing, and at its core, it means multiplying. Jesus says that trees which produce no fruit are unfit and will be burned. He came so that we would have life, so that our lives would produce more life and more lives. God wants everything that has life to multiply life.

Why does God put such importance on multiplication? He wants us to multiply because we are created in His image, and He himself is a life-multiplying, life-loving God. He is a Creator God that wishes His creation to 'create'—that is, to multiply. God is life, God is love, God loves life. Therefore God wants more life and so should we. In fact, not only is multiplication of God's image the first command God gives, but it is also the last command Jesus gave on earth.

Just before he ascended into heaven, Jesus gathered his disciples to Himself, saying "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me, therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to do and obey all that I have commanded you," (Matthew 28:19). Here Jesus calls His disciples to remember the creation story. Then He commands them to make disciples - in other words, to multiply.

In the Old Testament God commands us to multiply physically, in the New Testament Jesus command us to multiply spiritually. In keeping both these commandments, we multiply and reclaim His image all over the Earth.

After the Fall

The Fall is what happened immediately after Adam and Eve sinned by disobeying God. They immediately went from a state of moral innocence and favor with God to a state of separation, condemnation and death. When Adam and Eve fell, all of creation fell with them. The world, and our relationship with God, was broken by their sin. We were separated from God.

Sin being introduced into our lives did not eradicate the fact that we were made in God's image, but that image was greatly distorted through the Fall. We died spiritually. Our relationship with God was ruptured. Our moral purity was replaced by a sinful nature. We exchanged truth and knowledge gained through a direct relationship with God with 'false philosophies and vain imaginations.' We replaced the uncorrupted image of God with fallen Man. However, the truth of being made in the image of God remains. Regardless of how the image of God may be distorted by sin, the fact that men and women are still bearers of the image of God still shapes our view and action towards others.

The Relationship is Broken

The world, and our relationship with God, was broken by the sin of Adam and Eve. In The Message version of the Bible, God tells the serpent - Satan - in Genesis 3:14-15, "I'm declaring war between your offspring and hers." The sin and devastation we see all around us is evidence that this spiritual warfare continues to this day.

Godly Nature is Replaced with Sin Nature

When Adam and Eve sinned they exchanged their Godly nature, an undistorted Imago Dei, or Image of God nature, with a sin nature. They chose to obey self rather than God. Sin is what has changed the world from God's original design. Sin and its consequences are the problem of our world. Sin is defined as 'hostility to God expressed in defiance of his rule and commands.' Romans 8:7 states, "*The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.*" Sin has spread to everyone and death has spread through sin. Death is the opposite of life, it is the opposite of fruitfulness and the opposite of multiplication. Jesus came so that we could have life and so that we would multiply that life. Satan seeks to kill, steal and destroy. Sin is the problem, not sex.

The Adversary

Satan is the adversary of life. If you believe in the Bible, you must believe in God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. If you believe in God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit, then you must also believe in angels. And if you believe in angels, then you must believe in demons - Satan and other fallen angels. Ever since God created man, Satan has had an assault against human beings and the sanctity of human life. Ephesians 6:12 says, "*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*"

In 1 Peter, 5:8 the Bible says, "*Your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*" We must understand and believe this reality. Satan is real, he is brilliant, he is crafty, he has existed for untold centuries and he wants to destroy us. It's impossible to defeat an enemy that you refuse to admit exists. Satan will do - and is doing - everything he can do to thwart the plan of God for our life. Satan doesn't want to just end the life of unborn children, or of some people. Satan is the enemy of mankind, and he wishes to see all humanity dead. Satan is pure evil. He exists, and he is supremely dedicated to his unholy cause. Satan is our adversary. He is more than just an enemy of God, the church or the pastor. Satan is your *personal* adversary, and you will never have a greater foe than the devil.

Satan hates you because every time he sees you, he is reminded of God. Because you are made in the image of God. Remember what is true of every person: "There goes one made in the image of God. There goes one for whom Christ died." We are made in the image of our Creator. "*We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him. We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*" (1 John 5:18-19 ESV).

Satan's' Nature

In John 8:44, Jesus states, "*You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him.*" Jesus continues, "Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies." Again Jesus says, "*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.*"

Satan has been at the business of killing innocent babies, before and after birth, from the beginning. Through Pharaoh, he tried to kill Moses when he was born, by ordering the midwives to kill all newborn Jewish babies.

In Leviticus 18:21, we learn that people who worshiped Moloch often sacrificed their own children who were ritually murdered and then placed in a sacrificial altar of fire. Satan also tried to stop the spreading of God's Kingdom by having Herod try to kill Jesus as a baby.

Satan is still in the business of killing babies today - through abortion. He is the Father of lies. Lies like "Abortion is your right." Lies like, "It's not really a baby," or, "Abortion is reproductive health." In reality, abortion is the sacrifice of a human life for the convenience or needs of others - or for our own personal selfishness. We insist that our children must die so that we might live the life we want. And Satan is behind this global assault on life.

Satan has a coordinated strategic attack on Christian men, women, parents, singles, children, the family and the Church. Until we realize there's a war going on, rather than skirmishes that occasionally take out one of our own, we are defenseless. Satan's attack against human life is all-out war, and much like a flood, if we are unprepared and unprotected, his evil philosophies and death-causing strategies will seep through every crack and crevice of our life. Satan's flood of lies and death doesn't just affect our life, but the life of all of our neighbors as well.

This is the nature of Satan's attack - it is massive, it is all encompassing and it is designed to kill. For his lies lead us to sin - and all sin ultimately leads to death. Both physical and spiritual death. Our response must be led by prayer. Only in seeking God's wisdom will we be able to discern the evil one's schemes and strategies. Through prayer and the Word of God we can tear down the enemy's strongholds. A stronghold is an area where there is spiritual darkness and Satan gains a foothold. Through prayer and the Word of God we can put on the full armor of the Lord. Through prayer and the Word of God we can stand with Jesus, who has already defeated Satan at the Cross.

We can ONLY defeat Satan by prayer, the Word of God, and standing with Christ. Through His death, Jesus rendered "*powerless him who had the power of death*" (Hebrews 2:14-15 NASB). Though defeated by Jesus Christ, Satan is still active in this world. "*The whole world lies in the power of the evil one*" (1 John 5:19 ESV). But his final overthrow by God is certain. "*And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*" (Revelation 20:10 NIV).

Satan Overcome by Christ

We must remember that Christ defeated Satan on the Cross. Satan is strong, but not stronger than the work and power of Christ. Though Satan is defeated, he is still active and seeking to destroy you by tempting you to sin, which leads to separation from God and death.

We have been given spiritual weapons to fight and they are powerful for tearing down of strongholds. Ephesians 6:10-18 says, "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.