



Yes devil it's fully loaded
and I am not afraid to use it!

TEEN TREE OF LIFE

SATAN'S SUBTLE STRATEGIES

Part 6

July 12, 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.*

Last week, we went into detail about the three basic strategies Satan uses to entice us to sin. We did this by looking at how he tempted Jesus Christ. Now we are going to look at some specific strategies Satan uses, within these three basic categories.

The following strategies come from Thomas Brooks' book, "Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices" which was first published in 1652 and is just as relevant today.

1. "To present the bait, but hide the hook." This strategy denies the consequences of belief and actions. If you think about it, your belief system is the invisible force behind your behavior. Satan knows this so he attacks our belief systems in order to stop us from using the Mind of Christ in making the right decisions. We acquire the mind of Christ through our daily intake of Bible doctrine: **"Who can ever know what is in the Lord's mind? Can anyone ever teach him?"** [Isaiah 40:13] **But we have the mind of Christ. (1CO 2:16)**

He used the "present the bait but hide the hook" strategy against the woman in The Garden, when he lied and told her that she would not die if she ate the forbidden fruit. He attacked her belief system. She took the bait by eating the fruit, gave it to Adam and he ate it. And death (the hook) entered the world: **You know the story of how Adam landed us in the dilemma we are in—first sin, then death, and no one**

exempt from either sin or death. That sin disturbed relations with God in everything and everyone, but the extent of the disturbance was not clear until God spelled it out in detail to Moses. So death, this huge abyss separating us from God, dominated the landscape from Adam to Moses. Even those who did not sin precisely as Adam did by disobeying a specific command of God still had to experience this termination of life, this separation from God. But Adam, who got us into this, also points ahead to the One who will get us out of it. (ROM 5:12-14 The Message Bible)

We fall for this strategy whenever we rush to do something without thinking of the consequences. You can prevent this by stopping and then thinking through the consequences of what you are about to do before you do it. And of course, the key here is to constantly be aware of keeping your belief system built up by God's Word so you can use the Mind of Christ to make decisions.

2. "Painting sin with virtue's color." This is not as difficult to understand as it is when you first read it. When you paint sin with virtue's color, you are essentially calling a sin by a more acceptable (nicer) name which makes the sin seem not as bad. **BIG MISTAKE!** For example, the sin of pride (arrogance) would be called dignity, or self-respect or self-esteem. An arrogant person may attempt to cover his arrogance of sin by claiming he or she is dignified and just proud of his or her accomplishments. But as Christians, we know that we should be humble about our accomplishments which are blessings from God and that He deserves all the credit.

With painting sin with virtue's color, the sins of jealousy and greed become goals toward building up our financial future. You can prevent this from happening to you by knowing God's Word well enough so that you can recognize an action or attitude for what it really is, rather than what sinful man has renamed it!! Constant reassessing of what motivates you is so important. As Christians, our life's motivation shouldn't be so strive for financial success – although there is nothing wrong with having it. Our motivation to achieve any type of success in life, must come from our love for and relationship with God.

3. "By extenuating and lessening the sin." The word extenuate means to cause (an offense) to seem less serious. The idea here is that you think to yourself, "It's only a small sin." It's only a small amount of selfishness, only a "white" lie, or only a small, inconsequential object I stole from school or work. First off, all sin is sin – big or small and Rebound (naming your sins to God The Father in His Son's Name) is necessary no matter what the sin is. Second, we need to remember that small sins can lead to big sins. David's adultery with Bathsheba started with a look and lead to the murder of Uriah. The look – the sin of coveting (wanting what's not yours) – is recorded in **2 SAM 11:2-4 (New International Reader's Version): One evening David got up from his bed. He walked around on the roof of his palace. From the roof he saw a woman taking a bath. She was very beautiful. David sent a messenger to find out who she was. The messenger returned and said, "She is Bathsheba. She is the daughter of Eliam. She is the wife of Uriah. He's a Hittite."** Then David sent messengers to get her.

That sin eventually led to murder: **Then David said to him, "Stay here one more day. Tomorrow I'll send you back to the battle." So, Uriah remained in Jerusalem that**

day and the next. David invited Uriah to eat and drink with him. David got him drunk. But Uriah still did not go home. In the evening he went out and slept on his mat. He stayed there among his master's servants. The next morning David wrote a letter to Joab. He sent it along with Uriah. In it he wrote, "Put Uriah out in front. That's where the fighting is the heaviest. Then pull your men back from him. When you do, the Ammonites will strike him down and kill him." (2 SAM 11:12-15 New International Reader's Version) Can you see how this can happen?

We also need to remember that so-called small sins have brought about God's great wrath. All Uzzah did was touch the Ark of the Covenant with his hand to steady it and God struck him dead on the spot: **Again David brought together the best soldiers in Israel. The total number was 30,000. He and all his men went to Baalah in Judah. They wanted to bring the ark of God up to Jerusalem from there. The ark is named after the Lord. He is the Lord who rules over all. He sits on his throne between the cherubim that are on the ark. The ark of God was placed on a new cart. Then it was brought from Abinadab's house, which was on a hill. Uzzah and Ahio were guiding the cart. They were the sons of Abinadab. The ark of God was on the cart. Ahio was walking in front of it. David was celebrating with all his might in front of the Lord. So was the whole community of Israel. All of them were playing castanets, harps, lyres, tambourines, rattles and cymbals. They came to the threshing floor of Nakon. The oxen nearly fell there. So Uzzah reached out and took hold of the ark of God. Then the Lord was very angry with Uzzah. That's because what Uzzah did showed that he didn't have any respect for the Lord. So God struck him down. He died there beside the ark of God.** (2 SAM 6:1-7 New International Reader's Version) Uzzah's "little sin" were a result of good motives, but his actions were in direct opposition to what God had said to do. The lesson here is to remember that there are no "little sins."

4. "Comparing our sin to those of others." Comparing your own sins to someone else's, is never an excuse for your own sin. This has two variations. In the first, you compare yourself to someone you think is worse. This allows you to minimize your wrong by pointing out someone who did much worse. In the second variation, you attempt to minimize your sin by comparing yourself to someone considered a great person who sinned in a similar way. The idea is that Satan wants you to think you aren't so bad because someone great also did it. Your sin is never justified because other people also sin; but Satan would you have believed that! Learn about and use the response of someone like King David if you find yourself sinning. His response was to accept all the consequences of the sin. And do not compare your life to other people's lives. Compare your life to that of Jesus Christ – Our Shining Example of how to live.

5. "God is merciful, he has to forgive you, it's His job." This idea is one of Satan's best because it is often used by people to knowingly commit a sin. These are our everyday sins that we tend to do because we think it's okay because God has already forgiven us. These are sins like lying when you are asked why you didn't do your chores or being mean to your sister or brother because they were mean to you. We might convince ourselves that it is the easiest way to deal with the situation at hand; but this is extremely dangerous ground to be on because Our Heavenly Father is also a God of Justice. He is Merciful and Forgiving, but he also judges and disciplines us.

In the Old Testament, a person who committed this type of sin would be shut out from the congregation. David cried out in **PSA 19:13 (New International Reader's Version): *Also keep me from the sins I want to commit. May they not be my master. Then I will be without blame. I will not be guilty of any great sin against your law.*** This idea that David writes about – “sins I want to commit” – is fascinating! Look at what you do during the day and you'll actually become aware of sinning because you like to – whether it's because it gets you out of a pickle or it allows you to feel avenged. Be familiar with all of God's attributes and never take God's mercy for granted. That would be testing Him.

{to be continued}