

THE SUBTLETY OF SATAN

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’” —GENESIS 3:1

Scripture warns us there is an enemy in our midst. When Satan appears in physical form in Scripture, it is as the serpent. Under his control is a league of fallen angels or demons, whose agenda it is to deceive us into believing we are the gods of our own lives. Not to believe in the existence of Satan and his demons is already to be deceived.

Paul writes to the Corinthians, “I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may also be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ” (2 Corinthians 11:3). How did Satan deceive Eve? She lived in a paradise with everything she could possibly want when Satan said to her, “Did God really say...?” The power of suggestion and casting of doubt, as evident here, can lead us to believe we can be masters of our own lives. And the devil will have accomplished what he set out to do.

Satan’s strategy is to blind people to the truth in an effort to destroy any spiritual calling from God. One of the demonic activities we are told amongst believers within the church of Jesus Christ is the sidetracking of people from the truth of the Gospel. It is not Satan’s tactic to deny biblical doctrine, but to corrupt it. We have many New Age movements and a rapid growth of cults, sects and alternative religions, tailored to meet our needs and make life more comfortable. If churches are not teaching sound biblical doctrine, we are on shifting ground. Demon deception sidetracks from the word of God to other topical,

psychological issues which Christians and non-Christians alike fall prey to.

In 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, Paul tells us Satan's servants masquerade as apostles of Christ, servants of righteousness and Satan, himself, as an angel of light. His tactic in the Garden of Eden was not to come as an angel in dazzling light, but from the animal world. Why is this significant? Because Adam and Eve were deceived into thinking they could handle him. They were in control and that is exactly what the devil will have us believe.

C.S. Lewis wrote an excellent fictional book called, "Screwtape Letters", based on his understanding of how the demonic world operates. He wisely writes: "There are two equal and opposite errors into which we may fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve their existence and the other is to exaggerate their powers. The devil is pleased with either error." We need to be consistently prepared for the work of Satan, which undermines our recognition that apart from God we cannot conquer him.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, help me to recognize the work of Satan and keep me in your protective care. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I on my guard for anything that may be the work of Satan intruding upon my life?