

TUG OF WAR WITH THE DEVIL
I PETER 5:8-11

INTRODUCTION:

- A. Major Robert Rogers organized the “Roger’s Rangers during the French and Indian War in 1756. In 1759 he issued his standing orders. They are still printed in the front of the latest edition of the US army’s special forces Ranger handbook:
- *Don’t forget nothing.*
 - *Have your musket as clean as a whistle, hatchet scoured, sixty rounds of powder and ball, and be ready to march at a minute’s warning.*
 - *Tell the truth about what you see and what you do.*
 - *When we camp, half the party stays awake.*
 - *Don’t ever march home the same way.... [Vary your] route.*
 - *Don’t cross a river by a regular ford.*
 - *Let the enemy come ‘til he’s almost close enough to touch. Then let him have it...and finish him with your hatchet.* (In Stu Weber, *Spirit Warriors*, Multnomah Publishers, Sisters, OR, 2001)
- B. There are some applications there that would be useful in fighting the Devil. But most of it doesn’t work—because the Devil is majorly a different kind of enemy. You can’t sit in the brush along a trail and ambush him as he creeps past you. Like the Bible says, *We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, and powers, and spiritual wickedness is heavenly places...* (Ephesians 6)
- C. Fighting with the Devil is more like those old cartoons with a little angel on one shoulder and a little devil on the other, each whispering advice... And the character doesn’t have a clue what’s going on. There is a tug-of-war with the Devil and the character assumes he’s just thinking things through.
- D. The Devil is an everyday Al Quaida for every one of us. He is the ultimate terrorist. So today WE ARE GOING TO VISIT THREE DEPARTMENTS OF THE SOUL-LAND SECURITY SYSTEM:

I. THE INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT

The Devil is the most powerful and famous person you **never want** to meet. But you **need to**.

- A. Run a Background Check
1. Not a myth
 - **G. K. Chesterton**, *The cleverest thing the Devil did was to make us believe that he doesn’t exist.*
 - Check **Barna** stats on belief in the Devil
 - 1994 poll: *The devil, or Satan, is not a living being but is a symbol of evil.*
 - *Strongly agree 36%*
 - *Somewhat agree 23%*
 - *Somewhat disagree 12%*
 - *Strongly disagree 22%* (George Barna, *Virtual America*, Regal Books, Ventura, CA, 1995, 116)
 - Look at that—more Americans disbelieve in the Devil than believe. What a brilliant move on his part!!!
 2. **Isaiah 14:12**, “*How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star [KJV—“Lucifer”], son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! 13 You said in your heart, “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God...”*”
 3. **Ezekiel 28:14**, “*You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones. 15 You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created till wickedness was found in you. 16 Through your widespread trade you were filled with violence,*

and you sinned. So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God, and I expelled you, O guardian cherub, from among the fiery stones. 17 Your heart became proud on account of your beauty, and you corrupted your wisdom because of your splendor. So I threw you to the earth; I made a spectacle of you before kings.”

- A. Run a Background Check
4. Isaiah is about the King of Babylon. Ezekiel is about the king of Tyre. Both texts start with a human king and melt into the high, spiritual evil force that is behind the king—just as antichrist will be empowered by satan in the Tribulation Period.
- B. Debrief His M. O.
1. The devil goes to church.
 2. **Vance Havner:** *Satan is not fighting churches; he is joining them. He does more harm by sowing tares than by pulling up wheat. He accomplishes more by imitation than by outright opposition.*
- B. Debrief His M. O.
3. Satan moved into Jesus’ little band of Twelve. He possessed Judas so much so that Jesus called him a “devil.” He spoke through the mouth of Peter to discourage Jesus from going to the Cross. *Get Thee behind me, Satan!*
 4. Homosexual activists are trying to get Ken Hutcherson’s Antioch church kicked out of the school they meet in. That’s child’s play compared to the damage Satan does to churches every week by using Christians to tear their churches apart with gossip and disunity.
 5. He changes the price tags on the merchandise of life. He makes bad things look appealing and good things look worthless.
 6. **Milton:** *All is false and hollow; though his tongue drops manna and makes the worse appear a better reason.*
- B. Debrief His M. O.
- Nobody would ever sin if we saw it for what it was. That little office flirtation doesn’t look like it will lead to a disintegrated family, dad moving out, child support payments, attorney bills, humiliating appearances in court, and on and on. That flirtation just looks like good fun and it feels so good.
 - The Devil is so good at making sin look like something very, very smart and very, very satisfying, and very, very fun.
- 7.. A suave and brilliant adversary—doesn’t look dangerous at all
- **An angel of light**
 - Not a horned guy with a pitchfork. Expect a handsome guy in a Nordstrom suit, or NW casual golf shirt and Dockers.
 - It was **Mark Twain** who made this tongue-in-cheek reference to the Devil, *“We may not pay [Satan] reverence, for that would be indiscreet, but we can at least respect his talents. A person who has, for untold centuries maintained the imposing position of spiritual head of four-fifths of the human race, and political head of the whole of it, must be granted the possession of executive abilities of the highest order.”*
 - You can hate the Devil, you can spurn the Devil—but don’t ever underestimate the Devil—and above all, don’t ever ignore him.
8. Master of Propaganda: Doctrines of demons (**I Timothy 4:1**)
9. He is the accuser, the adversary
- Our *Adversary*: Carries the idea of an opponent in a lawsuit (Barbieri). Cf. **Revelation 12:10** (mid-point of the Tribulation), Calls the Devil... *the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night...*
 - Devil = *Slanderer* (I John 2:1, Jesus is our “Advocate”)
 - Let’s not help the Devil do his work. **Amy Carmichael:** *The absent one must be safe among us.*

10. Attack purity: He used this against two of the Seven churches of Revelation:
- **Pergamum: Revelation 2:14**, *You have people there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality.*
 - **Thyatira: Revelation 2:20**, *Nevertheless, I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols.*
11. He rarely attack doctrine directly—What would happen if I got up here next Sunday and started preaching that the Bible isn't really the Word of God and that Jesus didn't really do any miracles and that Jesus was not virgin born and didn't really rise from the dead?
- *One of the remarkable facts about great generals throughout history is that—except in cases where they possessed overwhelming power—practically all their successful moves have been made against the enemy's flank or rear, either actual or psychological. Great generals realize that a rear attack distracts, dislocates, and often defeats an enemy physically by cutting him off from his supplies, communications, and reinforcements and mentally by undermining his confidence and sense of security. Great generals know a direct attack, on the other hand, consolidates an enemy's defenses and, even if he is defeated, merely forces him back on his reserves and his supplies. (Quoting from Bevin Alexander, British military historian and strategist in *How Great Generals Win*, from Tim Downs, *Finding Common Ground*, Moody, Chicago, 1999, 61)*
12. Distraction
- **Church at Ephesus, Revelation 2:1-7.** They got doctrine right and they got suffering right. But in trying to get it right, they ***forgot who they were doing it for.***

2 ...you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. 3 You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. 4 Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.
 - Cf. **the sower and the seed, Matthew 13:7**, *Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants*

22, The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.
 - Paul Harvey, *If I Were the Devil*

I would gain control of the most powerful nation in the world. I would delude their minds into thinking they had come from man's effort, instead of God's blessings. I would promote an attitude of loving things and using people, instead of the other way a round. I would dupe entire states into relying on gambling for their state revenue. I would convince people that character is not an issue when it comes to leadership. I would make it legal to take one's own life, and invent machines to make it convenient. I would cheapen human life as much as possible so that the life of animals are valued more than human beings. I would take God out of the schools, where even the mention of His name was grounds for a lawsuit.

I would come up with drugs that sedate the mind and target the young, and I would get sports heroes to advertise them. I would get control of the media, so that every night I could pollute the mind of every family member for my agenda. I would attack the family, the backbone of any nation. I would make divorce acceptable and easy, even fashionable. If the family crumbles, so does the nation.

I would compel people to express their most depraved fantasies on canvas and movies screen and call it art. I would convince the world that people are born homosexuals, and that their lifestyles should be accepted and marveled. I would convince the people that right and wrong are determined by a few who call themselves authorities and refer to their agenda as politically correct.

I would persuade people that the church is irrelevant and out of date, and the bible is for the naïve. I would dull the minds of Christians and make them believe that prayer is not important, and that faithfulness and obedience are optional.

I guess I would leave things pretty much the way they are. (can be found on numerous Web sites on the Internet, including www.buchana.org/pray-p-devil.html . In Stu Weber endnotes, Spirit Warriors, 280)

II. TACTICAL DEPARTMENT

A. Satan's Tactics: **II Corinthians 2:11**, --we are not unaware of his schemes.

1. His limitations---everything he does plays into God's plan. You would think he would learn. What makes him keep playing the game? He lost a long time ago. You would think he would just curl up in a fetal position and give up.

- **Milton's** Satan said, *Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.*
- The only explanation I can up with is the blindness of pride and the driving force of hatred.

2. His craftiness:

- *Satan could be compared to Butch, a big neighborhood bully, who delights in beating up all the smaller children in the area. Suppose my little lad of Four years of age is on his way to kindergarten, singing and swinging his little lunch pail as he dreams of building castles in the sand. Suddenly Butch steps out from his place of hiding and beats up my little lad, who returns home in tears with a bloody nose and a black eye. "Daddy, you take me to school in the future so Butch won't beat me up," he says. So, the next day I take him by the hand and we walk to school together. As we approach Butch's place of hiding, my son says, "Watch out, daddy, he will beat us up." But several days go by and we see no sign of Butch. After a while my son says, "Daddy, I guess Butch has moved away. Now I can go to school on my own." So, off to kindergarten he goes, when suddenly and without warning he is pounced upon by Butch, who had never left, but had been waiting every day, observing us as we walked to school together. He did not dare to attack while I was with my lad, but the moment I was no longer there to protect him, he attacked again. (I think this is Bill Bright, Revolution Now)*
- **Augustine:** *The devil is like a mad dog that is chained up. He is powerless to harm us when we are outside his reach, but once we enter his circle we expose ourselves again to injury or harm.*

A. Satan's Tactics

3. His assault on leaders: By the way, Satan really believes the adage that the "bigger they are, the harder they fall." The more prominent a spiritual leader is in the work of God, as was Jesus, the bigger the target. Satan deliberately marks the leaders for temptation. If he can ruin the shepherd, it is so easy to scatter the sheep. Please pray for your spiritual leaders. Their spiritual exposure is greater and their need for prayer is greater.

- Snipers shoot at officers and radio men.
- Cf. David's sin of numbering the soldiers. **TEXT????????????????????**

B. God's Tactics

1. Why does God let the Devil run?

2. The devil's work gets God more glory. **Job insights**
3. The devil's work makes Christians stronger: *Trials, welcome them as friends*
J.B. Phillips did this to **James 1:2-3**, "When all kinds of trials and temptations crowd into your lives, my brothers, don't resent them as intruders, but welcome them as friends! Realize that they come to test your faith and produce in you the quality of endurance."
4. The devil's work helped accomplish the plan of salvation.
5. Here's how God helps us:
 - Edit:
 - **I Corinthians 10:13**, "No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it."

B. God's Tactics

- **II Peter 2:9**, "the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials"
- Truth: *I am the way, the truth, and the life. You shall know the truth and the truth will set you free.*
- Goodness:
 - When God put Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, they breathed the air of the goodness of God.
 - They tasted His goodness in every piece of fruit they put in their mouths.
 - They felt it in the fur of every animal they stroked.
 - They basked in God's goodness relationally as they walked with Him in the garden in the cool of the evening.
 - That is exactly what Satan attacked. He caused them to doubt the goodness of God. But Adam and Eve were inexperienced innocents. We aren't. We should know much better than they about the goodness of God. We should be much better at defecting the devil's schemes to undermine our belief in God's goodness.
 - That's why Peter wrote this book. That's why we've been studying it.
 - **Verse 10**, *the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ,*
 - **Verse 12**, *I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand fast in it.*
 - The Devil wants to destroy you—God wants to display you
 - The Devil wants to tear you down—God wants to build you up.
 - The Devil wants to rob you—God wants to enrich you.
 - The Devil wants to blame you—God wants to justify you

C. Our Tactics

1. **Ridicule: Martin Luther** claimed to have a more conversant contact with the Devil. He recommended "*The best way to drive out the devil, if he will not yield to texts of Scripture, is to jeer and flout him, for he cannot bear scorn.*" Once he was so conscious of the devil in his study, that he threw an inkwell at him.
2. **Verse 9: Resist him, standing firm in the faith...**
 - James 4:7, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."
 - You must have the power of God to resist the Devil, because God is the only thing that the Devil fears.
 - The Bible calls him a roaring lion, the king of the earthly jungle.
 - Don't meow at him, hide in the mane of the greater Lion of the Tribe of Judah
 - **Conscious dependence on God.**
 - The Devil is stronger than you. He is more experienced than you. He is smarter than you. He is more persistent than you. He is faster than

you. He has more resources than you. You walk; He flies. You sleep; he wakes. He sees you; you can't see him.

- **Alexander the Great**, it is said, once sent an emissary to Egypt. This representative of the great ruler traveled without weapons or military escort, carrying only the seal of Alexander.

The emissary met with the mighty king of Egypt, who stood with his army behind him, and communicated the message from Alexander the Great. "Cease hostilities against Alexander's interests," he said. The king of Egypt, wishing to save face, said he would consider the request and let the emissary know.

At that, Alexander's man drew a circle in the dirt around the king of Egypt and said, "Do not leave this circle without informing me of your response."

Talk about nerve! The emissary was unarmed and alone. The king of Egypt had an entire army at his back. Yet the king dared not touch the man because he carried the seal of Alexander the Great.

(Max Anders, *The Good Life*, 1993, 41)

- To do this **you need a plan**, and God has already made one up for you:
- How? Know and use your Bible!
 - Jesus use of the Bible:
 - a. Temptation #1
Devil: "Fact: You are hungry. Fact: You are the Son of God. Conclusion: Do a miracle. Make rocks into bread.
Jesus: "This reminds me of a Bible story. Exodus 16:2,
 - b. Temptation #2
Devil: "Fact: You are the Son of God. Fact: God has promised to take care of and protect you from harm. I even looked up a Bible verse that says so, "Psalm 91:11-12, "He will command his angels concerning you and they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone." Conclusion: I double dare you to bungee jump without the cord. Go ahead. Prove to me that you really believe God will take care of you, unless, of course, you're chicken."
Jesus: "This reminds me of a Bible story, Exodus 17:1-2,
 - c. Temptation #3
Devil: "Fact: I know that you were born to be King. Fact: People aren't exactly breaking down your door inviting you to rule them. Fact: I am the prince of this world and I can help you out. Conclusion: Just bow down and worship me and I will give you all the kingdoms of the world and all their splendor. Let me help you fulfill the plan of God for your life!"
Jesus: "This reminds me of a Bible story. Deuteronomy 6:10-13
 - NOTE: The greatest tool against the Devil is the Word of God.
 - When you are tempted to adultery, replay the story of David and Bathsheba.
 - When you are tempted to pride, replay the story of David numbering his troops.
 - When the Devil whispers that you should keep it for yourself, you need to understand the depth of the giving hearts of the Macedonians, II Corinthians 8 and 9.
 - When the Devil whispers that you are more holy than your Christian friend, you need to plumb the depths of Romans 14.

- When the Devil whispers that the sin of your Christian friend is really no concern of yours, and why don't you keep your nose out of other people's business, and doesn't the Bible say, "judge not lest ye also be judged," you need to agonize over Galatians 6.
 - When the Devil whispers discouragement into your soul, you need to capture the optimistic faith of the Apostle Paul in the Book of Philippians.
 - When you are tempted to withhold forgiveness, replay the story of the unmerciful servant.
 - When you are tempted to lie, replay the story of Jacob.
 - When you are tempted to play it safe, replay the story of Abraham and the sacrifice of Isaac.
 - Get familiar with Gehazi's greed, and Habakkuk's depression and Amaziah's half-heartedness, and Euodia and Synteché's conflict and Diotrephes' selfishness. These are all silver bullets for temptation. Load your soul with this good stuff because someday, you're going to be tempted in one of these areas and you're going to need it!
3. *The secret of victory lies not wholly in knowledge. It lurks invisible in that vitalizing spark, intangible, yet evident as lightning—the warrior soul. – General George Patton*

III. PUBLIC ALERT DEPARTMENT

A. Internal Struggles

1. Pride

- David's sin of numbering his troops. Devil tempts David to census his soldiers, II Samuel 24:1, *Again the anger of the LORD burned against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, "Go and take a census of Israel and Judah."* and I Chronicles 21:1, *Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel.*

2. Depression

- *Left him until a more opportune time*

3. Addictions

- I will not be brought under the control of any

4. Unhappy marriage

- I Corinthians 7

5. Comfortableness

- Nebuchadnezzar
- David on his rooftop

B. External Circumstances

1. Setbacks and disasters

- **Job 1:9-11**

2. Fear of threats

- Peter denies his Lord, **Mark 8:31-33**

3. Serious illness

- Paul's *Thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me.* **II Corinthians 12:7**

CONCLUSION:

- A. *The Mice in Council by Aesop: Once upon a time all the Mice met together in Council and discussed the best means of securing themselves against the attacks of the cat. After several suggestions had been debated, a Mouse of some standing and experience got up and said, "I think I have hit upon a plan which ensures our safety in the future, provided*

you approve and carry it out. It is that we should fasten a bell around the neck of our enemy the cat, which will by its tinkling warn us of her approach."

This proposal was warmly applauded, and it had been already decided to adopt it, when an old Mouse finally got upon his feet and said, "I agree with you all that the plan before us is an admirable one: but I ask, who is going to bell the cat?" (in Stuart and Jill Briscoe, *The Family Book of Christian Values*, Christian Parneing Books, 1995, 5)

- How we put a bell on the Devil???
- By caring enough to confronting sin in a friend
- By working hard to protect the unity
- By knowing our Bibles
- By praying constantly
- By staying pure

B. During WW II Winston Churchill stood and spoke to the British House of Parliament:

*We cannot yet see how deliverance will come or when it will come.
but nothing is more certain than that every trace of Hitler's footsteps,
every strain of his infected and corroding fingers,
will be sponged and purged and, if need be, blasted from the surface of the earth.*

(William Manchester, *The Last Lion*, Little Brown and Co., 1983, 33)

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FOOTNOTE: Authors that accept that Isaiah 14 and Ezek 28 deal with the devil: Stu Weber (Isaiah), Hal Lindsey, *Satan Is Alive and Well on Planet Earth*, 44ff; Billy Graham, *Angels: God's Secret Agents*, 1975, 75ff; Richard DeHaan, *Satan, Satanism and Witchcraft*, 12-13; *Angels: Elect and Evil*, C. Fred Dickason, 1975, 127-135