

The Devil Goes Fishing
Presented For Your Consideration By
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Scripture Reading: I Peter 5:6-11

I. The title and purpose of the lesson.

II. The devil is a master of deception. Paul writes in II Corinthians 11:13-15, *"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."*

III. The devil is called by many names in the Scriptures. These names give us a description of who he is and what his purpose is. The following is a list of the more familiar names used to describe him and his work:

- A. Satan - Adversary - opposing God and man, *"Be sober, be vigilant; be cause your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."* (I Peter 5:8) When Paul was at Ephesus he made the statement that there were many adversaries: *"For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."* (Acts 16:9)
- B. Beelzebub - The Prince of the devils, *"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."* (Matthew 12:24) He was the leader of the angels that fought against Michael and his angels in heaven. (Revelation 12:7-9)
- C. The wicked one - In the parable of the "Sower and the Seed" he is referred to as the wicked one because he stole away the Word of God from the heart of the hearer before he understood it. (Matthew 13:19)
- D. The god of this world - *"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."* (II Corinthians 4:3-4)
- E. Destroyer - *"And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is A-bad-don, but in the Greek tongue hath his name A-polly-on."* (Revelation 9:11) Both the Hebrew word A-bad-don and the Greek word A-polly-on which John used here to refer to the devil mean a destroyer.

IV. Each time the devil is mentioned in the scriptures, regardless of his name, he seeks to ruin, spoil, tear down or demolish everything and everybody that would give honor and glory to God.

V. In my younger days I used many different means to catch fish. When I went fishing my objective was to catch fish. The devil's objective is to catch men. He has no ethics or morals about him; he will use all temptations available to him. Not only will he use all temptations, he will use them with finesse.

- A. Temptation is defined as an encouragement to commit an unwise or immoral act by promise of reward.
- B. Finesse is defined as using skill in handling a situation.
- C. Temptation with finesse results in enticements that are sometimes difficult to refuse.

VI. All fish are subject to be caught, even those that have avoided the enticements presented to them for many years. All men are subject to the enticements of the devil even though they have stood strong through many years.

- A. The muskie is said to be the fish of a thousand casts, but with the right bait, at the right time and the right place they can be caught.
- B. The devil never gives up. He will use a thousand different temptations just to destroy the reputation and influence of just one child of God. Paul wrote in Galatians 6:1, *"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."*
- C. Paul writes, *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."* I Corinthians 10:12

VII. I have several different tackle boxes. Each one is filled to capacity with baits that are designed for specific fish. The devil's tackle boxes are filled to capacity with specialized baits. He may have one designed especially for you. Some of the baits he uses are seen in the following examples:

- A. David and his affair with Bathsheba. (II Samuel 11:1-17)
- B. Achan and the goodly Babylonish garment, the two hundred shekels of silver and the wedge of gold he took from the city of Jericho. (Joshua 7)
- C. Nebuchadnezzar and the pride that lifted him up to the point that he took credit for what God had done. (Daniel 4:29-30)
- D. We see many other baits in our society today that the devil uses to entice preachers to dishonor God with their lives. He has used strong drink and illegal drugs to deceive many.
- E. The devil is in possession of many things with which to bargain. In Luke 4:5-7 the devil showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, then he made this statement to Jesus to tempt him: *"All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will give it. If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."*

VIII. I have a depth finder to assist in locating likely places for fish to hold. The devil uses a depth finder, not to locate his prey, but to find out their depth in the scriptures.

- A. He will present heresy with just enough truth to make it believable. He will catch you if you do not rightly divide the scriptures.
- B. He twisted the scriptures when he presented them to Eve in the Garden.
Genesis 3:1-5
- C. He even tested Jesus on His knowledge of the scriptures. Matthew 4:1-11
- D. Remember that he is a master of deception. He can deceive us into thinking:
 - 1. That in certain special cases it is permissible to sin.
 - 2. That God doesn't really mean what He says; He will forgive us.
 - 3. That it doesn't really matter because no one will know.
 - 4. That we deserve to enjoy the pleasures that sin bring.

IX. The Department of Fish and Wildlife regulate which fish and how many I am allowed to keep for consumption. God's laws regulate the activities of the devil. The devil can only go as far as God will allow him.

- A. God removed the hedge from around Job's body and his possessions, but the devil was not allowed to take his life. *"And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord."* Job 1:12 *"And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, he is in thine hand; but save his life."* Job 2:6
- B. He cannot keep the soul of a person who has been saved, but he can leave scars on them that will remain for the rest of their life just as a hook will leave a permanent scar on a fish even after it is released. *"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."* John 10:27-29

X. The devil's temptations can be resisted with the help of the Lord.

- A. James writes that if we resist the devil, he will flee from us. James 4:7-10
- B. Joseph resisted the advances of Potiphar's wife. Genesis 39:1-12
- C. Paul writes, *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."* I Corinthians 10:13

Conclusion:

The devil can offer you many things that he promises will make you happier, but he can never offer you anything that is lasting. If you take the bait he will set the hook, leaving a scar on your reputation that will remain with you for the rest of your life. You can be sure

your reputation will proceed you in every pulpit where you stand to preach. *“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.”* Ephesians 6:10-14