

What the Enemy Knows

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Date: 22 September 2024

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[0 : 00] Let's turn to Ephesians chapter 6. Ephesians chapter 6. As we look at the real war that is going on behind the scenes in our world, it's important that we know some facts.

What is what's unseen is more real than what's seen. What's going on that you can't see influences and changes what happens, the things that you can see, but in reality, what's unseen is more real than what's seen.

Second thing I want you to get is the devil wants to make us think that he's more than he is. And then he also wants to make us think that we're less than we are in Christ.

The reality is he wants us to think less of Christ. And he makes an all-out effort to make sure he does everything he can to make us think less of Christ.

It's upon those principles that I want us to look at what the enemy knows. Ephesians chapter 6, beginning verse 12, says this, For we don't wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

[1 : 39] So what does Satan know? Well, he knows a lot, but he's not omniscient. He's not all-knowing.

You may want you to think that, but he just watches and listens quite honestly. He also knows some things about salvation. He knows things about his future.

And so what does the enemy know? First thing I want you to get that he knows is he knows we have weaknesses. He knows that.

When you go on the Internet, somebody's watching you. It's not a person. It's not exactly AI. It's logging, really.

Computers are logging your every activity. What you look at is calculated. What kind of content you're interested in is considered.

[2 : 35] And how popular your posts are determine a lot of what is made available to you. The algorithms that determine such a complex calculation are determined when somebody looks at this site.

And when someone interacts with this product. People that look at this site and interact with this product. They're usually interested in these other things.

It's those kind of algorithms that work to try to figure us out. In addition to that, our phones listen to us and interact with our interest.

It really got my attention when I was in a Southeast Asia country teaching underground to the church. And they told us not only to cut our phones off.

But to remove them from the room. To get them out of earshot. Of what we were talking about. In a country that produces such as that.

[3 : 46] Have you ever talked about someone. And then notice you got a friend's suggestion on Facebook for that person. Well for one you ought to be ashamed of yourself for talking about people.

Alright. But that's a whole other subject for another matter. What about having a conversation about a product. And then go on Amazon and it suggests that product to you.

Somebody's listening. And that's what happens in the spiritual world. To put it bluntly. 1 Peter chapter 5 verse 8 says.

Be sober minded. Be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion. Seeking someone to devour. Much like a lion hiding in the bush.

Waiting for a hyena to be alone. To get a little bit further away from the pack. And become vulnerable for attack. The evil one and his army are looking.

[4 : 50] Out for our vulnerabilities. They are unseen forces. But they are more real than what we see. And I want to be clear today. The devil don't want to give you a headache.

He wants to destroy your life. He wants to attack your peace. He wants to attack your joy. He wants to bring confusion and frustration in your life.

He wants to decrease your eagerness. If you're a Christian. He wants to decrease your eagerness to share your faith with others. And if you were honest this morning.

You may say. Pastor I don't really have a desire to share my faith. Well there you go. It's working. And let me tell you where he often looms.

And I'm always reluctant to bring up certain examples. Because it's. You may clue out if it don't involve you. And even if it does involve you.

[5 : 47] You want to act like you clue out. Let me tell you where he often looms. And where we are often weak. Two subjects. Sex.

And money. He loves to hang out in those areas. The devil wants to keep you impure. He'll work overtime for it.

He'll do it through lusts that lead to pornography. He'll lead it. That'll lead to crossing sensual boundaries. It'll lead to fornication.

It'll lead to adultery. Sometimes it leads to assault. It all starts in the mind. And he strives to keep it before us.

Through worldliness. Through social media. Through television. Through the loose morals of society. And when we are sexually impure.

[6 : 48] We have a hindrance to coming to Christ. It becomes a barrier for us. It's a barrier in our walk with Christ. It's a barrier in us coming to Christ.

And you may be like David. Who after he confessed his adultery. After he was confronted with his adultery. And the fact that he tried to cover it up. And a man died because of it.

In his prayer to God. His confessional prayer. He said my sin is ever before me. It's right there. It looms on me. And I'm telling you.

It can weigh you down. It can steal your joy. Or your persistence in that sin. Can lead to a dullness of conviction.

It's often referred to. And I've referred to it already in this series. Of a darkening of the mind. You just. When Satan darkens the mind.

[7 : 52] We just. We just attempt to justify our action. Or possibly. Not even see it as wrong anymore. But justify it. The apostle Paul warned married couples.

About our weaknesses. And he said in 1 Corinthians 7 verse 5. He said do not deprive one another. Except perhaps for. By agreement for a limited time.

That you may devote yourselves to prayer. But then come together again. So that Satan may not tempt you. Because of your lack of self control. Satan knows our weaknesses.

It often happens with sex. And it can also happen with money. Money is what led Judas to portray Christ. Instead of follow Christ. And he's not the only one. The rich young ruler.

Walked away from Christ. Sad. Because he had a lot of money. He didn't want to part from it. The early church was a.

[8 : 57] Generous church. Was very strong. And I'm talking about the early church in the book of Acts. That we read about in the book of Acts. It was marked by generosity. And it was expected among believers.

In 2 Corinthians 9. Verse 6 through 8. The apostle Paul says. The point is this. Whoever sows sparingly. Will also reap sparingly. And whoever sows bountifully.

Will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has decided in his heart. Not reluctantly. Or under compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you.

So that having all sufficiency. And all things at all times. You may abound in every good work. Yet it becomes a huge stumbling block.

For way too many people. It was in that kind of generous atmosphere. That Ananias and Sapphira said. Listen. We sold property. We brought all the money to the church.

[9 : 55] And they found out they were lying. They didn't find out. They knew they were lying. They tried to act as if they were faithful. In giving to the Lord. Well above the tithe. Very generous. But they lied about it.

And either the shock of being found out. They lied about it. Or either the Lord's judgment. And I've heard sermons both ways. And you pick whatever. Scripture don't really tell us why. But it led to both of their deaths.

That very day. That they lied about what they gave. And on that note. We're going to take another offering. Simon the magician.

In Acts chapter 8. He wasn't just an illusionist. He dealt with black magic. It's a real thing. Powered by the evil one. Simon got gloriously saved. His life was changed. He stopped entertaining crowds with his magic.

[11 : 02] And started following the ways of Christ. And when he saw the way that God was changing lives in the ministry of Philip. In miraculous ways. He was amazed at seeing that.

Then he saw Peter and John. And he offered them money. Because he saw what God was doing through them. He offered them money to buy the ability to give the spirit to whoever he touched. Peter told him. I don't know how it works. You need to repent. And he did. Jesus said in Matthew 6. Verse 24.

You can't love both God's money. You'll love the one and you'll hate the other. But we do at times. And I want you to know my point of this.

The devil and his demons can't read our minds. But they see the evidence in our lives. And they know our weaknesses. And they go after them. They go after them.

[12 : 04] He knows our weaknesses. Tell you what else he knows. He knows he's limited. He doesn't want you to know what I'm about to tell you.

He wants you to believe that. Like they do in the TV shows. You got an angel on one shoulder. You got a demon on the other shoulder. And there's a 50-50 chance.

Of you doing whatever. There's an equal balance. That somehow he's co-equal with God. And that you have just as much chance to do this as this. Or whatever. It's not the case at all. What he don't want you to know is that.

He is a mere created being by God. He's not a co-equal with God. And the hope of Jesus Christ changes everything.

Everything. Job teaches us that. He can't mess with us outside of the permission of God. He's limited. So he makes the most of his opportunities.

[13 : 07] He makes himself appear bigger than he really is. He makes his temptations seem so much more delicious than they really are. He makes the weight feel very. He makes the weight feel heavier than it has to be.

He makes God's very best for your life. Seems so far-fetched and so unattainable. That you stop trying. Stop trying. Stop trying. Stop trying.

Scientists took a wall-eyed pike out of the lake and put it in an aquarium. May the atmosphere and the temperature of the water match the lake as much as possible.

Then they threw a lot of minnows in. And that pike thought he had died and went to heaven. Then he was eating a buffet in that aquarium.

Then they stuck a clear glass cylinder down in the water and put all the minnows inside that cylinder.

[14 : 18] So when the wall-eyed pike came close to it, he'd bunk his nose on that glass. He'd see another minute and he'd bunk his nose again.

And again. And again. And again. As much as he saw, he couldn't get any of it. So he just rested. Down to the bottom of the aquarium and just sat there. They took that cylinder back out of the water and let those minnows swim freely.

Those minnows swam right by that wall-eyed pike's nose. But he never reached for them. He never bothered them.

He starved to death. Because he thought he could never get what was right before him. That's what the devil does.

[15 : 27] He makes us believe that we're held back from God's very best for our lives. He leads us into a temptation and we fall for it.

And we miss God's very best when it was right there in our grasp. Right there before us. Sin patterns develop in our lives and we settle in and we sink into sinful patterns.

While God's very best is swimming right by us. So easy to grasp that we fail to. I want you to understand today. Satan is limited in what he can do.

And he's very aware of his limitations. He wants us to think that he is almighty. And he can do all things that he wants to. He wants you to think that you cannot have God's very best for your life. And he will starve us out if we'll let him. But do not fall for his schemes. He's a liar and he's limited. And he knows it.

[16:27] Third thing I want you to get is this. If you're a child of God today and you've surrendered your life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Committed your life to follow him. We are sealed.

We're sealed. Now there's a difference when someone surrenders his or her life to Christ. There's a decision that needs to be made. You didn't come up with that on your own.

The Lord is pursuing you. And as he lays that upon your heart. You respond to that in obedience. Ask God to forgive you of your sins and come into your life. He'll change you forever as you surrender your life to him.

And when that happens, not only is your eternity secured forever. But the reality is that you're indwelt with the Holy Spirit of God.

And scripture says that we are sealed for the day of redemption. I want to hang out there for just a few moments. Ephesians chapter 1 verse 13 and 14.

[17:27] Listen to this. It says, I want you to know what that means today.

Because the devil knows what that means. When the Bible describes the salvation warranty that's placed upon our life. It describes it as a sealing of the Holy Spirit of God.

Now, when you go to the first century when they're talking about this. A seal was made when the wax from a candle was dripped upon maybe a seal of an envelope for instance.

Large drop of wax. And they would take that signet ring. That person of authority would take that signet ring. And would drop it into that wax and place his mark upon that document.

If there was a struggle over property rights, a sealed deed would solve the issue. Like a signature will today. Like a notary public will today.

[18:37] The seal would solve the issue. When a letter was sealed, it better not be tampered with if it's been sealed by one with authority. When a door is sealed, it better not be opened.

A Roman sealed tomb, for instance, in the death of Christ. No need for a notary if there's a seal. And if a courier was carrying a sealed document from somebody of authority, every door would open.

Not based on the mailboy, but based upon the authority of the seal. The authority behind the seal is where the power was.

Christian, I want you to understand something. I want you to know what the enemy knows. Once we are in Christ, we're sealed. Upon the authority of the shed blood of Christ and upon the power of the gospel, we're sealed with an eternal protection.

We're sealed with the Holy Spirit's power that has set us free to say no to the snares that the devil sets. We're free from that. We don't have to do those things. We're sealed with the promise of an eternity with Christ forever.

[19:47] And there's nothing that the devil can do to stop any of that for us as children of God. So you know what he does? He can't change that.

And he knows that. So he spends his time distracting us from knowing that. He spends his time darkening our view of what we have in Christ and doing all that he can to keep us from coming to Christ.

If you're here this morning and you've never surrendered your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, I want you to know there's a spiritual war for your soul going on right now. Because the devil wants his best for you not to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because when you surrender your life to him, you are changed forever. And you're sealed. I'm so thankful.

I'm so thankful that we're sealed in the Holy Spirit of God. And he knows that. And we need to know. Child of God in Christ, we're sealed.

[20:59] I'll tell you what else he knows. He knows he's defeated. He knows he's defeated. And he's a sore loser.

He's read the back of the book. And if you haven't, you need to. He's familiar with it. He took it out of context when he spoke to Jesus in the desert. Revelation 12, 10 through 12.

And I'm talking about the word, not Revelation 12. But he took the word out of context. Revelation 12, 10 through 12 says this. And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, Now the salvation and the

power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ has come.

For the accuser of our brothers have been thrown down. Who accused them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.

For they loved not their lives even unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them. But woe to you, O earth and sea. For the devil has come down to you in great wrath.

[22 : 04] Because he knows his time is short. He knows his time is short. Leave it up for just a moment. I want you to see this. They have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.

That's where the power is. His demise is already set. Christ's death on the cross solved it all.

And Satan is well aware that the shed blood of Christ in the confession of our faith is where we find our victories. It is not in our abilities. It is not in our own righteousness because we're all wretched. We've all fallen. We still fall. It's not in our righteousness. It's not in our heritage. I don't care who your grandpa is. It does not come from our heritage.

It does not come from our place of worship. I'm glad you're here. Don't misunderstand me. But you're not sealed because you're here. You don't have victory because you showed up. That's not where it comes from.

[23 : 17] It comes from being in Christ is what it comes from. It all comes back to the shed blood of Christ. It's by the shed blood of Christ that we win the victory.

Hebrews chapter 2 verse 14 tells us that it was by Christ's death that he destroyed the one who has the power of death. That is the devil. I love the way Adrian Rogers put it. He said he may be active but he sails a sinking ship and rules a ruined domain.

He's a loser and he knows it. By the shed blood of Christ we win the victory. Not only that, it's also by the shed blood of Christ that we walk cleanly.

The only hope we have is in the blood of Christ. And the blood that he shed for us. 1 John chapter 1 verse 7 says this. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

And the blood of Jesus his son cleanses us from all our sins. There's no reason to know these things if we're not going to claim these things.

[24 : 21] As a matter of fact, if you know those things and don't respond to those things, you're responsible for those things. So there's no need for us to know those things if we're not going to claim them and to live by them and to be changed by them.

And if you want victory over sin, we have to commit to walk cleanly before the Lord. There's no other way for that. We've got to commit to be clean before him. We're more vulnerable by every unconfessed sin in our lives.

If I have a bear on my back porch, okay? And some of y'all do. My soul. But if I have a bear on my back porch, you don't crack the door so he can come in the kitchen.

No, I've seen you on Facebook. You go in the house and you shut the door and lock it. Try your best to keep him out.

And the reality is, unconfessed sin is just cracking doors open when the enemy's lurking. It's just right there.

[25 : 33] Just being susceptible. Not only, when you have unconfessed sin in your life, not only are you not in the foxhole of protection in the battle, but you've crossed over into enemy's territory when you're unclean.

You're on his territory. I've said this several times over the last few weeks if you've been with us. James 4, 7. When I spoke of it, God spoke to me about it, and I've just leaned on it for several weeks.

He says, resist the devil and he'll flee from you. And I've told you before, now he may flee for a minute and he may be coming back.

And he may wait five minutes and he may be coming back. And he may wait 30 minutes. He may wait an hour or two days.

But he's coming back, I'll tell you. And the more you resist him, the less he keeps coming back because he knows he's beaten your life.

[26 : 39] Not because of you, but because you're leaning upon the shed blood of Christ. Because you're trusting the Lord. Resist the devil and he'll flee from you. But I want you to see the rest of that

because I always skip over the first part of that, and I shouldn't.

As I was studying for this week, I thought, man, I need to deal with this too. Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. And then after that, it says in verse 8, submit yourself, therefore, to God. After that, excuse me, it says, draw near to God, and he'll draw near to you. Now, let's put all that together. James 4, 7 through 8. And I want you to get this. I want you to take this home, and I want you to...

I'm praying God will speak to you through this. Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil. And he'll flee from you.

When I read this, I thought about this, boy. When I was in the ninth grade, I was scrawny. I know that's hard to imagine, but I was. And I had this boy messing with me, just picking at me.

[27 : 44] He's a bully, and he scared me. And when I read this passage, I thought, man, I wish so-and-so years ago, I'd have popped that old boy in the nose and just dealt with it, because I could have took him and didn't even know it.

If I had resisted him, he'd have fled. Because I got friends. We'd have hunted him down.

That's a whole other message. Submit yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil. He'll flee from you. Draw near to God.

This is a promise. Draw near to God. And he'll draw near to you. Cleanse your hearts, you sinners. And purify your hearts, you double-minded. It's by the shed blood of Christ that we walk cleanly. And lastly, it's by the shed blood of Christ that we testify.

[28 : 46] We need to change the way we talk. We need to change the way we pray. Instead of saying, Lord, give me the victory, if you're a child of God today, you need to say, Lord, you are my victory.

Send you, I have victory. Instead of saying, Lord, defeat Satan, say, Lord, thank you for defeating Satan. Instead of saying, Lord, give me strength, say, Lord, you are my strength.

You're my shield. You're my deliverer. You're who I put our confidence in. Instead of saying, Lord, make me stronger, say, Lord, I yield my life to you.

I'll fight for your cause. My hope is firmly in you. And because of you, I will have victory today. You see, Satan already knows that.

And we need to know it. And we need to live by it. Romans 16, verse 20.

[30 : 01] I don't want you to miss this. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. I'm going to tell you something. He knows it. Do we? And if we do, do we live like it? With every head bowed and every eye closed, if you've never surrendered your life to the Lord Jesus Christ, I want you to know today is the day of salvation.

There's not anything in you that draw you to God in yourself. No, in fact, he is the one tugging at you. He is the one leading you.

We'll stand in just a moment and we'll sing, but if you've never surrendered your life to the Lord Jesus, and today you say, Lord, I don't want to do this on my own anymore. I want you to forgive me to come into my life and to change me, then I encourage you to come.

[31 : 03] I'd love to guide you in that process. Maybe you're here and you have done that privately, but you've never done it publicly. Jesus, by his commission and by his example, told us that we need to follow that up with a public confession of our faith through baptism.

Next Sunday we're baptizing. If you've never been baptized as a believer, you come. We'd love to guide you in that process. Maybe God's drawing you to First Baptist Church.

God's doing a wonderful work in our church, and I thank God for that. Maybe he's drawing you to be a part of that. You come. We'll guide you in that process. Or maybe you're here this morning like a lot of us, and they're just stuff, stuff you need to lay down before the Lord, and you need to deal with it before God, and you need to walk out of here as clean folks before the Lord, invigorated by the Spirit of God, leading you to walk out of the valleys that you've walked yourself into.

So I encourage you to do business with God today. We're going to stand and we're going to sing, but more important than singing a song is getting your heart right with God. And I realize you can do that in the pew where you are.

You can do it at this altar right down here, or you can do it with a pastor praying for you. I'll be happy to help you in any way I can. I have no clue what God's telling you to do, but I know you'll never be satisfied if you do anything more or anything less than what God leads you to do.

[32 : 34] So be obedient. Follow his will and his way. Lord Jesus, lead us, Father. You give us understanding through your word.

Help us to live in response to it, dear God. Move and work in our lives, in our midst, as only you can, God, I pray. In Jesus' precious name, amen.

Amen. Amen.