

So it isn't like the devil is walking around physically with a neon sign announcing his agenda. He isn't doing interviews on the nightly news and bragging about his goal of extinguishing the zeal of the church. He doesn't personally have ads on social media sights that peddle his preference for hatred against God. But that is what he is doing behind the scenes. In the story of Job, he was "going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it" (Job 1:7). Based on what we know of Satan, we understand this to mean he has a worldwide influence. Paul calls him "the god of this age" (2 Cor. 4:4). He isn't more powerful than God. He isn't omniscient. He doesn't possess any divine attributes. He is a creature and not the Creator. But through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life he controls most hearts in this world. This is a wakeup call to pay close attention to the mind behind the chaos. Bible writers alert us to his scheming and deceitfulness (2 Cor. 2:11). We cannot underestimate him. He is at work. We can see the fruit of his efforts.

Satan has no good in him. He chooses to be this way. He is our enemy, plain and simple (1 Pet. 5:8). His goal is to destroy us. He wants us to be separated from God forever. So while our attention is being drawn to many things at present, let us consider a greater agenda at work:

1. Satan is a liar (John 8:44). Jesus even said there is no truth in him. He never tells the truth, because he wants people to believe lies and be damned (2 Thess. 2:11-12). This means we have to be careful what we hear and how we hear it. Truth saves and lies condemn.

2. Satan is a divider (John 8:44). That's one of the meanings of the term *devil*. He doesn't want people coming together. He doesn't want people talking out their issues. He wants people to be divided. He wants people to hate each other. Think back to the beginning. Who tempted mankind to separate from God (Gen. 3:1-6)? Who was behind a man killing his own brother (Gen. 4:1-1-15)? John uses this very example of Satan's influence over Cain and concludes, "He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:10-15).

In turn, hatred and misinformation cause an unsettled world. Anger is uncontrolled. People accuse one another. Discouragement and depression replace peace. Faith is replaced with doubt. Hope is lost. This is all the work of our spiritual enemy.

We have been provided a path of victory. Jesus is the answer. True love is the answer. Truth is the answer. We simply have to believe it, practice it and preach it. Let us not be deceived into believing that there isn't a greater agenda in everything going on around us. There is. Satan is trying his best to captivate hearts and steal them from Jesus. That is what we are truly up against.

NORTH HAMILTON CHURCH OF CHRIST



8310 Dayton Pike, PO Box 517

Soddy-Daisy, TN 37379

Telephone: 842-1044

www.northhamiltonchurchofchrist.com

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Elders

Willard Elsea 240-9539
Art Greer 902-6295
Joel Laney 322-7828

Minister

David B. Smith 667-1987

Telephone

Deacons

Joe Anderson	Keith Herron
Brad Jones	Tommy Qualls
Chris Randolph	Curt Stewart
Justin Tripp	Toby Ward

"What's Really Going On"

David B. Smith

I've heard more than a few people ask, "what in the world is going on?" This is in response to the flood of negative news this year—and especially in the context of all the chaos over the last two to three weeks. What are we supposed to make of these horrific images? How are we supposed to understand the hate and anger and violence?

Don't forget that in back of all that's going on is a battle for your heart. We can't see it, because God tells us that we are fighting "principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12).

Upcoming Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays

21 – Ryan Bellomy
23 – Jo Hargis
24 – Judy Lusk
25 – Jimmie Ruth Wilson
28 – Barbara Benford,
Karl Bolus,
Kathy Castleberry,
Kathy Douglas
29 – Michael Jackson
30 Loretta Leffew,
Becky Actkinson

Anniversaries

22 – Harold & Nancy Birch
26 – Jesse & Alisha Lowman,
Jerry & Norma Wright
29 – Ken & Ginger Wilson

Prayer List

James Anderson	Danny Curvin	Judy Lusk
Patricia Anthony	Tommie Grandfield	Tony Miller
Jim Bethune	Bill Greer	Lexi Owens
Nancy Birch	Fred Hafley	Carlos Shannon
Mike Bouldin	Kathy Hamilton	Janice Smith
Susie Hargis	Bessie Smithson	Isaac Cooper
Grayson Ledbetter	Diane Stacy	Loretta Leffew
John Webster		

Our Sick and Recovering

- **Marilyn Everett** was able to return home on Thursday after being admitted to the hospital last week and having an appendectomy on Tuesday. We pray for her continued recovery.
- Darryl Meeks will have back surgery on Thursday of this week. We pray that this will alleviate the severe pain with which he has been suffering.

Announcements

Remember that our online worship service is still being posted to Facebook and YouTube each Sunday mornings

For those who wish to do so, contributions can still be made using Venmo: NorthHamilton-ChurchOfChrist or can be mailed to P O Box 517, Soddy-Daisy, TN 37384