



# TEEN TREE OF LIFE

## SATAN'S SUBTLE STRATEGIES

### Part 9

August 2, 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 1 JOH 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."***

We are at the end of our study on a very fascinating but intense subject – Satan's Subtle Strategies. Over the course of this study, we first went into detail about the three basic strategies Satan uses to entice us to sin: The Lust of the Flesh, The Lust of the Eyes, and The Boastful Pride of Life. We learned that Satan used them with the woman in the Garden of Eden and won. But when he used them to tempt Jesus Christ, he lost! Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is Our Shining Example of how to stand up to Satan's strategies.

We're now at the last of the specific strategies Satan uses, within the three basic categories. He uses these to get our focus off of God and His Word. At this point, we're at number 11 and it's a very clever one!

**11. "You cannot do anything for the cause of Christ."** Let's start with some background to help you better understand this particular strategy. Look at what the apostle Paul wrote in **COL 3:22-24 (New International Version): *Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.***

Look at how Paul concludes this verse. He tells us that a servant's true master is Jesus Christ. This applies to all believers – even the lowliest slave! Anyone who accepts faith in Christ, becomes a servant of the greatest person in the universe. There is no

higher honor or privilege. That blows Satan's theory – that we can't do anything for the cause of Christ – right out of the water!

Why does Paul use an analogy to slaves? It's because in Paul's day, slaves were not entitled to any inheritance from a wealthy family member. From a material standpoint, these slaves had little to look forward to in life. Yet Paul encourages them (and us!) with a reminder that this mortal life is not where the real rewards will be given. God's inheritance, our eternal dwelling place with Him, will far exceed the trials and limitations of this life. Paul was again encouraging us to focus on the things above, rather than the daily concerns of life, as Satan would have us do. Paul's telling us that in all we do, we should be mindful to work with all our heart “**as working for the Lord.**” And this is NOT what Satan wants. He wants us to think that we can't!

The Bible specifically teaches us that as a believer, your identity is closely associated with serving Christ. Look at how Paul identified himself: **Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God (ROM 1:1)** Now, as you can imagine, Satan will try to prevent us – not only from believing that we can't do anything for the cause of Christ, but also from serving Him. One way he uses is to make us believe that we cannot accomplish anything for Our Savior.

When you think back on all the strategies we have looked at over these eight weeks, you'll see that each of them has the capability to successfully diminish our effective service for God. This is because any sin will accomplish that. But Satan also tries to reduce or eliminate our service for Jesus Christ by suggesting in various ways that our involvement is not important. He will also try to make us believe that our service would be a failure. He will also try to prevent us from serving Our Lord and Savior by trying to make us believe that we don't know what we're doing – so we shouldn't even try.

How does Satan do all of this? He does this through the discouraging words of other people. He does this by getting us to feel overwhelmed at what needs to be done in certain situations. He does this with negative ideas which he promotes in the Cosmic System. We'll hear these negative ideas and they'll slowly become our way of thinking. Satan accomplishes this not only through our failures but also in situations in which we achieve less than we might have wanted to. These are the times when we get the idea that our successes depend on what we do, rather than God working through us. When this happens, we are subject to this sly, subtle strategy of Satan.

We should always remind ourselves that The Holy Spirit has equipped each one of us for serving in the Body of Christ. The Holy Spirit is responsible for the distribution of Spiritual Gifts to the body of Christ: **God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! (1 CO 12:4-7 The Message Bible)** Every gift is needed for serving in the Body of Christ, regardless of whether it is great or small and whether we or anyone else personally thinks it's important.

Because we are slaves of Christ, it's up to Him to assign to us what He wants us to do. He will not have you do something He doesn't equip you to do; but keep in mind that part of the process of equipping you is having you do things you have not done before. This enables you to go on to even greater things.

**12. "My motives were right." "I was sincere"** This is a common strategy Satan uses to get us to try to justify our actions even when they're wrong. We say that we were just trying to accomplish a good thing. That may well be true, but sincerity doesn't always equate with righteousness or even wisdom. This mindset can move us to do things that are contradictory to God's commands and then still try to justify them.

Good motives never justify disobedience to the commands, principles & precepts of God's Word. Remember Uzzah? David wanted the Ark of the Covenant brought up to Jerusalem, the city God had chosen for Himself. This was a good thing. They had great motives for what they were going to try and do. But what happened? 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" was a result of good motives, but his actions were in direct opposition to what God had said to do.

The **Book of Numbers** gives a very precise method by which the Ark was to be transported. It had to be on the shoulders of a certain priestly line, the Kohathites. Instead, because they were anxious to get the ark to Jerusalem, they did what seemed wise to them at the time. They got a new ox cart and loaded the Ark of the Testimony into it. All Uzzah was trying to do when he touched it was to keep it steady on the cart when it hit a rough place in the road. He had a very good motive. He did not want the Ark to get damaged in any way. But what happened? Look at **2 SAM 6:7: *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.*** Uzzah's good motives were contrary to God's command. They resulted in him being irreverent and disobedient to God and resulted in his death. The end did not justify the means. His good motives were not enough. What we have to do is follow the Word of God over and above our feelings, emotions and even conscience.

There's so much more we could look at in terms of the different ways Satan uses to try to get us out of God's Plan for our lives. There are strategies you may have experienced in your own daily life that aren't listed in this study. The point is to become aware that we will get distracted in our Christian Walk because of Satan's temptation. Our goal is to be aware of these times and get back on track and in God's Plan. We live in the Cosmic System and we cannot forget that. Paul said it perfectly in **2 COR 10:3-6 (The Message bible):** *The world is unprincipled. It's dog-eat-dog out there! The world doesn't fight fair. But we don't live or fight our battles that way—never have and never will. The tools of our trade aren't for marketing or manipulation, but they are for demolishing that entire massively corrupt culture. We use our powerful God-tools for smashing warped philosophies, tearing down barriers erected against the truth of God, fitting every loose thought and emotion and impulse into the structure of life shaped by Christ. Our tools are ready at hand for clearing the ground of every obstruction and building lives of obedience into maturity.*