

TEEN TREE OF LIFE



SATAN'S SUBTLE STRATEGIES

Part 3

June 21, 2020

Before you begin, ask yourself a very important question: Do you believe that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins? If you answered yes, you will need to be sure that you are filled with The Holy Spirit. How do you do this? You name your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name. This is called Rebound. As a Christian, you must rebound any time you sin. This is taught in 1JOH 1:9: *If we confess [name] our sins [directly to God], He [God] is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* Now, if you have never believed that Jesus Christ died on The Cross for all of your sins, all you have to do is say to yourself that you believe in Him and you are saved! The Bible verse which teaches us this is ACTS 16:31: *"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved."*

This week, we're continuing to look at the strategies Satan uses with unsaved people. This next one is very, very devious because his goal, with this strategy, is to get people to deny God's Existence. This strategy is called atheism. Agnosticism is another one of Satan's subtle strategies. Agnostics believe that you cannot know if God exists. An agnostic neither believes nor disbelieves in a god or religious doctrine. They claim that it's impossible for human beings to know anything about how the universe was created and if divine beings exist.

Religions such as Buddhism and Confucianism are based on atheism or agnosticism. This strategy is becoming increasingly effective because of the increase in people who see "science" as the way to save mankind, and evolution as a major principle of it.

The philosophical purpose of evolution is to explain the existence of everything – apart from God. It's very important to understand that evolution is a religious philosophy,

not actual science. That's why so many so-called "scientists" and "science educators" are so afraid of anything being presented to challenge the hypothesis of evolution. **ROM 1:18 (The New International Reader's Version)** talks about these foolish people who deny God's Existence: ***God shows his anger from heaven. It is against all the godless and evil things people do. They are so evil that they say no to the truth.*** Think about how much power Satan has if he is able to convince people to "***say no to the truth***"!!! This particular strategy of Satan is extremely prevalent today in 2020. Look at what's going on in our schools, on our streets and in our country, and then think about what the apostle Peter wrote in **2PET 3:3-4 (The New International Reader's Version)**: ***Most of all, here is what you must understand. In the last days people will make fun of the truth. They will laugh at it. They will follow their own evil desires. They will say, "Where is this 'return' he promised? Everything goes on in the same way it has since our people of long ago died. In fact, it has continued this way since God first created everything."***

There is another even more destructive strategy which Satan uses. It's called Practical Atheism. Again, atheists believe that there is no God. But this more destructive device, which is so widespread throughout our country, is a belief system (inspired by Satan) that says it's okay to say that God exists and that you believe in Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, but that it doesn't have to change your life. Imagine that?? This Satanic belief system allows people to claim that they believe in God, but can live their lives, as if there is no God. The people who fall for this are, in reality, practical atheists like the man in Jesus Christ's parable about the greedy farmer: ***Someone out of the crowd said, "Teacher, order my brother to give me a fair share of the family inheritance." He replied, "Mister, what makes you think it's any of my business to be a judge or mediator for you?" Speaking to the people, he went on, "Take care! Protect yourself against the least bit of greed. Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot."*** (LUKE 12:13-15 The Message Bible) This last quote of Our Lord's is something you should memorize! Satan wants you to be preoccupied with wanting materialistic things and wealthy. This will get you out of God's Plan for your life. And that is Satan's goal!

The actual parable begins like this: ***Then he told them this story: "The farm of a certain rich man produced a terrific crop. He talked to himself: 'What can I do? My barn isn't big enough for this harvest.' Then he said, 'Here's what I'll do: I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll gather in all my grain and goods, and I'll say to myself, Self, you've done well! You've got it made and can now retire. Take it easy and have the time of your life!' Just then God showed up and said, 'Fool! Tonight you die. And your barnful of goods—who gets it?' "That's what happens when you fill your barn with Self and not with God."*** (LUKE 12:15-21 The Message Bible) Do you see how obsessed the farmer is with getting more, here on earth, and how very oblivious he is to his relationship with God? The "**fool**" in the parable is part of a huge crowd following Jesus for his teaching. But he is clearly living his life as if there is no God.

Now Our Lord gets deeper into his teaching: ***He continued this subject with his disciples. "Don't fuss about what's on the table at mealtimes or if the clothes in your closet are in fashion. There is far more to your inner life than the food you put in your stomach, more to your outer appearance than the clothes you hang on your body. Look at the ravens, free and unfettered, not tied down to a job description, carefree in the care of God. And you count far more."*** (LUKE 12:22-24 The Message Bible) He's telling them to

have faith in His Father's Provision and Grace. And that's what you need to do: trust in the fact that you mean everything to God!

Our Savior continues with this: ***“Has anyone by fussing before the mirror ever gotten taller by so much as an inch? If fussing can't even do that, why fuss at all? Walk into the fields and look at the wildflowers. They don't fuss with their appearance—but have you ever seen color and design quite like it? The ten best-dressed men and women in the country look shabby alongside them. If God gives such attention to the wildflowers, most of them never even seen, don't you think he'll attend to you, take pride in you, do his best for you?” “What I'm trying to do here is get you to relax, not be so preoccupied with getting so you can respond to God's giving. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep yourself in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met. Don't be afraid of missing out. You're my dearest friends! The Father wants to give you the very kingdom itself.”*** (LUKE 12:25-32 The Message Bible)

So many people in today's world are just like that farmer – living life without thinking about eternity in Heaven! They are so greedy and foolish that they're throwing away the time God has provided with which to glorify Him. They are ruining all chances of receiving the blessings which God has prepared for them: ***It is written that “no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no human mind has known.” God has prepared these things for those who love him. (1COR 2:9 The New International Reader's Version)*** Imagine throwing away what's described here?

The next satanic strategy we're going to look at is procrastination. It has a similar effect as the strategy we just learned but with procrastination, Satan is influencing people to put off coming to terms with dealing with their decision to believe in Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and having a relationship with God. Rather than being preoccupied with materialistic things, procrastinators keep thinking that there's always time left to deal with Salvation. And because they believe they still have time left, they can put off dealing with it until tomorrow. And they'll keep putting it off, over and over again, until it's too late. But, the truth is that no one knows when he or she might die, as we learned from the parable in **LUKE 12**. The Bible teaches us that today is the day of Salvation: ***He says, “When I had mercy on you, I heard you. On the day I saved you, I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time God has mercy. Now is the day he saves. (2COR 6:2 The New International Reader's Version)*** No person knows if he or she will have a tomorrow on this earth, so there's no time to procrastinate!

The final subtle strategy Satan uses to sway unsaved people is encouraging them to doubt God's Truth. This includes all the means and methods designed to cause people to doubt The Word of God. The means and methods Satan uses include philosophy; what is supposed to be “science” (both biological and social); and suspicion or distrust. Each of these means and methods allows people who are unsaved to intellectually deny God or formulate Him to be something they can be comfortable with. They end up creating a lesser god that they can manipulate. Now that is something to think about!

{to be continued}