

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning
Week 27 (June 29-July 5, 2014)

You may be surprised that the Bible contains so much material about Satan since many of today's preachers ignore or deny his existence. In this week's devotions, we will continue our study on the devil.

Sunday, June 29 (read Mark 4:13-20)

Some people are like seed along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. (Mark 4:15)

You may want to read the first twelve verses of this chapter if you need a reminder of the Parable of the Sower. My purpose in today's study is to point out that **Satan** loves nothing better than to keep the Word of God from taking up permanent residence in your heart. When you say, "I didn't get a thing out of the message today," you may blame a distraction or an irritation, but the real source is the devil himself. He knows that when the Word really takes root, it will produce a crop, "thirty, sixty or even a hundred times what was sown" (v. 20). The last thing Satan wants is for you to arrive at a Biblical worldview to rectify the politically correct worldview you used to believe. Don't give the devil a foothold! Concentrate on Jesus and His Word every time you worship. God will see to it that you don't go home empty!

Monday, June 30 (read Ephesians 4:17-28)

In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. (Ephesians 4:26-27)

Today's passage will give you a good start if you are serious about living the Christian life. The featured verses above provide great information as to how to keep Satan from getting a grip on your life. You are never as vulnerable to sins as you are when you are angry. Note that anger is not sin, but it can lead to sin if you do not deal with it. You have probably been taught not to go to bed angry, but I have another powerful application. Some of the folks I have met over the years are near the end of their lives and yet they are still angry over things that happened many years ago. The sun is about to go down on their earthly journey, but bitterness is still growing in their heart. Nothing gives the devil a better open door than this. The Holy Spirit is using Paul's pen to say, "Let it go!" "Do not give the devil a foothold" (v. 27).

Tuesday, July 1 (read James 4:1-10)

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

Today's text begins by admonishing you to pray with the right motives when asking God for the things you need. If you pray, according to God's will and for God's glory, you will never have to worry about praying selfishly. James reminds us strongly that the politically correct teaching that concentrates on self-esteem will make you popular with the world, but it will also make you an enemy of God (v. 4). Instead, He wants us to come to Him in humility "by His grace and for His glory" (v. 5-6). In seeking **His** grace and glory, you will resist the devil and his evil schemes (v. 7). We should come near to God with humble, thankful and repentant hearts. His Word promises that He will come near to us and lift us up to higher ground (v. 8-10).

Wednesday, July 2 (read John 8:42-47)

You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44)

This has to be the strongest statement about the devil to come from the mouth of Jesus! Notice that the Lord makes no effort to help His listeners feel good about themselves. The last thing He wants is for you

to be living a lie oblivious as to who the father of lies really is. He identifies Satan as a **murderer** as well as the **father of lies**. Nowhere is this more obvious than in the abortion industry and the work of Planned Parenthood. Those who do not believe the fact that life begins at conception will willingly accept ending a life for convenience sake, not expecting the consequences of regrets and depression later on. After offending His enemies, Jesus asks, "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin" (v. 46a)? If His worst enemies, in their anger, cannot prove Jesus guilty of a single sin, shouldn't you trust His Word and His plan for your life?

Thursday, July 3 (read John 13:1-2 & 21-30)

As soon as Judas took the bread, Satan entered into him. (John 13:27)

All sins begin with lusting after something or someone we do not have. Judas is a sad example of that because he knows who Jesus is and what He has come to do, and yet, he wants the Lord to begin His earthly kingdom right away. He cannot understand that Jesus has to be our **Savior** before He can be our **Lord**. He has to become the **sacrifice for sin** before He can reign as **King**. Satan tempts Judas (v. 1-2) to betray Jesus, thinking this will force the Lord to take a shortcut to avoid death on a cross, which is something the devil could not persuade Jesus to do (see June 19-21 devotions). Read the sad story when Judas allows his temptation to become sin (v. 21-30). Ask yourself if this could happen to you. The **most honored** person at the meal is supposed to partake of the special bread. By receiving that bread, Judas accepts the honor and glory that should go to Jesus. Satan, who had been tempting Judas externally now takes possession of him (v. 27). Judas was meant to follow the "Light of the world" to the garden of Gethsemane; instead, he leaves in the terrible blackness of the night (v. 30).

Friday, July 4 (read Ephesians 6:10-18)

Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. (Ephesians 6:11)

Like Paul, I want you to "be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power" (v. 10). The world will always be against you because Satan and his demons are constantly trying to disrupt the plan of God (v. 11-12). Many Christians brag about all the things they have **stopped doing** since they gave their heart to Jesus. Instead, we ought to "put on the full armor of God" and allow our testimonies to be more about what we have **started doing** as a result of accepting Jesus. The full armor includes the "belt of truth," the "breastplate of righteousness," the "shield of faith," the "helmet of salvation" and the "sword of the Spirit" (v. 14-17). Our feet also must be ready to carry the gospel of peace to the world (v. 15). Satan has no chance to defeat us if we are fully dressed for battle. Are you wearing your armor today?

Saturday, July 5 (read 1 John 3:1-10)

He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. (1 John 3:8)

Today's text begins by reminding us of the privilege we have as children of God. The politically correct world does not understand us because it does not know Him. Someday soon, we will see Him face to face; then "we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." This should be all the motivation we need to live a holy life (v. 1-3). John tells us in no uncertain terms that a true Christian should not **live in willful sin** (v. 4-6). Ever since Adam and Eve accepted Satan's lie in the Garden of Eden, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Jesus paid the penalty of sin (death) on the cross, but then He sent the Holy Spirit to abide within each believer so that he/she could say "no" to sin and "yes" to God (v. 7-10). Satan's power over you is broken. Live under the freedom you have in Christ!