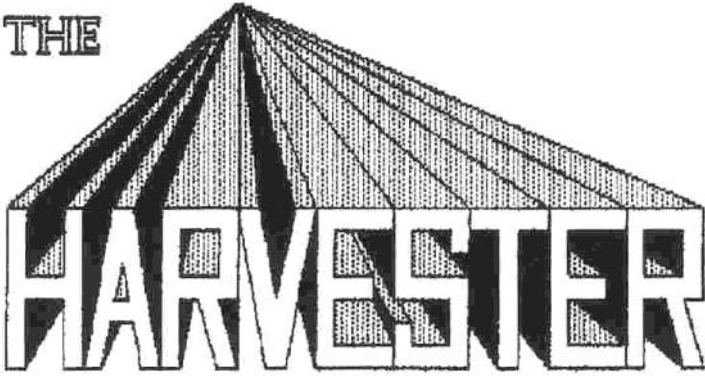


THE



"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)

September 2016

No. 369

SATAN DOES NOT PLAY FAIR!

"God has a plan for your life. The enemy (Satan) has a plan for your life also! Be ready for both! Be wise enough to know which one to battle and which one to embrace." - Author Unknown

I think the scriptures support this idea. If we are in a difficult situation and seek God's guidance, the answer will not contradict His Word. If the action we are taking is in conflict with God's Word, it is of Satan and therefore, is sin. We cannot let Satan take advantage of us because we should not be ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11). The devil is as a roaring lion walking about seeking whom he may devour (1 Pet. 5:8).

THE HARVESTER

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Satan does **NOT** play fair. Satan can take the form of the righteous.

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. (2 Cor. 11:13-15)

Jesus was speaking to those who wished to kill him in John 8:44:

*Ye are of your father the **devil**, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a **murderer** from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is **no truth in him**. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for **he is a liar**, and the father of it.*

Sometimes Satan tries to get us to misuse the scriptures to justify sin. However, we see in 2 Peter 1:20 that “**no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.**” I cannot understand the scripture one way and another person understand it another way and both be right. We could both be wrong! Truth is truth and not dependent on the situation and/or person.

God speaks to us today through His word, the Bible. Hebrews 1:1-2 tells us,

*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time **past unto the fathers by the prophets**, Hath in these last days [Christian era] **spoken unto us by his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds.*

So if a person is doing something that is in contradiction to the Bible that they claim they were led to do, it is Satan, not God, which is leading them.

Notice in Matthew 4:1-11 that if Satan was bold enough to tempt Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior, Satan will not hesitate to come after you and me. Notice in verse 2 that Satan tempts when one is weak and vulnerable. We notice in verses

4, 7, and 10 that Jesus uses scripture to defeat Satan just as we can today. However, notice that in verse 6 that Satan quotes scripture. Also, note in verses 8-9 that Satan offers Jesus the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; however, Jesus only rebukes Satan for the temptation to worship anyone besides God, but not about what Satan offers. Satan can only tempt us with what this world has to offer, which is temporary at best, while God offers eternal blessings.

Don't give Satan anything to work with! Note Ephesians 4:26-27: ***"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil."*** Christians must learn self-control as not to be led into sin but also as not to damage our witness for the gospel. Vengeance belongs to God - not us. Also, Romans 12:17-21 says,

Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Notice that Satan, the god of this world, has only the power God allows him to have. Note 2 Corinthians 4:3-4,

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

People make the decision to allow Satan to blind them from the gospel.

Even though Satan is powerful, God gives Christians the armor to defeat Satan.

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For

we wrestle **not against flesh and blood**, but against principalities, against powers, against the **rulers of the darkness of this world**, against **spiritual wickedness in high places**. Wherefore take unto you the **whole armour of God**, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your **loins girt about with truth**, and having on the **breastplate of righteousness**; And your feet shod with the preparation of the **gospel of peace**; Above all, taking the **shield of faith**, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the **fiery darts of the wicked**. And take the **helmet of salvation**, and the **sword of the Spirit**, which is the **word of God**: **Praying always** with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; (Eph. 6:10-18)

Note all of the weapons are defensive except the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. This is why it is so important to study the Bible so that we have every tool available to us to defeat Satan.

We must submit to God and resist the devil. James 4:7 says, *“Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.**”*

Are you able to see the difference in the plan God has for your life as compared to the plan Satan has for your life? Are you ready for both plans? Are you embracing the right one? Are you battling the right one?

MARK CARPENTER
(Woodland, AL)

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Which man killed a lion with his bare hands?
2. Who became nurse to Ruth's son?
3. Which king took possession of Naboth's vineyard?
4. Jesus was a high priest after the order of which ancient

king, mentioned in Psalm 110?

5. Which missionary was described as having known the holy scriptures from an early age?

...and remember last month's questions?

1. Who claimed that the golden calf simply came out of the fire? AARON (Exodus 32:22-24)
2. On which mountain were the Israelites given the Ten Commandments? MT. SINAI (Exodus 34:32)
3. To which city did God ask Jonah to take his message? NI-NEVEH (Jonah 1:2)
4. What method did the Romans use to kill Jesus? CRUCIFIXION (Mark 15:25)
5. Which plant is "the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs"? MUSTARD (Matthew 13:31-32)

BOLDNESS

I have a great respect for the Apostle Paul. He was instrumental in the spreading of the gospel throughout much of the known world during his time. He wrote at least 13 of the books of the New Testament which give us invaluable instruction on how to live our lives and conduct ourselves in the church of God. He was willing to suffer persecutions for Jesus Christ. He lists what he had to go through to preach the gospel in 2 Corinthians 11:23-27:

Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and

painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

One time the whole city of Ephesus was in an uproar because of Paul and his preaching. *“And when Paul would have entered in unto the people, the disciples suffered him not”* (Acts 19:30). They feared for his life.

It was this same Apostle Paul who requested prayers in Ephesians 6:19-20,

And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

If the Apostle Paul needed prayers that he would speak as he should and that he would speak boldly, how much more should you and I pray that we would speak as we should and be bold to speak to others the message of Jesus Christ?

There can be several reasons that you may not share the message and be as bold as you should. The first is lack of faith. The Apostles Peter and John healed a lame man shortly after the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 3). They were brought before the ruling council of the Jews.

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought

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of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. (Acts 4:8-13)

Why were Peter and John bold? They knew the miracles they had witnessed at the hands of Jesus. They had personally seen Him alive after His resurrection. They were bold because their faith was strong and they had seen the power of God.

The second reason you may not be bold is that you are concerned of what people might think of you. Many leading Jews believed in Jesus but would not confess Him because of what others might think.

Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. (John 12:42-43)

But Jesus tells us that we must confess Him.

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. (Matt. 10:32-33)

You may not be bold because you are afraid of what others will do to you. But He has promised us in Hebrews 13:5b-6, “*For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.*” Whatever people may do to you is small compared to the riches of the inheritance you are promised.

You may even be ashamed of being a follower of Jesus. Don't be ashamed. The Apostle Paul said,

GOSPEL MEETINGS

DATES	PLACE	SPEAKER
September 4 - 9	Mount Zion Crab Orchard, KY	Joe Hill & J. D. McDonald
September 23 - 25	Van Lear Van Lear, KY	Hunter Bulger (Prattville, AL)

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. (Rom. 1:16)

The message is God's message and the gospel is His power to salvation. You are just God's messenger.

Strengthen your faith. Don't be worried about what others might think of you. Don't be afraid of what they might do to you. Don't be ashamed. Pray for each other that we may be given what to say and that we may boldly speak the message of Jesus as we ought to speak.

ED ANDERSON
(Sierra Vista, AZ)

WORD SEARCH ANSWERS (from August issue)

I once made a remark about the hidden books of the Bible (merely by a fluke). It kept people looking so hard for the facts and for others it was a revelation. Some were in a jam, especially since the name of the books were not capitalized, but the truth finally struck home to numbers of readers. To others it was a real job. We want it to be a most fascinating few moments for you. Yes, there will be some really easy ones to spot. Others may require judges to help them. I will quickly admit it usually takes a minister to find one of them, and there will be loud lamentations when it is found. A little lady says she brews a cup of tea so she can concentrate better. See how well you can compete. Relax now. There really are sixteen names of books in this story.