



Exposing the Seductive Lies of the Enemy

**Uncovering Satan's Subtle and Not So Subtle
Strategies and Plans to Hinder a Christian's Walk**

By Chris Simpson

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One day, while He was praying, Jesus learned that Satan was preparing to attack Peter. Jesus also knew that Peter had no idea such an attack was coming. He knew He had to tell him. Finally, the time came and Jesus said:

“Simon, Simon, Satan has demanded to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith not fail. When you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” (Luke 22:31-32)

By the Spirit, Jesus saw things that were to come. He knew that Peter was going to fall. But He also knew that his faith would help him through it. Notice He said, “Satan is *demanding* you.” He apparently saw Satan standing before God demanding the right to tempt Peter.

How Could Satan Do That?

Now the question to ask is, “Upon what basis did Satan demand to sift Peter as wheat? What unrefined area in Peter’s life did Satan see and presume to claim for his own?” We find the answer in the Gospel of Mark. When Jesus told His disciples that after His arrest they’d be offended and flee, Peter said:

“Although all shall be offended, yet will not I be offended” (Mark 14:29)

Peter, acting out of defensive pride, made this arrogant statement in front of all the others. Satan heard it as well and said to himself, “Peter is as blind as a bat to his pride. I’m going to take move in and take advantage of this.” Then he went before God and said, “There’s pride in Peter and I have a right to it, because it’s mine.”

Job Had The Same Problem

Now maybe you're saying, "How do we know that's what happened?" Well, look at the first two chapters of the book of Job. That's exactly what happened there. One day God asked Satan, "Have you seen my servant Job? He's upright and stays away from evil." God was bragging on him. At that time there wasn't much to brag about on the earth. But Job's life was pleasing to the Lord. Satan then said, "Well, it's because you put a hedge around him. Take the hedge down and he'll curse you!" So God agreed and removed the hedge. Then, all kinds of calamities happened to Job, yet he never cursed God.

Later, God spoke with Satan and said, "See my servant Job. He's still faithful even though you moved Me against him." Then Satan said, "Skin for skin, all that a man has will he give for his life. You touch his body and this time he'll curse you." So God let it happen. And again, Job refused to curse God. However, a lot of other things did come up in Job. For the next several chapters we see Job whining and complaining and full of self-pity. Finally in chapter 32 it says:

"...Job was righteous in his own eyes....he justified himself rather than God."
(Job 32:1-2)

Job had a pride problem. Because of this, Satan was allowed to move in and sift him as wheat. But while Satan thought he was hurting Job, in the end he did him a favor. Job's sufferings at the hand of the devil helped him finally see his problem and repent. Then, the latter end of Job was twice as blessed as the former.

God Allows It To Happen

Understand that God, in His infinite wisdom, allows these things to happen. There's only one way to be promoted from one grade level to the next: you must

take a test. That's what trials and temptations really are. God allows testing to come so that you can be promoted from where you are to where He wants you to be. Now the problem with any test or temptation is that there are always two things involved: the possibilities and benefits of promotion, as well as the risks of failure.

Let's consider exactly how the enemy goes about claiming "what is his own" when he tempts a believer. We're given a clear picture of this in the Epistle of James:

"When one is tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. Don't be deceived, my dear brothers." (James 1:13-16)

The Devil *Did Not* Make You Do It!

The real point of this verse is that nobody can say, "The devil made me do it!" You see, every man is tempted when he's dragged away by his *own* evil desire. It starts with something that's already inside a person - like pride, lust, cravings or compulsive desires. Satan then comes and works with what's already there. Just as a fisherman goes to great lengths to find just the right kind of lure that will attract fish, so Satan uses whatever he can find within you in trying to snare you.

Jesus said, *"The prince of the world comes and has nothing in me."* (John 14:30) There was nothing in Jesus that Satan could successfully lure. Christ kept His soul pure. He never let anything inside that would give Satan a chance to entice Him to sin. The problem with you and I is how much we have let in that gives ground to the enemy.

Sin's Birthing Process

One more thing about this verse. James says, “...*after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin;*” In other words, after you’ve been enticed, your evil desire births sin. Notice he’s talking about ‘giving birth.’ To birth something requires two parents. You have to have a male and a female. The male gives the seed and the female brings forth the birth.

So it is with sin. The act of sin involves two parents. The believer is one parent and the devil is the other. The enemy comes and entices and tempts. Then the believer yields and disobeys. It’s your own evil desires and lust that allows the enemy to allure you into sin. This process is clearly illustrated in the seventh chapter of Proverbs:

“My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with you. Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of your eye. Bind them upon your fingers, write them upon the table of your heart. Say unto wisdom, You art my sister; and call understanding your kinsman: That they may keep you from the seductress, from the woman which flatters with her words. For I looked through the window of my house and saw among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding...” (Proverbs 7:1-7)

First: Fall In Love With Truth

This chapter outlines the subtle steps Satan uses to entice a believer into sin. It starts off urging you to keep God’s commands and embrace the ways of wisdom. In other words, fall in love with truth. That’s how you can sum it up.

Loving the truth, particularly the truth about yourself, is the greatest protection from the first step of seduction: dullness of spirit. That’s how Solomon describes

the young man - he's "void of understanding." Another version says, "a young man lacking sense." In other words, he was an accident waiting to happen. This young man apparently had no love for the truth. He was like a moth flying close to a light, oblivious to the spider's web that waited. In the next verse we see that he was also aimless with no sense of direction:

"Passing through the street near her corner, and he went the way to her house." (Proverbs 7:8)

The Danger Of Aimlessness

If you don't love the truth with all your heart, then you'll find yourself aimless and directionless. This young man did not intend to go to the seductive woman's house - he was just hanging out in the neighborhood where she lived. After a while, though, he found himself on her street. Then, before he knew it, he was right in front of her house.

It's spiritually dangerous to wander around aimlessly with no purpose. Invariably, you're going to get into trouble. That happened to me once. I was riding around aimlessly and I barreled through a school zone. I thought, "I am not where I should be." That's why I got a ticket. When you get out from under the Lord's covering and protection, you may find yourself tempted by all kinds of things that otherwise wouldn't effect you.

Now, in the next verse we see an amazing description of what seems to be happening inside the young man's soul at this point:

"In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night..." (Proverbs 7:9)

The Progression Of Seduction

This verse describes the progression of seduction. No one runs from bright light to pitch black darkness. No, it's a gradual thing. First, you enter into the twilight, which is a mixture of light and darkness. After that, it's easier to move into the evening and finally the dark of night. It's like the story of how to cook a frog in a pot. If you throw him in boiling water he'll jump right out. But, if you put him in cool water and turn the temperature up just one degree at a time, before you know it, the frog is boiling and he didn't even realize it. That's how the enemy seeks to seduce and tempt.

Satan is far more successful when he comes with a mixture of light and darkness than if he came covered in black. If he showed up on the scene with horns, pitchfork and a red suit, you'd say, "Forget it." But we're told that he comes as an "angel of light" to deceive the hearts of the simple. (2 Cor. 11:3, 14) That's why the "twilight zone" is so dangerous. If you believe it's possible to entertain just a little evil in your life and not drift further, you're sadly mistaken. You can't say, "Lord, I love you. I want to follow you. But I'm not ready to give up this little pet sin."

Little Puppies Do Grow Up

Imagine, if you would, a little boy who kept bugging his mom and dad for a dog. But his parents said, "No, you can't have a dog. You're too young for such a responsibility and besides, a dog would make a mess of the house." But he kept whining, "I want a dog." One day, one of his friends gave him a puppy. He was so excited. Since he knew his mom and dad wouldn't be very excited, he decided to hide the little puppy under his bed. He put some blocks under there to keep the puppy from getting out and every morning he fed him with scraps from the table. Then he thought, "I'll just keep him under the bed and everything will be fine. I'm

happy because I have my puppy and Mom and Dad are happy. Everybody is happy.”

But what is the little boy forgetting? Little puppies become big dogs. One day that dog is going to go, “Ruff, Ruff, I’m out of here!” And he’ll come out from under that bed and run all over the house. Then mom will ask, “Where’d this dog come from?” Those tiny little sins that we often think are “no big deal” do have a way of growing, don’t they? Before you know it, they come prancing onto the stage of your life and take over.

Face To Face With The Enemy

Let’s consider what’s happened so far. The young man started out with a dull spirit, became aimless in direction, and then went from twilight to the dark night. It’s at this point that the enemy is ready to encounter him head on:

“And there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot and subtilty of heart.”
(Proverbs 7:10)

Had the seducer come on the scene earlier, the young man may still have had strength to resist. But, as was pointed out earlier, it takes two to bring sin to birth. So far, he’s made all his own choices in wandering from wisdom and truth in the direction of the seductress. Now he’s encountering the enemy head on. You need to go through certain doors to get to this point. The doors in his case were dullness, aimlessness, and mixing darkness with light (compromise).

The Spider’s Deceptive Web

The spider weaves a beautiful web, strong and sturdy. When it’s covered with the morning dew, it glistens and sparkles. Now if a moth gets away from the other

moths and spends too much time buzzing around the light at night, he may just get a little confused and aimless. In the morning he sees the dew covered web and flies over to inspect it.

Looking closely, we find the spider hiding behind a leaf. The spider is smart. He built his web near a leaf so that he could hide, waiting for Mr. Moth to come. The stupid moth wouldn't have had a problem if he'd stayed with the other moths and gone to bed when the light went out. But he was wandering around all night bored and frustrated. That's exactly what's being described in these verses. The next two verses go on to tell us of the nature of the seductive woman:

“She is loud and defiant, her feet are restless; now in the street, in the squares, at every corner she lies in wait.” (Proverb 7:11-12)

We're told here three things about the seductress: first, she's loud and stubborn; second, she's restless; third, she lies in wait. From an allegorical sense, this is one of the clearest pictures of the demonic realm in the Bible. These attributes aptly describe the nature of the demonic world: loud, stubborn, restless, and seeking to seduce. Having encountered the naive young man, now she's ready to move in and take hold of him:

“So she took hold of him, she kissed him and then with an impudent face said....” (Proverbs 7:13)

Let's consider for a moment what's happening here. The young man was totally responsible for what occurred all the way to verse nine, where he slipped from the twilight into the black and dark night. Then in verse ten the seductress shows up on the scene. In other words, Satan doesn't show his true colors until a believer has been seduced to the point of dullness, aimlessness and compromise.

Now, consider that fact from a positive point of view. As long as you avoid dullness, aimlessness and compromise, Satan will be limited in his ability to have any effect in your life. The reason many believers are subject to so much temptation is because they:

- 1)...don't love the truth, particularly about themselves
- 2)...have no clear direction or purpose in their walk
- 3)...tend to compromise issues when things get difficult.

As a result, such believers are regularly harassed and tempted by the enemy.

The Seductive Voice Of The Enemy

At this point, the seductive woman launches into a seven verse monologue. She opens her mouth in verse fourteen and speaks all the way to verse twenty. She knows the young man will listen. She has his rapt attention. It's interesting that the enemy didn't say anything until he got his victim to this point. If the young man had followed the counsel of verse four and embraced wisdom and understanding, he would not have found himself having to endure the oily and seductive voice in verse fourteen. By carefully examining what the seductress says, we can clearly see the very things Satan uses to try to seduce God's people. Notice, the first thing is 'religious deception:'

"I have peace offerings with me; this day I've paid my vows." (Proverbs 7:14)

Religious Talk, Devilish Walk

The first thing coming out of her mouth is religious talk: peace offerings and paying vows. Isn't that interesting? She starts out with a 'smoke screen' of religion. That's usually the very thing Satan puts in people's minds to justify doing what

they know isn't right. For instance, a gossip often cloaks his sin by saying things like, "It's O.K. if you tell me what you've heard about so and so. Then I'll know how to pray intelligently." Believe it or not, few things are as effective in keeping believers in darkness as religious deception. Satan is most effective in his attempts to bring a believer into bondage when he can get someone to mouth spiritual platitudes, while all the while engaging in perversion and bitterness. Consider the next verse:

"Therefore I came to meet you, diligently to seek your face, and I have found you." (Proverbs 7:15)

You're a 'Marked Man'

Isn't this kind of scary? The enemy says, "I've diligently sought you and I have found you." Peter tells us that, "*The devil walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*" (1 Peter 5:8) Until you realize that you're in a real war, you're nothing more than a sitting duck for the enemy. In fact, you will never get off first base, in a spiritual sense, until you recognize these realities and begin to do all you can to engage the enemy in offensive battle.

You must realize that there is a foe out to devour you, particularly if you desire to be a faithful disciple of Jesus. You're a marked man (or woman) if you've decided to really live 'all out' for Jesus. Look at the next verse. Now the seductress is getting dirty. She pulls out deep allurements from the past. She says:

"I've decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt." (Proverbs 7:16)

The Enemy ‘Gets Dirty’

She’s speaking of tapestries and things from Egypt. Egypt represents your old life, the one you lived before you were born again into God’s kingdom. The enemy’s desire is for you to return to your old life. He wants you to be as, “*A dog that returns to its vomit,*” and as, “*A pig that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud.*” (2 Peter 2:22) Satan’s desire is to not only bring you all the way back to the things you once did, but to become even worse than you were before, if you’ll let him.

The young man is just standing there, listening to all this evil talk. Since he didn’t walk away while she was being religious, the seductress now begins to blatantly appeal to his old nature. The more he stood there and listened, the more she pulled up things from the past: old lusts and sins that had been dead on the cross. Look at the next verse:

“I’ve perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon.” (Proverbs 7:17)

A Counterfeit For Every Truth

Now that she has him safely under her spell, the seductress offers deceptive counterfeits to the young man. She tells him that she’s perfumed her bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. What’s amazing about this verse is that it’s very similar (yet not quite) to a verse describing the Lord Jesus in the Psalms: “*All your garments smell of myrrh, aloes and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, where they have made you glad.*” (Psalm 45:8) From an allegorical perspective, the thing Satan offers looks a lot like what God offers. But it’s a counterfeit. Cassia and cinnamon are very similar herbs, but not exactly the same. The enemy’s tactic is to get as close to the truth as he can with just a little bit of error. That way the gullible will swallow it.

Satan has a counterfeit for most everything the Kingdom of God has to offer. For joy he has thrills. For love he offers lust. For every gift of the Spirit, Satan has an associated occult experience. For the word of knowledge, there is E.S.P. For genuine prophecy, he offers astrology and fortune telling. Unfortunately, because Satan does have his supernatural counterfeits, some people toss out the legitimate supernatural experiences of the Holy Spirit for the cheap substitutes.

They'll say, "I don't want to get into New Age stuff." But that's exactly what the enemy wants them to do, to either become seduced by his counterfeits or throw the baby out with the bath water, and have nothing whatever to do with the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Lets step back and consider what's going on. The seductress started out speaking to the young man with religious deception. Then, she began to pull out deep enticements from his past (Egypt). She's seeking to get him entangled in things that look a lot like the truth, but are really counterfeits. What you're seeing here is a clear description of the seductive and manipulative techniques Satan uses on anyone who's foolish enough to get snared in his traps. Now let's look at another one of his strategies:

"Come, let's drink deep of love till morning; let's enjoy ourselves with love! My husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey. He took his purse filled with money and will not be home till full moon." (Proverb 7:18-20)

"Come On, You Can Get Away With It!"

All of this is just another way of saying, "Come on, you can get away with it. Nobody will know. You won't get caught." When Satan can convince you that you can get away with indulging in a pleasurable sin, it's real hard to overcome it. So,

how does one overcome? It's simple - stay accountable. Make a commitment to the Lord that certain types of activity will be brought to the light when they occur. This, more than anything else, throws cold water on the devil's temptations. When you're willing to confess your faults and be honest with others, then the enemy will have a hard time "getting you off alone" and into sin.

With that last statement the seductress ended her monologue. Unfortunately, the young man listened without a murmur of resistance. As a result, the next verse tells us, "*With her fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.*" (Proverbs 7:21)

Turning A Dangerous And Deadly Corner

At this point, it's highly unlikely the young man will find it within himself to turn around. Why? Because he listened to her talk. The more he listened, the tighter the enemy's grip. Satan's major hold on a person is through lies. If he can get you to believe or even just entertain his lies, he's already made serious inroads into your soul. Believing a lie is more spiritually dangerous than passion, lust or greed. Once you choose to believe something that you know inside is not true (particularly if it's to justify a chosen course of action), then you've turned a corner in the spirit where it's very hard to find your way back.

Then it says she *forced* him. This implies serious demonization, where he had little "will" left in the matter. This is the point where you find yourself driven into various compulsive activities, even when everything in you hates it. It feels like something inside of you takes charge of you at times and decides when you will do this or that. The next verse says:

"And so he goes after her straightway, as an ox goes to the slaughter, a fool to the correction of the stocks. Until an arrow strikes through his liver; as a bird

darting to the snare, not knowing that it will cost him his life. Harken unto me now children, attend to the words of my mouth. Let not your heart decline to her ways, do not go astray in her paths. She has cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going to the chambers of death.” (Proverbs 7:22-27)

Solomon’s Warning And Solomon’s Downfall

Solomon ends the chapter with a warning: the seductress is dedicated to destroy you; don’t let your heart be deceived by her pernicious ways. Ironically though, in spite of his great wisdom in these matters, Solomon himself ended up as one of the “*strong men slain by her.*” We’re told that:

“But king Solomon loved many seductive women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of Moab, Ammon, Edom, Zidonia, and of the Hittites: Of the nations concerning which the Lord said unto the children of Israel, You shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart from the Lord. When Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord, as was the heart of David his father.” (1 Kings 11:1-4)

You may be asking yourself at this point, “If King Solomon, with all of his wisdom and insight, was not able to avoid the trap of the enemy, what hope do I have?” Well, as a New Testament believer in Jesus you have plenty of hope. Consider the these very powerful verses from the prophet Isaiah:

“Behold I have created the smith that blows the coals in the fire and that brings forth an instrument for his work. And I have created the waster to destroy. No

weapon that is formed against you will prosper and every tongue that rises against you in judgment you shall condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, says the Lord.” (Isaiah 54:16-17)

Nothing Happens Apart From God!

There's an important revelation in these two verses. First, God is saying that it is He who has created the waster to destroy. What does that mean? Simply that everything the enemy does or attempts to do in your life has been permitted by God. Satan has to get permission for every temptation or trial he may bring your way. Remember, Satan had to go before God to demand the right to sift Peter as wheat. He also needed explicit permission before he was allowed to do anything to Job.

Why did God let Satan sift Peter and attack Job? Because God intended to use the enemy as His tool to help them recognize and get free from the problem of pride in their character. That's how they would grow. In the end, Satan is nothing more than one who helps you grow. That's how God turns all things around for the good. Because this is true, when you do resist temptation, the enemy ends up actually helping you - much to his chagrin.

In fact, that's why Satan doesn't always tempt when he could. Every time he does tempt you, it's a roll of the dice. God's looking to see if you're going to obey. Satan's looking to see if you'll disobey. So he rolls the dice to see if you'll grab his bait and fall. If you do, then you lose ground, the enemy's encouraged and the Kingdom of God has not been advanced. But if you rise up, obey Jesus and resist, then Satan's discouraged, his temptation works to your benefit, and his kingdom is diminished as a result.

In other words, what Satan means for evil, God always intends for your ultimate good. Temptations and trials are really nothing more than “exams” sent periodically to monitor your progress. They provide opportunities to get off ‘first base’ and advance. It’s during the time of temptation that you can finally prove to the Lord, by your choices, that you really do love Him!

So, the next time the enemy comes around with his seducing lies -- rejoice! In overcoming him, God will reward you with the joys and riches of His presence!

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