

Why Christians Should Keep the Law (Part 6)—The Devil's Strategy

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The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/vzmfprt/pt-6-why-christians-should-keep-the-law>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Welcome, everyone, to Episode 6 of our series *Why Christians Should Keep the Law*.

In today's episode, we will see a special dialogue take place. This dialogue is recorded in Genesis 3 and takes place in the Garden of Eden. Within this dialogue, we are given, what I would argue, the greatest revelation in all of Scripture regarding how the devil attempts to move against us, his modus operandi, and his strategy to take us out. Out of everything we will cover in this series (we will cover a lot of information, and all of it is important), I will say what we cover in today's message has a very special place in this discussion. I think as we get through this, you will appreciate that fact.

Let's jump right into Genesis 3:1. I will break verse one into two parts. Let's cover the first part:

Genesis 3:1a—^{1a} **Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.**

We need to cover several things here. First, for clarity's sake, who is this serpent? We can safely say this is explicitly referring to Satan, the devil. That's not my opinion; that is Scripture. The book of Revelation draws from Genesis 3:1.

Revelation 20:2—² **He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan.** (Emphasis added.) (Also, see Revelation 12:9.)

This gives a very specific title, "the serpent of old," to Satan, the devil. There's no debate that the imagery of this serpent, which in Hebrew is *nachash*, is, in fact, the devil. As a quick side note, it is interesting to me that *nachash* is not just a Hebrew term for serpent; it just so happens to be a term for witchcraft, for divination. I don't think that's a coincidence.

Continuing with Genesis 3:1a—^{1a} **Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.** (Emphasis added.)

This is the first time in Scripture that the devil is openly mentioned. The devil possesses so many unholy characteristics and despicable attributes that could have been recorded, yet only one thing is

mentioned. Do you think the Lord is trying to convey something important to us? You better believe it because the one attribute specifically affixed to the serpent, *nachash*, is *arum* in the Hebrew, which means cunning, crafty, and shrewd. His art of seduction and deception is above all.

Revelation 12:9 says—⁹ **So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world.** (Emphasis added.)

Notice, what is affixed to the serpent of old? **“Who deceives the whole world.”** The serpent of old deceives the whole world. That very lesson of deception was already communicated back in Genesis 3:1. So, we are talking about the kind of deception that Jesus talks about in Matthew 24:24, where he says, **“If possible, even the elect would be deceived.”** We are talking about a deception that is so great that it captures many Christians. We already covered that in this series. Many Christians fall into deception thinking they can walk lawlessly, when, in fact, at the end they find out they were deceived by the serpent.

Continuing with Genesis 3:1a—^{1a} **Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.** (Emphasis added.)

As a quick note (we don't have time to go down this road), notice the serpent, the devil, is affiliated with the beasts of the field. This is important because in Revelation a special mark, called the mark of the beast, is given to the wicked who worship the devil. Satan is being portrayed as a beast because it is highly prophetic. It is a specific imagery that God has chosen to apply to him that reverberates throughout Scripture, especially in the book of Revelation. So, that said, let's move on:

Genesis 3:1b—^{1b} **And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"**

Notice, with very first words the devil spoke out of his mouth (as recorded in Scripture), he called the Law of God into question. He cast doubt upon our need to obey the Law. He attempted to convince Eve that she didn't have to keep God's Word, His commandments. So, he brought the Law into question. This is very significant.

I look at the church today and the prevailing mantra is “Jesus did away with the Law. I don't have to keep the Law because Jesus kept the Law. I don't need to do that. I don't have to keep the commandments.” So, Christians are walking away from God's Law. This is absolutely terrifying. They don't realize that this deception goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden. There's nothing new here. What is happening today, happened in the garden.

Keep in mind, Adam and Eve were in a glorified state as children of God. They really were the church of the day, and the enemy went for them. Make no mistake; do not be deceived in any way because you better believe he's coming for the church. He's coming for Christians. He hates them. He wants to steal, kill, and destroy. Notice, this is exactly what the devil did to Eve. He came to steal the Law of God from her. This was her inheritance. The psalmist actually talks about how the Law is our inheritance forever. Satan wants to take it.

Deuteronomy 29:29—²⁹ **The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.** (Emphasis added.)

I love how the secret things belong to the Lord, but the things that are revealed belong to us. They are ours, and the devil is coming to take the precious treasure of the kingdom, the holy Words of God, His commandments, His Law, from us.

How did Eve respond to the devil?

Genesis 3:2-3—² And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, **God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'**" (Emphasis added.)

I want to highlight "**God has said.**" Eve literally communicated, "This is the Word of the Lord. God has commanded we can eat of every tree, but this tree we cannot." The devil had said, "**Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?**" And Eve responded, "**God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'**" (Emphasis added.)

The three words, "**lest you die**" are added at the end of this verse. God didn't just give His commandments to Adam and Eve; He also gave them the ramifications for not keeping His commandments. If they did not keep His Law, they would face the wrath of God. They would face certain death. It was the death penalty.

I love this part because it encompasses the totality of the Word. When God gives us commandments, He also tells us the judgment. And what is the judgment supposed to do? What is mentioning "lest you die" to Adam and Eve supposed to do? It's supposed to cultivate the fear of the Lord in us. Then you can weigh out the situation and say, "This temptation is not worth it because I know the ramifications. I know the implications for disobeying God. It's not worth it. I won't do it."

There is a reason we don't run around sticking our fingers in light sockets. Even if someone said they would give you a hundred bucks to stick your finger in a light socket, a wise person would not do that. Why? Because they know the ramification; they could be electrocuted and even die. It wouldn't be worth it.

Knowing God's judgment produces the fear of God. We are told in Proverbs 16:6—⁶ **In mercy and truth atonement is provided for iniquity; and by the fear of the LORD one departs from evil.** (Emphasis added.) It is the fear of God that keeps you from sinning.

What happens when you remove that fear? People move into sin. We need the fear of God. The devil knows how important that fear is because what are His next words?

Genesis 3:4—⁴ **Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die."** (Emphasis added.)

So, let me get this straight. God told Eve, "**lest you die.**" Satan said, "**You will not surely die.**" In essence, Satan called God a liar. What was Satan's point? What angle was Satan working? He was removing the fear. Satan knows what will follow if he can remove the fear; he knows he can get her to disobey God.

If the enemy can convince you that there are no ramifications from walking away from the Law, you will walk away from the Law. It's inherent to the flesh to do just that. We have to fight the flesh, let alone

all the deception and temptations that are cultivated by demonic forces. What keeps us in check is the fear, so Satan wants to remove the fear.

This is the battleground in the church today because Satan is convincing Christians: "It doesn't matter if you turn your back on the Law; nothing will happen; you will not die. It doesn't matter if you keep the commandments; you will not die; it's not salvific." This is the mantra today.

Well, unfortunately, Satan was not done. He said more:

Genesis 3:5—⁵ "For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

You want to talk about getting into the stratosphere of insane deception. The devil was mixing lies with truth. His first statement, "You will surely not die," was an outright, boldface lie. But his next statement in verse 5 is a little trickier because if you take this in its hyper literal sense, it's a true statement. We know it's a true statement because you can jump ahead a few verses and read:

Genesis 3:22—²² Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever." (Emphasis added.)

After Adam and Eve had succumbed to sin and deception, God said, "Man has become like one of Us, to know good and evil" (Genesis 3:22a). That's exactly what the devil said to Eve in verse five. He said, "In the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:5). So, what the devil said was true.

The problem with the statement is that Satan presented this as a good thing for her eyes to be opened not simply to righteousness, but to darkness. Therefore, Satan presented the Law of God as something oppressing her, binding her, shackling her, and preventing her from progressing to being a better and greater person.

Well, I kid you not, this is exactly what the devil is doing to Christians all over the world today. He convinces them that by upholding the Law and walking in the commandments of God, they are falling into a state of oppression and need to be set free. He convinces them they need to walk away from the Law because that's what it means to walk in liberty, although in this series, you will see Scripture tells us otherwise.

In Isaiah 46:10, God said that He declares the end from the beginning. You need to seriously consider this story and how important it is. Think about how the devil will move against you. Think about what Paul said to the Corinthians:

2 Corinthians 2:11—¹¹ lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

We are not ignorant because God preserved Satan's modus operandi. He preserved how Satan is coming to take us out. We know this because of God's holy Word.

That's all the time we have for today. May the Lord bless you and keep you. I hope to see you in the next video.

