

Know Your Enemy

Sun Tzu wrote *“The Art of War”* around 500 BC. It’s regarded as the oldest military treatise in the world and yet remains popular among leaders today in business, education, law, politics, sports, and government, as well as other areas where these principles can be applied. Sun Tzu wrote, *“If you know your enemy and know yourself, you need not fear the results of a hundred battles. If you know yourself but not the enemy, for every victory gained, you will also suffer defeat. If you know neither the enemy nor yourself, you will succumb in every battle.”* Based on those statements, Sun Tzu is credited with the phrase *“know your enemy.”* The Apostle Paul had this awareness when he wrote to the Corinthians not to be ignorant of Satan’s strategies **2**

Corinthians 2:11: *“so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.”* It’s essential to know our enemy, Satan, so we don’t fall prey to his deceptions, and the only way to know his strategies is to study God’s Word. Satan hasn’t changed his strategy since the **3rd chapter of Genesis:** dispute, deny, and displace God’s Word. **Genesis 3:1,3-5:** *“And he {Satan} said to the woman, ‘Has God really said, ‘You shall not eat from any tree of the garden’” {Eve said}.... God has said, ‘You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.’” The serpent said to the woman, “You certainly will not die! For God knows that on the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will become like God ...”* You see, Satan wants us to change what God said just a little to create a little doubt that becomes denial. After denial, he displaces the meaning, *“you will be like God.”* To detect Satan’s strategies today, observe how our culture treats sin. How easy it is to set aside Biblical truth when doing so suits our purposes. Lying to spare someone’s feelings; adultery doesn’t feel wrong because it is true love; gluttony and addiction aren’t personal choices, but rather genetic disorders or chemical imbalances. Society finds numerous ways to dispute and displace God’s Word. Right and wrong are turned upside down. **Isaiah 5:20-21,23:** *“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight! Who declare the wicked innocent for a bribe, and take away the rights of the ones who are in the right!”* This can easily happen if we allow ourselves to be deceived. Paul tells us, **1 Corinthians 10:13:** *“No temptation has overtaken you except something common to mankind; and God is faithful, so He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”* When we decide to amplify the limits in our lives, we are prone to misrepresent God’s Word and to fall into Satan’s trap. **2 Timothy 2:15:** *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”* Let’s live in God’s truth and reject all that is false. In **Matthew 24**, Jesus warns us of deceptive days ahead and urges us to be on guard. If we claim to love God, we can’t live in a way that is untrue. **3 John 1:3:** *“For I*

was overjoyed when brothers came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth.” Biblical truth doesn’t yield to opinion, fashion, office, or culture; it is simply the truth, and followers of Christ should stand for it and live by it.