

The Identities of Evil

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[0 : 00] and faithful to the Lord. If you have your Bibles, I want you to turn to 1 Peter. 1 Peter chapter 5, we're in a series called The Real War because I am convinced that we are fighting battles that are unseen but very felt.

And we need to understand because we can't quite see it with the human eye. We can see the evidence of it. We need clarity on what exactly we're facing. And how do you fight or stand against something when you don't even know what you're fighting?

When I was a child, my dad went out one night to walk the dog. And it was a night and a walk that he's never forgotten.

He spoke of it a couple of weeks ago, and we've never forgotten it either. It was in the dead of winter in the upper peninsula of Michigan where my father was stationed at Kincheloe Air Force Base.

That's about 11 miles from the Canada line and cold is not the word for it. I walked to school in three foot of snow. It was not uphill and I was not barefooted, but when a five-year-old walks in three foot of snow, it is uphill.

[1 : 12] And when it's ten below, you are barefooted, no matter how much you got on your feet. We had a well-trained dog and we had a big set of woods behind the house and he could let that dog run at night and Dad took him out for a walk.

One night, the dog got into something. Dad went running to find out what was wrong and they both got sprayed by a skunk. When they came back to the house, neither were welcome.

But we had to let them in because they would have died. It was so cold. And so I'm just going to tell you, I don't know how else to tell you, Pop stank for days. I mean stank.

And we had to roll the windows down in that Buick station wagon in the dead of winter just to survive when we rode with him for several days. It helps to know what you're fighting.

It really does. And before you go into battle. So I want to be clear. You're in a war. And you'll face some battles.

[2 : 18] Thank God the war's been won, but there's still squirmishes going on. There's still battles being fought. And if you don't realize that, you're going to lose way too many of them. It helps to know who you're going to take a stand against.

Who are you dealing with? And we can find out a lot about the evil one when we study the names that he is called in Scripture.

These names are given as descriptive titles of what he stands for. And his traits are shown through these names.

But I want to begin by looking at Peter's advice to us. Thank God's also inspired by the Holy Spirit of God and given to us by the Lord. 1 Peter 5, verse 6 says this.

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him because he cares for you.

[3 : 20] Be sober-minded. Be watchful. Listen now. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

Resist him. Firm in your faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings will be experienced by the brotherhood throughout the world. And after you've suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who's called you to his eternal glory in Christ, this is worth underlining, folks, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. I don't have time this morning to talk about restoring and confirming and strengthening and establishing, but man, I wish I did because that is good stuff.

That's not our topic this morning, but I'm telling you, I read that at 9 o'clock, and it blessed my heart, and I read it again, and it blesses my heart to know that we have a God that's there for us when we need him, regardless of what we're going through, and I'm going to tell you what you're going through because we can learn a lot about the evil one by the way God defines him through his word.

And so I want to look at various names and learn about his schemes because his schemes are the real problem. I want you to hear me. It is not our kids that's the problem.

[4 : 57] I know what Sunday mornings are like in the home, okay? It's not our kids. It's not our spouses. It's not our opponents.

It's not the bullies in our life. It's not the nemesis in our life. It is the demonic schemes of the evil one, and oftentimes that is seen in other people's lives, and oftentimes it's seen in our lives. But when we study the names of God in Scripture, we learn about his attributes and the ways that he leads us and ministers us and helps us, and by understanding the names of the devil, we learn the way that he steals from us.

We learn the ways that he attempts to destroy us, that he strives to kill us. And the first one I want to talk about is one, and I'm going to talk about real popular ones today, ones you've heard of probably, but in our passage, he is called the devil, which means the slanderer or the accuser. I call him the whisperer, and the reason why is do you ever notice when you have something good and juicy on somebody and you want to tell somebody else, you just look around, you lean in, and you say it real soft.

[6 : 25] Y'all don't know what I'm talking about because y'all ain't never told anything juicy on anybody, have you? Praise the Lord. We got one problem solved. That's what the devil does.

He leans in, gets our attention, and whispers to us. Now I want you to hear me. He's not after you. He's after Christ. He does not want to discredit you. He wants to discredit Christ. However, if he can discredit the people of God, he can discredit God.

And he does that through his whispers. He tells the lost, Jesus is not the only way.

That is, as long as you are sincere in what you believe, that God will save you. You can be a Muslim. You can be a Mormon. As long as you're a churchgoer, then you're safe.

[7 : 40] And I want you to be clear about something. Don't ever think that your presence here, or that a baptism that you've experienced, will get you to heaven.

Because it won't. Sometimes it causes confusion. Because it's not real in your life. If you've not committed your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, if you've not admitted the sin in your life, and asked him to forgive you, and to cleanse you, and to come into your life, and to change you, you'll have hell to pay.

There's no confirmation process. There's no Bible knowledge that you can have. There's no grandpa in ministry that'll save your soul from an eternal hell.

It only comes when we surrender our lives to the Lord. And the devil don't want you to realize that. The devil don't want you to understand that. Just like the serpent in the garden, a manifestation of the evil one himself, said to Eve in the garden, and he said, did God really say?

Did he really? You see, the devil is a liar, he's a slanderer, and he whispers to the lost. But not only the lost, he whispers to the saved.

[9 : 00] He'll make you doubt your salvation. He'll tell you Christians, well, they don't really sin. Look at you. He'll tell you that God gets tired of you.

He'll tell you there's no need for you to confess that to God again. Because God's written you off. He'll make you doubt your salvation, and doubt will steal your joy.

And when your joy is stolen, you won't share your faith with others. You're not even sure you have it. You sure ain't gonna share it. And the state of being unforgiven because of a lack of confession will serve, listen to me, Christian, unconfessed sin serves as a facilitator for stumbling blocks in your life, for strongholds in your life.

You let sin just fester in your life. It's like watching grass grow in your yard, hoping it's gonna be shorter by next week. We're in the dead of summer, folks. It ain't gonna get shorter.

It's gonna be worse. And so it is with an unforgiving heart. As our passage says, he's prowling around, looking for an opportunity. He'll lie about God.

[10 : 15] He'll lie about others. He'll tell you not to forgive others. He'll tell you to hold it against them. He'll put thoughts in your head about how people are just out to get you. How somehow

you're the focus of everyone else out to get you.

Get you so keyed up, so full of hate and worry. You're so pondering on that when somebody says hey to you, it's like they said boo, scares you to death.

Afraid they're coming after you. Why? Because of his whispers. Because of the things he says to you. He'll whisper to you about God. He'll whisper to you about yourself.

He'll whisper to you about others. He'll lie to you. He'll slander. He's the devil. But he's also called Satan.

And whereas devil is a transliteration of the Greek, Satan comes from the Hebrew language, which the majority of the Old Testament is written in.

[11:22] And it means adversary or accuser. That is the word that's used in Job chapter 1, verse 6 and 7.

When Satan walks into the courts of heaven and the Lord says, where have you been? Now let me just say this. God never asks questions because he don't know the answer.

God will ask you questions. Not audible. Louder than that. In your heart.

He knows the answer. You need to know the answer. And so God confronts us sometimes with questions. He does that in Scripture as well.

He didn't have to ask Eve where they'd been. He didn't have to ask them that. He knew where they'd been. He wanted them to face that. And he does the same thing. So when we see this question that he's asked, he's not asking it because he don't know where the evil one is.

[12:27] He's asking it so we can understand that. And he answers, Satan answers, I've been going to and fro on the earth. Sounds a lot like the passage I read in 1 Peter chapter 5.

He's like a lurker. Satan's walking around looking to see what he can get into. What he can mess up. Kind of like a group of punks walking around or riding around the neighborhood at night, just midnight, just looking for something.

Up to no good. And that same word Satan is used in 1 Chronicles chapter 21 verse 1. When Satan incites David to number Israel.

In other words, what he said was take a survey and find out how powerful you really are. Do you really know how big this army is, David? Why don't you just get them to count?

And so David wells up a little bit. He goes to Joab, his commander, and tells him to take a census of the army. And I want you to listen to Joab's response.

[13:37] And I want you to notice in the text where the word Lord is capitalized, okay, and where it's in small case because when he's speaking and it's in small case, he's calling David Lord, not because he's his savior, but because that was a title given to somebody who you're under.

It means sir. It means master, commander, whatever you want to call it. Notice what he says. He says, may the Lord, that's the Lord, add to his people a hundred times as many as there are.

Are they not, my Lord the king, all of them, my Lord's servants? Why then should my Lord require this? Why should it be a cause of guilt for Israel?

But the king's word prevailed against Joab, so Joab departed and went throughout Israel and came back to Jerusalem. Now what Joab's saying is, listen, God's got this.

We don't need to count these folks. Don't you know, David, that everybody is behind you.

Everybody will rise up. No matter what it takes, we'll make sure we get the job done.

[14:47] We don't need to do this. Don't take pride in your numbers. Trust God to take care of the matter. David wouldn't listen. He got the men counted and then he welled up with pride.

But verse 7 says, but God was displeased with this thing and he struck Israel. My friend, that is exactly what Satan will do.

He will fill you with pride and he will use pride to lead folks to fall. Satan is mentioned in the book of Zechariah and in that situation, he's piling up insults on a man named Joshua, the high priest who came before the Lord's presence and when he came before the Lord's presence, he was unfit.

He was dirty. He was not right. And Satan is just piling on the insults and we live much of our lives unfit. And every time we're stained, every time we're dirty, every time we're unconfessed before the Lord, it opens us up to the evil one's accusations and he'll make us squirm like the snake that he is.

Now the key to that is to stay clean before the Lord. The tighter you are with the Father, the less wiggle room you give to the evil one. When Jesus told his disciples that he was to go to Jerusalem and die, Peter, Peter wanted no part of it.

[16:24] Peter was zealous. Wore a dagger on his thigh. That's why he cut that man's ear off when he tried to arrest Jesus. I mean, you know, he had a big mouth.

His foot fit exactly right in his mouth. And some of y'all know exactly what that means but I won't point you out. Peter tried to correct him.

He said, far be it from you, Lord. This shall never happen to you. However, what Peter didn't understand was that part of the will of God.

And Jesus didn't need to hear somebody trying to dissuade him when he was in the midst of not only taking on the cross that he would endure but bigger than that what he called the cup in the garden which was the cup of God's wrath.

That means the sin of the weight of the world was to fall upon his shoulders. He had a bunch on him. He didn't need anybody else putting it on him. And he responded to Peter and said, get behind me, Satan.

[17:32] You're a hindrance to me. Now, was Peter Satan? No. Jesus knew that Satan was trying to throw him off his game and he used Peter to do it just like he did to Adam and Eve in the garden when he tried to throw them off their game just like he attempts to quote scripture to Jesus in the desert of temptation.

Why does he accuse and hinder? Satan opposes the agenda of God. He works against the plan of God. He does it in our lives.

He does it in our church. He does it in the kingdom of God. In the book of Thessalonians, the apostle Paul talked about wanting to come back to Thessalonica. and see them and every time he tried he said Satan hindered him from coming.

Now, why would Satan hinder Paul from going back to God's people? Because Paul was encouraged to see them and he encouraged them to be strong.

He was encouraged by them. He called the church that he nurtured and strengthened his glory and his joy. And the devil don't want anything to do with that.

[18:45] He don't want us to enjoy worship. He don't want us to grow together in the Lord. He wants to hinder that and be careful what he puts in your path for that.

That's what the adversary, the accuser does. He gets in the way of the work of God. He assaults people. He whispers sweet, nothing is in your ear. Or like David, he leads you to seek after things for your glory and not God's glory because his attack is toward God.

He's Satan, the accuser. And many times the false accuser. Because I got news for you today. If your sin is confessed and you've been forgiven and you've, it's been removed by the shed blood of the cross of Christ and you've repented and changed directions and walked away from that sin, it's gone.

And I don't know how many people I've met that's been haunted by something that happened in their life years ago or months ago or weeks ago that they've repented of and walked away from and yet they still feel the weight of that.

That's not of God. That's the evil one just continuing to pepper you. Because see, if he can beat you down enough, you'll give up.

[20:06] You just won't try. And we've been challenged by the Lord to live for the honor and glory of God. Man, that's hard to do when we're beat up. Don't listen to Satan's smack.

He's your adversary, your opponent that tries to agonize you. He's also called Lucifer.

And it only happens one time. It's in Isaiah chapter 14, verse 12. And it's translated in different ways. It's fascinating. It's the word study of this. In the ESV, they call it the Daystar.

That's what I read out of the English Standard Version. And they call him Daystar there. In the King James, it says Lucifer. And that is actually from a Latin translation called the Vulgate of the Old Testament.

And from that word, it's a Latin term, Lucifer. But it's translated as bearer of light or sun, S-O-N, of the morning.

[21:16] That's what he was. When you look back at his history as we did last week, God created a beautiful creature and gave him high standing.

But pride got in the way when he tried to be greater than God. And he went from the sun of morning to the father of night.

So, so, why is that sun of morning, that description of him so important? Because it helps us to understand why his approach is sadly often successful in destroying people's lives.

whoever told you that Satan is ugly and scary and would cause you to run lied to you. Satan was created attractive.

He was winsome. An angel of light. And it is that way that he tries his best to present himself. Paul warns the church in 2 Corinthians 11 that there are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ and no wonder for even Satan, listen to this, disguises himself as an angel of light.

[22 : 41] So it is no surprise if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Satan will short sell you every time.

He does it again and again in so many ways. I want you to listen to the proverb writer when he warns about adultery and what a common trap for the evil one.

Sexual sin is something that the evil one loves to trap us with. loves to destroy us with. And he's having a heyday in the country.

He really is. In so many ways we celebrate sodomy as a country. And if we're not clear about what the word of God says and what God says about it and we don't speak to that, it'll never be heard. So we need to be clear. Proverbs 5 talks about how easy it is to fall into sexual sin and the proverb writer was writing to a young man and he says this, for the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey and her speech is smoother than oil but in the end she's bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

[24 : 05] Her feet go down to death, her steps follow the path to Sheol. She does not ponder the path of life, her ways wonder and she does not know it.

Keep your way far from her and do not go near the door of her house lest you give your honor to others and your years to the merciless, lest strangers take their fill of your strength and your labors go to the house of a foreigner.

For at the end of your life you groan when your flesh and blood are consumed and you say how I hated discipline and my heart despised reproof.

I did not listen to the voice of my teachers and incline my ears to my instructors. I'm at the brink of utter ruin in the assembled congregation.

Let me just rest there for a minute because the evil one whether it be sexual sin or some other type of sin the evil one don't want you to come back to church.

[25 : 20] He don't want you to walk faithfully with the Lord. He don't want you to be reminded of what the Word of God says. He don't want you to feel the Spirit of God move in a place like we have this morning.

He don't want that to happen so he'll try his best to hinder you. Now Proverbs 5 is written from an older man to a young man to warn him about the adulteress and ladies if that's offensive to you I got news for you.

Adulterating men are sorrier than her. Don't be appeased by them. Young people save yourself and if it's too late for that then start afresh today because I'm telling you you can be clean before the Lord.

He'll wash you clean and renew you but the devil wants his best to suck you in to a pattern in your life that'll cause great distress.

Lucifer's sweet. He's sinful and he's sensual in his suggestions and they ruin you. It sure doesn't seem ugly.

[26 : 40] When I was a youth minister I used to tell young people if the devil wants to entice you he don't come down the school hallway with a skull on a stick saying let's party. He brings the most beautiful girl.

he brings the most athletic boy. He brings the folks that you're most attracted to to drag you into a pit that you have a hard time rising out of.

He doesn't sell himself as one that'll ruin you. He doesn't sell himself as one who'll cause you to be bound in sin. He'll tell you it's your life you do what you want to with it.

Don't let nobody tell you what to do. He don't sell folks on addiction. He don't tell them how they can get involved with alcohol and become addicted and ruin their life.

He don't tell them how they can be involved in drugs and how that can absolutely ruin their life. It just seems fun for a moment. He don't tell you how you become addicted to porn and ruin your life.

[27 : 55] He don't share those things. No, he makes it about social status. He makes it about a relief from what woes you.

He makes it about an ease of pain. However, it's all schemes. as Jesus put it, to steal and to kill and to destroy.

He's Lucifer. He's attractive to follow, but he's condemning in the end. It's not a game. It's a war. And we must battle. So, three things quickly. One is, don't be enticed by the evil one. He'll whisper sweet little lies in your ear and it's easy to get enticed.

Don't do it. The second thing is, don't be entertained by the evil one. Because the accuser wants to sidetrack us, I promise you. He wants to throw us off our game.

[29 : 04] More importantly, he wants to throw us off what God's got for us. So, don't be entertained by the evil one. And lastly, don't be enamored by the evil one.

One day, a quick, big-fangled, fast-talking hobo came to Mayberry. And he started getting Opie's attention, and it would lead Opie down a wrong path, and Andy got involved.

And the hobo said, well, Sheriff, maybe I do things, look at things a little different than other people do. Is that wrong? I live by my wits.

I'm not above bending the law or to keep clothes on my back or food in my stomach. I like the kind of life that other people would just love to live if they only had the courage.

What's to say that your boy wouldn't be happier? what's to say that the boy would be happier your way than mine? Why don't we let him decide?

[30 : 18] And Andy replied to the man that would the next day strike oil in another TV series, black gold Texas tea, and move to Beverly Hills.

Andy replied, nah, and listen, I'm just going to say this, and if you don't know what I'm talking about with either one of these series, shame on you. There's enough apps to find this stuff.

Andy replied to him and said this, nah, I'm afraid it don't work that way. You can't let a young'un decide for himself. He'll grab at the first flashy thing with shiny ribbons on it.

And then when he finds it, there's a hook in it. And it's too late. The wrong ideas come packaged with so much glitter, it's hard to convince him that other things might be better in the long run.

And all a parent can say is wait. Trust me. And try to keep temptation away.

[31 : 38] Don't be enamored by the evil one. Don't reach for flashy things. That's a ploy of the evil one. And there's a hook in it.

The Lord is saying wait. trust me. Trust me. And I'm thankful today that we can.

I just want you to know who we're dealing with. And scripture's quite clear when we look at the examples that it gives us. With every head bowed and every eye closed, I ask you today, has there ever been a time in your life when you've surrendered your life to follow the Lord Jesus?

When you've confessed your need of Christ, your need for forgiveness, ask him to save you, to forgive you, to empower you by his Holy Spirit to change your life.

If that's never happened to you, I want you to know that he will save you today. Today's the day of salvation. He'll change your life. We're going to stand in just a moment and we're going to sing and as we start, I want you to come.

[33 : 03] If you've never given your heart and life to the Lord Jesus, you come and tell me. I'd love to take time with you right after the service to speak to you just for a few moments about what it means to give your heart and life to the Lord Jesus.

Maybe you're here this morning and you have done that, but you've never acknowledged that through baptism, which I believe is the first step of obedience based on what scripture tells me.

Jesus, by his example and by his commission, told us that if we're ashamed of him before others, he'll be ashamed of us before our Father, which means it's not really legitimate if we're ashamed of it.

He tells us to acknowledge what Christ has done in our life as believers through baptism, physical process, to honor him and obey him in that way.

If you've never done that, I'm going to tell you, it's not just a procedure. It's a hindrance in your life if you've never done it. The devil would use that to slow you down. Maybe you're here and God's drawing you to First Baptist Church.

God's doing a wonderful work in our midst and I'm thankful for that. God's leading you here. I'd love to guide you in that. But for all of us, we're in a battle.

[34 : 15] And some of us are losing it, at least in some area of our life. And today you can walk clean.

You can make a decision that, God, I want to lean on your power and strength. I want to do what's right in you. I want to trust you instead of my own judgment. And I don't know what everything holds for that, but I'm just going to trust you with it, Lord.

I'm going to give it over to you. I'm going to ask you to empower me to change today, to please you with all of my life.

Don't get caught in the stare that he'll set for us. Lord Jesus, today, I pray that you'll allow us to honor you by giving it over to you, by entrusting you with it.

Oh, God, I pray. Lead us, Lord, to honor you with all of our lives. In Jesus' precious name, amen.
Amen.