

Duped by the Devil

How many ways can we give ground to Satan? Wouldn't it logically be as many ways as we fail to hold ground for God? And what might be the most important of such failures? Ignorance, neglect, or mishandling of his word. The devil can get us in many ways, if we allow him to, but when we are unfaithful to God's word, by holding wrong interpretations of doctrine, we have opened the door to him continually, as long as we maintain those false beliefs.

Satan's lifelong goal and ambition is to try to thwart God's plans, and he works relentlessly to try to keep us from obeying, and walking with God. One only has to recall his wiles against Job to realize how intent he is to carry out his diabolical plans to interfere with, and defeat our efforts to honor God. And sad to say, he succeeds much of the time.

I don't think many Christians are aware of his obsessive preoccupation to gain access and control of us, especially our minds. And, we should never doubt how much more meticulously aware of our weaknesses, and vulnerability, he is, than we are. And nowhere is that more evident than in the account of his subtle, insidious working on the minds of Adam, and Eve in the garden of Eden—leading to the downfall of the race. For which they were fully at fault, for yielding to the temptation.

As to maintaining the truth of God's word, let's consider a major doctrinal area, and try to establish the importance of rightly understanding, and holding to the truth of that subject. .

A mistake in this fundamental responsibility, will always be an opening for Satan to take advantage of us. But, we will be protected from him, if we are fully submitted to God, and exercise our responsibility to resist the devil—for which we are guaranteed that he will flee from us!

But, remember it is not a one-time commitment, or long period effect, because Satan will frequently try to lure us away from God, with all the means of which he is capable. So, that standing against Satan, is at least a daily need. Neither should we make the foolish mistake of trying to outwit him, or contend with his vastly superior intellect! We don't fight him on his grounds, but on God's.

So, now let's say we are endeavoring to learn the doctrine of salvation. And I don't mean relying on the pastor's teaching of it, but our responsibility to learn the truth by diligent scriptural study, ourselves. If you persist in sound biblical study, you will come to know the literal truth of the subject, and once firmly established in it, you will not be moved from it, and Satan will have no foothold against you, in that area.

But, if you don't come to the fully right understanding of the gospel, you will have given the devil access to your mind (on that subject, at least), because you hold a misinterpreted belief in certain essential elements of the doctrine. And God intended a certain meaning, only.

Satan cannot deal with the truth—especially eternally important spiritual truth—because he is the father of lies, which, to the church’s shame, is what a false concept of the gospel is. Anything contrary to, or at odds with the literally true meaning of God’s word is fair game for Satan, and he will exploit it, and capitalize on it, to the detriment of the individual Christians at fault, and the churches with which they are associated.

He cannot thwart, or consequently affect God, but he can surely have a damaging effect on Christians, and their churches. To say that, in a practical sense, he owns us may be too strong or extreme, but scripture does tell us that we can be taken captive by him at his will, when we step out of God’s will, or let down our guard against him.

Do you know where you are in all of this scenario? Which, however, is the real situation existing in a great majority of the universal church. There is actually only a relatively small remnant of believers, who have “kept the faith” (the true gospel, plus who knows what else has been compromised).

And if you haven’t proved your own doctrinal integrity, you cannot simply assume that your gospel theology is right, because you are aligned with a vast majority of the universal church.