



Snares

Part 1

June 11, 2023

The Apostle Paul's 2nd Letter to His Son in the Faith, Timothy:

2 Timothy 2:20-26, ²⁰Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. ²¹Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. ²²So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. ²³Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.

²⁴ And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, ²⁵ correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will."

May the Lord add His Blessing to the Reading and the Hearing of His Word, In Jesus Name. Amen.

The Snare of the Devil. How often have we been snared by our words, our deeds, our thoughts or by our sins? If you know anything about trapping or snaring; the goal of snaring is not to kill but to trap in place until the hunter comes to call. A snare is meant to impede movement and to contain to a specific place without any forward movement or way or escape.

And like an animal, we too can be snared; trapped by the enemy without any hope of escape. And throughout the month of June, I will be teaching on the snares of life and how we must seek to be freed from such devices in so that we may move forward. So today, let's discuss a few snares:

1. The Snare of Our Words

- a. Proverbs 6:1-5, “My son, if you have put up security for your neighbor, have given your pledge for a stranger, ²if you are snared in the words of your mouth, caught in the words of your mouth, ³then do this, my son, and save yourself, for you have come into the hand of your neighbor: go, hasten, and plead urgently with your neighbor. ⁴Give your eyes no sleep and your eyelids no slumber; ⁵save yourself like a gazelle from the hand of the hunter, like a bird from the hand of the fowler.”
- b. Friends, if we were to be honest, our mouths are our greatest enemies; our feelings, emotions, thoughts, and internal hidden state of being. Who we are and what we are will always be easily ascertained by the words of our mouths; church, your heart will always tell on you by the words that you speak.
- c. Take for example the Words of Christ Himself found in Saint Matthew’s Gospel chapter 12...
- d. The Gospel of Saint Matthew 12:33-37, “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or make the tree bad and its fruit bad, for the tree is known by its fruit. ³⁴You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵The good person out of his good

treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. ³⁶ I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, ³⁷ for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

- e. Church, our words matter because our words can create more than snares in our lives; it will directly impact our eternity. We must strive, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to guard our hearts for by it we directly guard our words. And just as our primary text for this point annotates, if we are snared by our words then give no rest to our eyes nor embrace slumber; but rather own our words and seek to be loosed from the bondage of our words.
- f. Remember, to be loosed from the snare of our words, we must own what we've said, make no excuse for them but rather bear the burden, or rather, eat of the fruit of our words in so that we may learn prudence. Check your words, check your hearts and guard your lips; for from them flow the issues of life. Point #2...

2. The Snare of Our Imaginations

- a. 2 Corinthians 10:3-6, “For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. ⁵We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ, ⁶being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.”
- b. If I were a man to wager a bet, I’d dare to wager that most of our anxieties are birthed from the vanity of our imaginations and the anxieties of our hearts. A dear friend and Pastor, Pastor Jon Ashcraft, recently shared the following and I felt it prudent to share with all of you.
- c. “Worry is the invention of and salvation from imaginary trouble. In worry, we become the heroes of our mental projections, protecting ourselves from perils which exist only in our minds. We have protected ourselves and others from made up scenarios that are unlikely to occur. All the while we ignore and disengage from real world problems we are perfectly capable of solving, thereby failing to become the real heroes of our real life stories.”

- d. Church, our imaginations can be just as snaring as our words; our imaginations create points of anxiety, worry and fear of things that are not real nor, most in generally, are not in the realm of possibility.
- e. How often have we created false narratives and scenarios in our minds when it comes to conflict with others and we amp up and gear up for a proverbial war that was never meant to be nor will ever happen.
- f. Beloved, we must guard our words and guard our minds lest the fear of our hearts create a false reality. Far too often, our feelings are not real; they are unfounded and false. We all must stop allowing our feelings guide our imaginations and create narratives that are not true.
- g. As text expresses in 2 Corinthians, **“We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ...”**
- h. May we all today individually choose to take our thoughts captive unto obedience to Christ thus escaping the snare of our imaginations! And lastly, point #3...

3. The Snare of Our Bitterness

- a. Hebrews 12:12-16, “¹²Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, ¹³and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. ¹⁴Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. ¹⁵See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;”
- b. Notice with me the second half of verse 15... that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled
- c. Note that the root of bitterness is singular but the impact is plural thus by it many become defiled... Friends, bitterness is destructive on a multitude of levels but primarily it destroys the host and sickens everyone who comes in contact with the host. Like a virus, bitterness will spread if you are not careful; bitterness is the fruitful tree birthed from the seed of offense.
- d. Bitterness spreads through our words and our attitudes and, if we are not careful, others we are close too will take ownership of our offenses over actions that were not committed against them.

e. Today is the day to pull out the root of bitterness, choose to forgive, and move forward. Bitterness is a snare! And so many are trapped in this snare of bitterness and unforgiveness that we need deliverance from; we are all hopelessly lost and undone without Christ to help us to walk through this life and it is my prayer today that snares be broken off of you today in Jesus Name!