Send questions to: pastornick@htchurch.com On YouTube: @htchurch

1. Understanding Your Enemy

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith…" (1 Peter 5:8-9).

- The Devil is not a metaphor for evil or a symbol of our unresolved conflicts.
- Jesus and His apostles all considered the Devil to be a literal person.
- If we're wise, we'll want to know something about that predator.
- Paul said that he was not "ignorant of Satan's devices," and we shouldn't be either. God wants us to prevail over this predator!

1.1. Understand more about Satan by noticing his names and titles.

a. Satan. This name means adversary or opponent. Jesus is your Advocate and your defense attorney, but Satan wants to see you prosecuted and condemned.

b. The Devil. This title comes from the Greek word *diabolos,* and it means an accuser, slanderer, or gossip. The Bible calls him "the Accuser of the Brethren."

c. The original sinner. We said that it's likely that sin had never existed in Creation until it was formed in Satan's heart (see our discussion of Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28).

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d. The Prince of this World. Jesus Himself referred to the Devil this way. Remember that God created us to have dominion over the works of His hands; however, when Adam sinned, he also became in a very real sense the servant of Satan. The enemy steers the world-system.

e. The god of this world (age). Satan is the author of all false world religions, and he stands ready to receive people's worship – in fact, he's hungry for it! He is the one to whom the worship of the nations is flowing.

f. Beelzebub. This means he is the master of the (demonic) household.

g. Belial. This name means he is wicked or worthless. In the Old Testament, very wicked people were called *sons of Belial*, which means that they carried his nature.

h. Abaddon/Apollyon. This name means that he is the destroyer.

2. Living in a season of pressure from the enemy… what is he up to?
God warned us that in the last days perilous or ferocious times would come.

Paul says in 1 Timothy 4:1-2: "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron…"

We need to develop a love for the truth. Failure to love the truth will result in an atmosphere of apostasy: "The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, ***because they did not receive the love of the truth***, that they might be saved" (2 Thessalonians 2:9-10).

“Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old. Buy the truth, and do not sell it, wisdom and instruction and understanding” (Proverbs 23:22-23).

Satan is driven to hurt God and those who bear God’s image. What are his goals?

2.1. To stop the spread of the Gospel.
A principal goal of the enemy is stopping the Great Commission. The most vicious activities of the Devil today are seen at the frontiers of missions work.

2.2. Discrediting the God of the Bible.
Satan seeks to discredit God by making people think the Bible is out of date or inaccurate. It was prophesied that mockers would come before the Return of Christ.

2.3. Destroying the testimony of the Church.
Satan provokes Christians so that the Church will become an object of ridicule. Instead of being a faithful, prophetic voice, the Church then causes people to blaspheme God.

2.4. Raising up Satanic worship in place of the worship of God.

The Devil is hungry to receive worship, so he introduces false teaching and sends winds of doctrines that distract Christians. Ultimately, this process will culminate in the worship of the world being directed towards a single man, the Antichrist.

3. The Devil's downfall is clearly set out for us in the Word.

Just as Satan spoke his five, prideful "I will" statements, Scripture shows us his fivefold defeat. Don't be intimidated by his power, but listen to what the Word says.

3.1. Satan already lost his great privileges, when he originally fell.

Jesus said that He saw Satan fall like lightning from Heaven. He is no longer "the anointed cherub that covers!"

3.2 Satan experienced his greatest defeat at the Cross.

"And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:13-15).

3.3. He will be kicked out of the heavenlies entirely during the coming Great Tribulation.

We have seen this in Revelation 12:

"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels, and did not prevail; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceives the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (see Rev. 12:7-10).

3.4. Not long after that, the Devil will be thrown into the abyss.
"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished…." (Rev. 20:1-3a).

3.5. Ultimately, Satan and his followers will be thrown into the Lake of Fire.
Jesus said that Hell was created specifically for that purpose (Matt. 25:41). "The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone…. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

A concluding thought: Satan's doom is certain, but we should be more excited about the fact that Jesus enables us to defeat him personally! In James 4:7, the Bible says, "…submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

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