

What the Devil Knows

By Paul R. Blake

Text: Matthew 4:1-11

Introduction:

- A. What do we know of the Devil?
 - 1. Devil - "diabolos" - An accuser; a slanderer.
 - 2. Satan - "satanas" - An adversary.
 - 3. He is incredibly intelligent and cunning.
 - a. An opponent who does his homework; studies us and the book by which we live.
 - 4. He knows the Bible - Matt. 4:1-11.
- B. We are warned to beware of him - Eph. 6:11 - "wiles of the devil."
 - 1. He lives to destroy the faith of God's people.
 - a. Has time to concentrate on them, as he already has everyone else under his influence.
 - 2. Satan is not ignorant nor unsophisticated.
 - a. When we begin to think that, we become open for his next trick.
 - 3. He knows and understands many things religious people and some brethren don't know.
 - 4. We must study and believe to the point that Satan won't have a greater knowledge of the word of God than we.
- C. Some things Satan knows:

I. KNOWS THAT GOD IS AND THAT JESUS CHRIST IS HIS SON

- A. A look at nature and the complexity of creation.
 - 1. Psalm 19:1-4
 - a. Spiritual fingers in the ears of their soul.
 - b. Child in a tantrum; "I doan wanna..."
 - c. They don't want to know Him.
 - 2. Psalm 139:14
- B. A look through a perfect book.
 - 1. Psalm 19:7-11
 - 2. God's word is perfect, sure, right, pure, clean, true & righteous.
 - 3. Can be depended on as THE source the absolute truth.
 - 4. Historically accurate book tells of Christ, open tomb cannot be disputed, abounding evidence cannot be denied.
- C. Satan doesn't try to deny it; he knows Christ; he confronted Him and lost.
 - 1. His efforts are directed at distracting our attention away from the infallible proofs.
 - 2. We are without excuse if we do not see what is all around us.
 - a. Rom. 1:20
 - b. There is no reason why we should doubt the existence of God and His Son.
 - 3. Satan knows - James 2:19.
 - 4. He is terrified by the evidence, that men might believe.
- D. That's why he's pleased when, in spite of the evidence, some still doubt.

1. James 1:6-8 - vulnerable.
2. Heb. 12:12 - Their faith had grown so weak that...
3. Doubt causes some to draw back away from salvation.
 - a. Heb. 10:38-39
- E. True commitment and service is based on solid faith.
 1. Find one who is lacking in service or dedication, likely he is doubting.
 2. Belief moves people to action - Acts 2:36-37.
 3. Belief and obedience so locked together that the opposite of belief is not unbelief but disobedience.
 - a. Heb. 3:18-19; 1Peter 2:6-8
- G. Satan knows there is a God and that Jesus is His Son.
 1. And, he acts on it!

II. KNOWS THAT RELIGION IS NOT ENOUGH

- A. A person can be religious and be lost.
 1. Cornelius was religious - prayed, gave alms, devout, feared God
 - a. Acts 10:2
 - b. Yet he had to obey the gospel in order to be saved - Acts 11:14.
 2. Ethiopian treasurer - very religious.
 - a. Was not saved until he had obeyed the gospel - Acts 8:27-39.
- B. The Bible is clear on this.
 1. Matt. 7:21-23; 2Thes. 1:7-8
- C. Satan doesn't mind if we are religious.
 1. Disguise for Pharisees - Matt. 23:28.
 2. Converts to that religion - 23:15.
- D. Satan knows that being religious isn't enough, but many do not.
 1. "One Church is as good as another."
 2. "As long as you are sincere."
 - a. As long as you are... (fill in the blank with your favorite word).
 - b. Nice to everyone, devout...
 3. Response to a request for Bible study - "I already have a Church."
 4. Satan is delighted.
- E. He knows that we will be lost if our religion does not coincide with the word of God.
 1. 1Peter 4:11; Col. 3:17
 2. I wish everyone knew what Satan knows about this.

III. KNOWS THE POWER OF THE GOSPEL

- A. The gospel preached today by faithful men is the same gospel preached by the apostles; exciting to know that I am repeating a principle that Peter or John might have preached.
 1. It has the same effect today that it had then.
 2. Rom. 1:16 - Headlines: "Sins removed! Souls bound for heaven! Satan loses!"
- B. God is pleased when it is preached - 1Cor. 1:18, 21.
 1. His word will never be sterile or impotent - Isa. 55:10-11.

- C. Changes vile men into saints; can you name something else that can do it?
 - 1. Saul of Tarsus, chief of sinners (1Tim. 1:15) into
 - 2. Apostle Paul, chiefest of Christ's servants - 1Cor. 15:10.
- D. Satan is deathly afraid of what that power can do to you.
 - 1. If we could learn what Satan knows, the Church would grow.
 - 2. Society would improve.
 - 3. Some justify their lack of zeal (laziness) by saying that it won't do any good to teach the world; implying the gospel is powerless today.
 - 4. Tickles Satan. He knows that the gospel can change the world.
 - 5. Doesn't it bother us that we are helping him to work his plan?

IV. KNOWS THE DANGER OF FALSE DOCTRINE

- A. Has taught some a few catch phrases:
 - 1. "Tread lightly" "Don't say things that will upset folks" "Stop stirring up trouble" "Just let things be" "Positive preaching" "Watch what you say or they won't come back"
 - 2. It is not possible to preach the truth in such a way that no one will be offended. If Jesus Christ could not do it, no man ever will. If a man pleases everyone with his preaching, he is not preaching anything.
 - a. Gal. 1:10; 1Tim. 4:1-3; 2Tim. 4:1-4
 - b. Nothing wrong with a personal conviction that one should be celibate or a vegetarian.
 - c. It is when it is taught for doctrine that it becomes trouble.
 - 3. Satan knows that teaching opinions and doctrines of men is dangerous; that's why it is one of his favorite tools.
- B. Jesus despises false teaching - Rev. 2:12-17.
 - 1. Matt. 16:6-12; 15:8-9, 13-14
- C. Satan knows what a little false teaching can do to a Church; if uncertain sounds continue, he wins.

V. KNOWS WHAT A LITTLE SIN CAN DO

- A. Some believe that as long as one isn't guilty of a big sin, he need not worry.
 - 1. Satan tempted Adam and Eve into committing one sin.
 - a. That was enough to separate them from God - Gen. 3:1-6, 2:17.
 - b. Knew if they committed one sin, they would commit more.
 - c. John 8:42-44
 - d. Satan trained people to lie, easiest sin to commit; harder drugs.
 - 2. Acts 5:1-11 - Ananias and Sapphira
 - a. "Just one lie is all."
 - b. "Justified, because it was a moment of weakness."
 - 3. Sins of weakness will cause one to be lost - Gal. 2:11-12.
 - a. Weary of hearing how that the young or aged or those in difficult situations "have it so hard, we understand if they aren't faithful..."
 - b. 1Cor. 10:13 applies to the young, old, and hard pressed.
 - 4. Sins of ignorance will cause one to be lost - Acts 8:18-24.
 - a. Simon didn't know.

- B. Not only will a little sin defile the man, but it can corrupt the Church.
 1. 1Cor. 5:6 - " a little leaven..."
 2. Satan knows that.
 3. Why can't we accept the fact that a little sin damns.

VI. KNOWS THE DANGER OF EVIL ASSOCIATIONS

- A. Being around dancing, drinking, or immodesty will not bother us (?)
 1. "As long as we aren't participating."
 2. Is it a commentary on a Christian if he is more comfortable among sinners than saints?
 3. Some are embarrassed for the worldly to see them stand apart as Christians.
- B. Satan wants us to view worldliness as pleasure, rather than destruction.
 1. Heb. 11:25 - Moses.
 2. Progression into sin is slow and gradual.
 - a. Psalm 1:1 - steps to scornfulness.
 - b. Start by observing it -- initiates tolerance.
 - c. Move to proximity -- breaks down resistance.
 - d. Progress to participation -- sinning.
 3. First step on road to hell isn't sin, it's bad judgment.
 4. 1Cor. 15:33 - Satan knows that verse; why do we think we know better?
 5. Eph. 5:11 - Only acceptable answer to works of darkness.

VII. KNOWS WHAT MISSING SERVICES WILL DO

- A. Many who do (regularly or occasionally) think little of it.
 1. "But what else could I do?" "Had no choice." "Got to eat." "Got to have an education." "Don't feel that it was wrong." headache, backache
- B. Not only do we sin when we are willfully absent (Heb. 10:23-26), we commit a deliberate act to weaken ourselves.
 1. Satan knows that being absent will make us more vulnerable.
 2. We build our faith by feasting on the word - Rom. 10:17.
 3. Satan knows that strong Christians are out of his reach at services.
 4. More vulnerable when we are home by ourselves.
- C. He knows that missing services will hurt; why don't we know that?

Conclusion:

- A. Do we know as much as Satan?
 1. He knows there is a heaven and hell.
 2. He knows there is a Judgment Day.
 3. 2Peter 2:3-11; 1Peter 5:8