


Gospel Power



"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation..." (Romans 1:16)

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What The Devil Cannot Do

Steven C. Harper

According to the yearly polls, more people believe that God exists than believe the devil is real. This reflects a similar finding that more people believe in heaven than in hell. This is merely a reflection of the human mind that desires only good and nothing bad, and heaven and hell are as good and as bad as it gets. But for those who are true believers in God and Christ and the Bible, the devil is certainly real, and he is recognized as our enemy — the adversary. (Hebrew – **satan** means *adversary*.) Christians believe the devil is just as real as Jesus, but also recognize they are in opposition to one another.

Part of the recognition of the devil's existence should be recognition of what he can do. It is in our best interest to know the abilities and tactics of our enemy if we want to defeat him. Paul made reference to this when he said to the Corinthians, "*We are not ignorant of his devices*" (2 Corihthians 2:11). We need to know what our enemy will do to try to defeat us, what he will use in those efforts, and how he operates. Knowing as much as we can about him, we may be able to "*Put on the full armor of God, ... able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil*" (Ephesians 6:11). God has promised us victory, but only if we have the proper equipment, the proper training, and the strength to endure until the battle is won.

Knowing what my enemy can do is one way I may defeat him. If I know my enemy has a weapon capable of firing accurately within a one-mile range, I will stay outside that range until I can either disable the weapon or find a way to get to him first.

On the other hand, we can also defeat our enemies if we know what they **cannot** do. If I know the enemy cannot drop bombs on me, or cannot cross bodies of water, I will use that knowledge to give myself an advantage and hopefully win the battle. I believe we can do that with our enemy, the devil, too. Let's look now at what he **cannot** do.

He Cannot Know Our Thoughts. This is something the Lord can do, but Satan cannot. In the story of Job, we find that the devil believed Job was serving God only because he enjoyed material blessings. He accused Job of selfish service and told God that Job would curse Him to His face if those things were taken away (Job 1:11). Later, he would tell God that he would curse God to His face if his health were taken from him (2:5). Neither was true, and God knew that. He held Job up as a "blameless and upright man who feared the Lord and shunned evil" (1:8; 2:3). Satan could not believe that any man would serve God simply because he sincerely loved Him, but he

was wrong. If he could have known the mind of Job, he would not have made such bold accusations, but that was something he could not do!

You can use this knowledge to your advantage today! If Satan cannot know your thoughts, don't make the mistake of letting him know what they are! If you have certain weaknesses, don't give him the advantage by confessing them out loud so he can hear and use that against you! Take care to keep your weaknesses to yourself and speak to God in your heart; God will hear but the enemy will not. As you do this, you must keep in mind that the devil will accuse you of many things before God, just as he did with Job. God does know our hearts and He will know why we do what we do. Prove the accusations to be false by having a heart set on the Lord and His will, and then follow through with a life that shows it.

He Cannot Make Us Sin. The devil may certainly tempt us to sin, but he cannot make us sin. There's a big difference. James said that we sin when we are led away by our own desires (1:14, 15), but we do not have to sin. The devil, when he knows what our weaknesses are, will use that against us and throw that in front of us as a temptation every chance he gets. We should not give the devil an opportunity (Ephesians 4:27) to use our own weaknesses against us, but should he find out what they are, all is not lost.

He cannot **make** us sin because Paul tells us that God "*will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it*" (1 Corinthians 10:13). Isn't that comforting to know that God will not allow us to be tempted without providing a way of escape? As hard as the devil may try, God knows and answer for every temptation — we just need to use it!

He Cannot Refute Scripture. The best answer to every temptation is the way our Lord answered them: with the Scripture. Every time the devil threw a temptation at Jesus, He

answered, "*It is written*" (Matthew 4:1-10). Though the devil used Scripture himself (although incorrectly), he could not refute the Scriptures Jesus used. He could not refute them because they were the final answer — they were the truth. He cannot stand against the Scriptures because "*he is a liar and the father of it*" (John 8:44). One who speaks nothing but lies does not know how to answer something that is nothing but truth.

Again, this is to our advantage if we understand the significance of this knowledge. Knowing that he cannot refute the Scriptures, we have the weapon by which we will defeat the devil every time. This is the "escape" God has provided for us, and it will win every time; we just need to use it!

He Cannot Defeat Us. The final, comforting, thought in all of this is the fact that the devil cannot defeat us — if we do not allow him to defeat us. James said, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). The important factor here is resistance. The devil really has it easy, for the most part, because most people do not resist him and the temptations he throws our way. Some do not resist because they do not want to, but others do not resist because they do not know how. Since they know little of the Scriptures, they do not have the answer for every temptation, and do not recognize the way of escape God has provided. Sometimes this is true of Christians! Let that not be true of us! As disciples of Jesus Christ, we should be striving to defeat the enemy at every turn.

As Peter said: "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*" (1 Peter 5:8). If we are ever vigilant and always ready, the devil will lose every time because God will simply not allow it! Besides, we know what he **cannot** do!

~via *The Burns Park Beacon*, North Little Rock, Ark.

Remember Our Bible Class Periods

Sunday at 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.

Activity or Progress?

Ken Weliever

“And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,” (Colossians 1:10).

Author Donald S. Whitney tells the story of an early explorer to the North Pole who chartered his excursion hourly to safeguard his journey. At one point, as he traversed this vast white wasteland, a peculiar phenomenon began to occur. While monitoring his position, the instruments indicated that even though he had been moving north, he was actually father south than he had been the previous hour. Regardless of the speed at which he walked in the direction of the Pole, he continued to get farther from it.

How could this be? What was happening? Finally he discovered that he had ventured onto an enormous iceberg that was drifting in one direction as he was walking in the other!

The story illustrates quite vividly that it is possible to develop a intricate strategy, exert a tremendous amount of energy and equip yourself with all kinds of sophisticated equipment and great resources, yet still not be making any progress!

In the Christian’s journey it is abundantly more important to be sure that we are making progress and not just exerting energy as we journey toward the Heavenly City. Just because we are involved in a lot of programs and church activities does not mean we are making progress. As church leaders, we may keep our people busy, but are they being productive? We need to evaluate our progress. We need to examine ourselves (2 Corinthians 13:5).

Am I really living for the Lord? Am I seeking to please Him in every way? Am I bearing fruit? Am I growing in the knowledge of God? The answers to these questions may

indicate whether or not we are just keeping busy or actually making progress.

We are called upon to bear fruit. Jesus said, “By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, so you will be my disciples” (John 15:8). Discipleship is more than just attending church services, reading the Bible, and refraining from certain sins. It is being fruitful. It is producing something of worth and value.

I think we often confuse faithfulness for fruitfulness. Author Rick Warren wrote, “God wants your church to be faithful and fruitful. One without the other is only half the equation.” Paul’s prayer for the Colossians was that they might “bear fruit in every good work.” While it is necessary to be doctrinally sound and know what good works are, it is not enough. The proof of discipleship is in the production, in the fruit born.

We need to examine ourselves and ask, “Am I just engaged in activities, or am I making progress?” My personal admonition to each of you would be this simple slogan: Be Faithful. Bear Fruit.

~via *Biblical E-Sights*, Fol. 1 No. 41

News & Notes

THE SICK: *Jerry Dickey’s mother, Pat Dickey*, is in ICU at the ECM hospital in Florence...*Scottie Goode’s father, Hubert Goode*, is now at home after spending several days in the Huntsville hospital ... *Wanda Tucker’s father, Billy Letson*, came home from the hospital this past Tuesday and it was determined that he did not have a stroke

...**Onzell Tucker** was sick last week and unable to be at services...**Lakin Hammond** has been not feeling well this past week...**Robyn Goode** was sick and unable to be at Bible study Wednesday night...**C. L. Weathers** is feeling better now after being sick this past week ...**Henry Trousdale** has been sick at home this week with pneumonia...**Phil Pressnell** is doing better now after being sick this past week...**Faye Hammond** is doing better now after being sick and not able to be at Bible study Wednesday night... Remember **Kerry Cox's grandfather, Coy Lowman,** continues at home ... **Millinea Word** as she will be beginning a new round of treatments soon ...**Mattie Blanche Word** continues at home and not able to be out ..**Aldeen Noles** is in the SunBridge Nursing Home in Lawrenceburg ..**Sheila Moore's mother-in-law, Laurene Whitehead,** is in the Athens Convalescent Center ...**Mary Best's nephew, Shannon Johnson,** who is at home ... **Millinea Word's mother, Nola McCafferty,** and **Tisha Thomas' grandmother, Nellie Hunter,** who are both in the Meadow Brook Nursing Home in Pulaski.

SYMPATHY: We want to express our deepest sympathy to **Arvel and Doris Newton** in the passing of their nephew, **Chester Newton,** on Saturday. I do not have the funeral arrangements at this time.

SONG SERVICE: Tonight will be the time for our worship in song. **Daniel Clemmons** will be responsible for planning the service. I hope that everyone will make their plans to be present for this worship to our Father.

SONG PRACTICE: We will meet this afternoon at 5:15 for our song practice. Our young boys will be leading some songs and we will be singing some songs that are new or unfamiliar to us. I hope that as many as can will be present to encourage our young boys.

COMMUNICATION GROUPS: Communication group three will meet tonight after the evening service. If you are in group three remember to meet with your group this evening.

Gospel POWER

is published in interest of New Testament Christianity and to enhance the work of the Anderson church.

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Classes 9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship 10:45 a.m.
Evening Worship 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes 7:00 p.m.

Anderson church Home Page

Anderson-church.org

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