The Wiles of the Devil

Satan in the Early Church
Lesson 9

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
July 31, 2011
Purpose of our study of the devil

► Learn the wiles of the devil – 1 Peter 5:8
► Learn the tools for resisting the devil – James 4:7
The Wiles of the Devil

1. Lucifer cast out (Isaiah 14:12-21; Ezekiel 28:11-19)
   a. Desire to be above God
   b. Corrupted wisdom

2. Serpent in Paradise (Genesis 3)
   a. Crafty – beautiful
   b. Liar

3. Consider Job! (Job 1-2)
   a. Attack the person and property of Job
   b. Cause Job to curse God
The Wiles of the Devil

4. The temptation of Jesus (Matthew 4:1-11)
   a. Do not trust God
   b. Tempt/test God
   c. Love the world more than God – not worship God

5. The enemy and the Kingdom (Matt. 13:1-30; 36-43)
   a. Remove Word
   b. Counterfeit believers

   a. Oppression of men
   b. Power of Christ
The Wiles of the Devil

7. Two Kingdoms (Luke 11:14-26)
   a. Two kingdoms at war
   b. No peace for the wicked

8. The father of lies (John 8:31- 59)
   a. Liar
   b. Murderer

9. Satan in the early Church
Ananias and Sapphira – Acts 5:1-11

» Example of Barnabas (4:36-37)

» Ananias and Sapphira
  - Key word: nosphizomai (Gr) – to pilfer, to embezzle
  - Titus 2:10
  - Joshua 7:1 (Septuagint – Greek Old Testament)

» Satan filled his heart to lie
  - Lie to the Holy Spirit (5:3)
  - Lie to God (5:4)
  - Test the Spirit (5:9)

» Sudden death to both husband and wife.
What was the role of Satan?

- Satan filled their hearts
- 1 Peter 5:8 – roaring lion
- John 13:2 – put in Judas’ heart
- John 13:27 – Satan entered Judas
The heart of the matter

- Satan lifted up his heart against God (Isaiah 14)
- Matthew 15:17-20 – heart defiles
- Jeremiah 17:9 – deceitful, wicked heart
- James 1:14 – enticed by our own lust
- Matthew 5:8 – blessed are the pure in heart . . .
The wiles of the devil

- 2 Corinthians 4:4 – blinds minds of unbelievers
- Ephesians 2:2 – works in the children of disobedience
- 2 Corinthians 11:14 – devil turns himself into an angel of light
Were Ananias and Sapphira true believers?

- Peter under the influence of Satan
  - Get behind me, Satan (Matthew 16:23)
- Communion warning (1 Cor. 11:28-34)
Why the severity of the penalty?

- Lying to God is a serious matter (Ecclesiastes 5:4-5)
- The proper question: Why not always severe wrath?
- Mercy and grace of God exalted in the face of sin
The outcome of Satan’s attack

- Great price paid by Ananias and Sapphira
- Great fear on the church (Proverbs 9:10)
- Great blessing in the church (5:14)
- A warning: Proverbs 4:23 “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”
The evil spirit cast out (16:16-34)

- Slave girl with spirit of Python
- “These men are servants of the Most High God who proclaim the way of salvation.”
- Paul, annoyed after several days, cast out the demon
- Owners falsely accused Paul and Silas
- Paul and Silas were beaten and cast into prison
- Great deliverance by earthquake
- Salvation of the jailer and his house
- An apology from the magistrates
What was the role of Satan?

- A harmless announcement?
- Essential background – Satan is the father of lies
- “Most High God” – common term for god, esp. Zeus.
- “Way of salvation” – many saviors in Greek/Roman world, including the emperor
- Jesus’ example – Mark 1:24-25, 34; Luke 4:34-35
The slave owners react

- The evidence of the work of Satan in their hearts
- Love for the world, more than love for God – riches
- Matthew 6:24 – you cannot serve 2 masters – God and money
- They lied to have Paul and Silas killed
- Satanic influence – blinded minds
Satan’s attack on Paul and Silas?

- Suffering and imprisonment
- Satanic temptation – “curse God”
The outcome of Satan’s attack

- Paul and Silas sang praises to God
- The power of God in the earthquake
- Salvation for the jailer
- The danger of syncretism
Extraordinary miracles (19:11-20)

- Unusual miracles – touching Paul’s clothing
- Jewish exorcists attempt to copy
  - Sceva – Jewish high priest – “pretender”
  - Seven Jewish sons of Sceva were exorcists – fake
- Exorcists are beaten and driven away naked
- Fear and honor for Christ
- Believers repented of the magic practices
- Magic books burned
- Word of the Lord increased mightily
Miracles in a world of magic arts

- Ephesus, a city given over to magic
- Precedents by Jesus and Peter
  - Jesus: Mark 5:27-34; 6:56
  - Peter: Acts 5:15
- Evil spirits and sicknesses
- Unusual display of Divine power in a city that was under the influence of Satan
What was the role of Satan?

- On the residents – bondage and suffering
- On the exorcists – physical abuse; humiliation
- On the believers – continued magical practices
Why were the exorcists unsuccessful?

- No magic in Christianity
- Miracle is an act of God’s sovereign power
- Psalm 50:16f - the wicked may not use His Name.
The outcome Satan’s attack

- The name of Jesus was extolled
- Power of Jesus distinguished from Satanic power
- Sanctification of believers
A spiritual warfare

▶ “The business of the Bible is to assert the reality of the unseen.” Martyn Lloyd-Jones
▶ Ephesians 6:12 – wrestle not against flesh and blood
▶ 2 Corinthians 4:18 – eternal things are unseen
Satan in the Early Church

- Guard your heart (Proverbs 4:23)
- No compromise with evil (2 Corinthians 6:14)
- Give no opportunity to the devil (Ephesians 4:27)