**The Attack on the Woman - BD17-02**

We are speaking concerning the subject of the enemy of our souls, the archenemy of our souls, Satan, the fallen angel of God. I’m very much encouraged to see such a goodly number in attendance this morning. Whenever we begin speaking about the subject of Satan, you may anticipate any number of frustrations, any number of attempts on his part to keep you from getting this information. So I can tell you now that in the immediate weeks that are before you, you will have more reasons for not attending these morning Bible study services than you have ever had in a long time. People who have been in regular attendance, you will begin noticing, are not in attendance. People who are not in attendance for a while, when we have passed this subject, will suddenly show up again. Satan has a way of keeping the people who most needed this information from being present. However you don’t have to go very long in the Christian life before you discover that this is one of his devices. It is fantastic how often a message will come up in the normal course of the exposition of the Word, and somebody who would be strategically blessed, informed, and oriented by that message is out of town, or is away, or stays home for one reason or another, and that service they miss.

That’s not without reason. These are not accidents. This is because this tremendous personality Satan has that much power and that much control over your life through the demonic world that he can guide, and thereby direct you and what you do so that you operate on his will instead of God’s will. Please remember there are two wills in the universe. There once was only one, the will of God. Now there is the will of God and the will of Satan, and both are constantly on appeal to you.

We have been studying about the spiritual maturity structure which the Word of God calls upon every believer to build in his soul. It has five basic facets, so we may think of it as a pentagon within our souls, for our defense against Satan, and from which we conduct our spiritual combat and warfare against him. You should have a pretty clear idea of what it is to be a mature Christian in five major respects. As you read the Word of God, you will discover that you will constantly be coming across information that tells you a little more about each facet of the pentagon of this defense. This is something that you must develop. The bible uses the word “edify.” God the Holy Spirit is the agent who edifies. What he edifies is building up of the spiritual maturity structure, and it’s a process of building. Satan is your opponent, and you have no defense against him unless you have this structure built in your soul.

We found in Ezekiel chapter 28 and Isaiah 4 information concerning this angel called Satan. We found that this passage goes beyond speaking of the immediate context of the King of Babylon and the King of Tyre, and goes on to speaking about someone who is more than human. The things that these passages say indicate that the person is somebody more than a human being—that the prophet has leapfrogged from the immediate situation of the king concerning whom he was prophesying, and has passed over to the agent behind the king, namely Satan.

We found from these passages that Satan was created by Jesus Christ as the archangel, and he was in the cherub class of angels which is the highest order of angels. His original name was Lucifer, which means “bright and shining one.” He was in the service of Jesus Christ as the personal attendant of the Lord Jesus Christ. For this reason, he was called the anointed cherub, for Christ is the anointed one; i.e., the messiah. He, in effect, was the guardian of the throne of the glory of God. He was created as the most beautiful and most intelligent of all the angels. Everywhere that he looked, he saw nobody equal to himself except God. He has an invisible body made of a light-like substance with soul qualities, including the power of choice. He is clothed, we’re told, in garments of translucent gems, and he has a most impressive voice when he speaks. He was a perfect angel, and he was fully at ease In God’s presence in God’s presence in the third heaven, the throne room of God.

One day he began observing, as the years went by. We don’t know how long this was, how many centuries went by. Maybe it was for millions of years that he was in this state of positive volition toward the will of God. One day he began putting thing together in his mind. He observed that there was nobody in all creation that was his equal. Everyone was under him, all the angels were underneath him, everyone was in a lower category, and everyone was of a lower quality, except that only God was above him. He began to think, “Wouldn’t it be nice if there were nobody above me—if I could be number one in this magnificent universe that God has made?” With that act of pride, negative volition was triggered within this magnificent archangel. He rebelled against the will of God. His rebellion, we found, was expressed in five specific statements:

1) He said, “I will ascend into heaven.” This meant that he was going to revolt against God, move into the third heaven, and take over the throne room.

**Heaven**

2 Corinthians 12:1-4 indicate to us that there are three heavens. The first heaven is the atmosphere that surrounds and envelopes the earth. The second heaven consists of the interstellar spaces. Beyond that—billions of light-years beyond that—is the third heaven where God Himself dwells. Ephesians 1:20-21 and Ephesians 4:10 speak about this place where God Himself dwells. It seems that the angels, by and large, are confined to the first and second heaven—the atmosphere and the interstellar spaces. However, they of course have access into the presence of God as Job 1:6 indicates that there are times when they report into God within the third heaven.

Satan, as the archangel and personal attendant of Jesus Christ, had access to this third heaven. When he rebelled, one-third of the angels decided to go with him. We don’t know how many angels there are—millions or billions of angels. But one-third of all the angels that God created, all at one time, decided to join Satan in his rebellion and they fell with him (Revelation 12:4). These were removed from the presence of God along with the archangel. Satan is now confined to operating mainly in the first and second heavens, and it is from here that he rules the earth. Luke 4:5-7 and John 12:31 indicate that he is the dominant personality in control of this world. All believers, interestingly enough, now go to where Satan wanted to take over. When a person dies, his soul and spirit immediately go into God’s presence in the third heaven. The Christian immediately enters the throne room. In John 14:1-3, the Lord tells us about going and preparing dwelling places (apartments) for us in the third heaven.

So here you Christians sit with the magnificent destiny before you that you are someday going to enter the throne room as your permanent place of residence. Satan has now been excluded from it except for certain reporting occasions.

So he said, I will ascend into heaven. I’m going to move in, kick God out, and take over.

2) He said, “I will exalt my throne above the stars.” “Stars” in the Scriptures refers to angels. In Job 38:7 and Revelation 12:3 we read about the stars singing at creation. The physical stars don’t sing. This is a reference to the angelic hosts that were there praising as they watched God in his creative work. The lust for power and to rule supreme over the angels is what Satan means by this statement, “I will exalt my throne above the stars. I’m going to take over, full control, direct authority over the angelic world.” His pride led him to ambition for power over others. This is what happens to people. The person who rises up with pride is the person who begins to ambitious. He’s the person who starts getting pushy because he’s wanting to take over and run things and have authority over people.

3) Satan said, “I will sit upon the mount of the congregation…” This refers to sitting upon God’s throne as the ruler. Literally, it says, “… the mount of the assembly…” We have a reference to this in Psalm 48:2 where there is the place where the Jews assembled. What he is saying here is that he wants to rule the planet earth and its inhabitants, both the original and the recreated earth. He will sit upon the mount of the congregation in the place where people assemble.

4) He said, “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds.” About two-thirds of the references to clouds in the Bible have to do with the presence of God, such as in Exodus 16:10 and Exodus 40:38 where God moved with the children of Israel and let them in the clouds and in the pillar of fire. What does Satan want to do here? He says, “I want to assume the place of the absolute sovereign of the universe. God is sovereign in the universe. He is the king. He is supreme. Satan said, “I want to sit upon his throne. I want to play the role of being sovereign.” Of course he lacks the divine essence and the personality of deity, so he can’t possibly control creation or maintain it.

5) Finally, Satan said, “I will be like the most high.” This sums the whole thing up. That was his ambition. What does he mean by that? He wants to be in the tradition of the essence of God. He wants to have God’s character, sovereignty, righteousness, justice, love, eternal life, omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, immutability, and veracity. But he can’t have this character of God, so what does he do? He counterfeits it. He produces religion for people to follow so he can be like God. He produces human viewpoint so people will act nice. By their human viewpoint, they will pursue human good.

There are a lot of Christians who are phased in to human viewpoint which Satan is dispensing, and they’re creating human good. It looks very nice and other people are very impressed. There are plenty of men in the ministry who spend their whole lives cranking out human good because they’re functioning on human viewpoint. They are purportedly agents for the blessings and benefit of humanity. They pursue various programs that they feel very warm and very glowing about. They feel themselves to have arrived at a higher level of achievement than some poor character that stands up and says that the highest virtue in the Christian life is Bible doctrine.

Many local church Christians like to play this same game of power and lust. They’re motivated by ambitions of pride and their abilities, and by their lust for praise. So they want to be in the position of being like God. The rest of the congregation may consider them to be very wonderful people because they wear a certain covering of self-righteousness. Yet these same people are shot through with envy. They’re shot through with competition. They’re shot through with proving themselves. They’re shot through with Satan’s sin, the sin of pride. This is why in local churches we begin to have the conflict of pushy people, because Satan uses human viewpoint. He says, “Friend, why don’t you get up there and be what you should be. You’re something special. You’ve got abilities. You can show them how it should be done.” That’s exactly what Satan said he was going to do. He was going to show the angels what God could really have done with this universe.

Well, Satan is doomed to the lake of fire and brimstone which has been made for him and his angels and for any human being who chooses to follow him. Satan’s banishment from the throne room of God resulted in his taking over the planet earth. Consequently, the planet earth deteriorated into chaos and darkness. Once the earth was restored by the recreation of God and man was placed upon the earth, Satan moved in to take over again. This is the phase that we’re going to begin to look at this morning.

Turn with me please to Genesis 3. Let’s think back to the condition of man in the Garden of Eden. Here we are at the very beginning. Man has been created. The first man name was (in the Hebrew language) “adam.” This simply means “man.” When you transliterate it (transpose the Hebrew letters into English letters), it (still) comes out as “Adam.” So he was called Adam which is really just the Hebrew word for man.

There were three things done to this man that God created. First, in Genesis 1:27, the Word of God says, “For God created man in his own image.” This is the Hebrew word “bara.” “Bara” means to call into existence out of nothing—by the word of God to command into existence. Man was created. Now the question is, what was created about man. How was man created? We know where his body came from. God didn’t speak his body into existence. He put that together out of materials from the earth. So God created man in his own image. It is the image part of man in which God did his creative work on man.

If you’ll turn to Genesis 2:7, we’ll see what part of man was created. Genesis 2:7 says, “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” The word “life” should be plural because that’s what it is in the Hebrew—it is “the breath of lives.” It looks like this in the Hebrew: “chayin.” The singular form is “cha,” and that’s not what is there. It is this plural word. God breathed into the nostrils (and that happens to be plural too, and you can see why that would have to be plural) of man the breath of lives.

Now this is very important. What did God breathe into man? Well he breathed two kinds of lives into him. First, he breathed soul life into man. Secondly, he breathed spiritual life into man. He breathed a spirit and he breathed a soul into man. That’s why the word is in the plural. This refers to the image of God of which Genesis 1:26-27 speaks. “And God said let us make man (that is, the trinity, make man in our image) after our likeness.” The image of God refers to the soul life. When the Bible says we are made in the image of God, that’s the soul. That is what God breathed into man. When it says “likeness,” that includes the totality here (and man has another part, the body), this is the likeness here, in that God is a trinity and man is a trinity. So he’s made in the image of God in the fact that he has a personality, and that’s the soul.

Verse 27 says, “And God created man in his own image. In the image of God created He him, male and female, created He them.” Man had a mentality. He has a soul. Therefore he has a mentality in that soul. He is able to reason. That mentality has self-awareness. He knows himself. You sit here this morning and you can distinguish yourself from the person next to you. When you leave here, you’ll know where you should go home. You won’t end up in somebody else’s house and ask, “How did I get here?” or “Who am I?” He also has a conscience in his soul in which he has values and a set of standards. His soul also had volition so that he could choose. He also had emotions, and all of this was part of his soul, and consequently he could appreciate things. He could appreciate God. He could appreciate Eve, his right woman. He could appreciate the perfect environment in which God had placed him. There was no old sin nature at the time that distorted the soul. That’s what the old sin nature does. It distorts our soul so that all of our mentality, our volition, and our emotions are contrary to the will of God rather than being tied into that will.

So the first thing we have said that happened to this man Adam was that God “bara’d” him. God created the man. He called out of nothing into being the immaterial part of man which constituted his soul and his spirit. A second thing that God did to man is found in Genesis 1:26 where it says, “Let us make man in our image.” This is “asah.” “Asah” is to make something out of something. Now what does that refer to? Well obviously “asah” refers to the body of man, for the body of man was made out of the materials of the earth. It refers to the mechanical functioning of man’s body, and God produced that out of the materials of the ground—the physical man from natural materials.

The third thing that happened is found in Genesis 2:7. This is to give us a general introduction to this man who is in this garden that Satan is going to approach. “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.” This Hebrew word is “yatzer.” This one means “to fashion,” or “to mold,” with outward form. This speaks of the symmetry of the body. God formed man so that he had an outward appearance. He had the distinctive appearance of Homosapiens. He looked like a human being. He was distinguished in his appearance from all of the animals, though he had certain common structural features with the animals. This emphasizes the outward form of man.

When God finished with doing these three things with man (these three words that describe what God did), man was perfect, like all the rest of God’s creation, and he was in a position of innocence relative to sin. Everything that man needed for his life, for his provision, and for his pleasure had been provided in the Garden of Eden. Man had been forbidden only to eat of one tree, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This was the knowledge of human good and of sinfulness. He was told that he was not to eat of this tree. This tree was no special tree. It was just a tree. It had a fruit on it. What the fruit was we don’t know. It was just a tree and he was not to eat of this one. It was simply a testing point of his will against God’s will. The knowledge of this tree would bring an old sin nature.

The man was in perfect environment in fellowship with God through the human spirit, and in fellowship with his woman through his soul. Man was dominant over creation and he was locked on position volition to the will of God. Satan, through whom this beautiful planet earth had gone to wrack and ruins, viewed this magnificent recreation. It was a perfect environment, it was a perfect man, and it was a perfect wife, with the best combination you could ask for—the right particular man with his right particular woman, with nothing to do but to enjoy fellowship with God which is exactly what they were experiencing. The Bible tells us that every day God met with him. The manifest member of the Godhead, the person that we see that reveals God to us is Jesus Christ who is called Jehovah, along with the other members of the trinity, but mostly it applies to Jesus Christ.

So the Lord Jesus Christ met with him every day. What was he doing? He was teaching the man what he needed to know about doctrine. He was giving him doctrinal studies. He was filling this man’s human spirit with the knowledge of God, and consequently Adam was not only a magnificent physical figure, but he was also a magnificent spiritual figure. He was tied in to the full knowledge of the living God. You and I sit here and we are really paupers comparatively. I don’t care how much you know about the Word of God. You have to admit that we are comparatively paupers. There’s so much we don’t understand. There’s so much of the Word of God that we have never really entered into. We have no real appreciation of what Adam had in his relationship with God and in contrast to what we lack. Thank God that we can keep plugging away at it, and it can get better day by day as we make it our business to learn the Word.

But Satan looked at this and he said, “I want that earth back. I want to be in control of this earth.” There’s this man, and the Bible tells us that man was made a little lower than the angels. Man doesn’t have the angel’s body made up of light substances that can travel at the speed of light and is not restricted by time and space anywhere in the human verse. And Satan said, “Why should I let this man have this up when he isn’t even up to my standards. I’m going to get this earth back again.”

So he proceeded to bring man onto negative volition to tie into the will of Satan. There were two wills in the universe. He said, “I’m going to get these two people off of God’s will and onto my will. Then every child born to these two people will also automatically be in my camp, for they will be born with an evil nature and consequently be separated from God.”

Now you would have thought that he would walk in and say, “I’ll ruin their perfect environment.” No, that’s not the thing he wanted to do. He didn’t go around busting up things all over again. He didn’t attack the environment but he was going to destroy the environment by capturing a very strategic part of man’s soul, his mind. This is what Satan always works on. This was the point of attack. This is the point of attack for you today. Every day this week Satan will be hitting you here. That’s why it is important to have information that is God’s point of view cycling up to your mentality all the time. The only place it can come from is your human spirit. And the only way it can come from there is that you put it there in the first place.

But he’s going to approach man and put him on Satan’s will. But how is he going to do that? He’s not going to go in and destroy man’s fellowship. He’s not going to go in to promote some immorality or violence. He doesn’t want that. He wants to be like God. He wants people running around promoting religion and human good. But how can Satan get into the mind of Adam? Adam’s human spirit is full of doctrine. He meets Jesus Christ. He learns the Word. How is he going to hit this man with an idea so as to make him a sinner? Sin begins with the mind. Proverbs 23:7 tells us that we are what we think. 2 Corinthians 10:5 and James 1:14-15 tell us that it start internally, in our thinking.

Satan decided to break into the perfect environment through the woman. He said, “I’ll never get to first base with Adam. I’m going to bypass him.” He sat there and leaned his chin down on his elbow and he watched this woman and he analyzed her. Because he was so brilliant, he finally devised a plan. He couldn’t get to first base if he approached Adam. If he approached Adam, Adam would have cut him down with a blink of his eyelash. Had Adam been there when Satan approached the woman, Adam would have cut him down. He would have exercised his authority as the spiritual leader. He would have made the decision for himself and his wife.

But Satan discovered what a lot of men have not yet discovered today. He discovered that the woman was a responder, and that she has to react from her own volition or she cannot be productive of anything desirable. Her femininity is structured upon being able to react from her own volition. Something has to trigger that response. That’s why unless a woman is really married to her right man, she’s not responding. But once she meets her right man, she can never forget him. She will always respond to him. There will always be the longing to respond to her right person.

So Satan had to get some false doctrine into this woman. He knew that he could not do it through the man, but he could use Eve as the agent because Eve, apparently, was not as careful about doctrine as Adam was. And Adam was overwhelmed by his right woman. So Satan said, “I’ll get at Adam’s spiritual maturity structure by getting at the woman and I’ll use the woman as my agent.” Man knew what was at stake in this negative volition. Genesis 2:17 tells us that after God had created the man and before the woman came on the scene, God said, “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat. For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt die.” So Adam was well aware of what was going to happen.

I want you to notice something about this expression, “thou shalt die.” Literally in the Hebrew it’s something else. The word “die” here in the Hebrew (“muth”) is repeated. It’s declared twice so that what the sentence is actually saying is, “dying (the first use of the word die—a participle) thou shalt die (used a second time—in the future tense).” So what God said to the man was, “dying (the first death), you will consequently experience a second death.” What is the first death? Well Adam did die because the Bible says that “in the day that thou eatest thereof thou surely shalt die.”

It is amazing how many Christians are never bothered by that phrase. Many Bible teachers will teach this passage and they will associate man’s death primarily with his physical death. Then some bright little kid puts his hand up and says, “Hey, it says here that ‘in the day’ that you eat of it you will die. He didn’t die that day.” Any you should hear how Sunday School teachers will stumble around with their answer, such as, “Well that just means a long time. A day sometimes is a long time.” Well, it’s nothing like that at all. Adam and Eve dropped dead right on the spot the minute that they bit into that fruit because the first death here was spiritual death. They immediately died spiritually. Subsequently, out of spiritual death flows physical death. That came later for Adam when he was 930 years old.

So man knew what was going to happen. Romans 6:23 speaks of death, and this is again spiritual death. “And the wages of sin is death.” This is spiritual death. He had, incidentally you notice, to have a human spirit. Let me give you a couple of words here: trichotomous, dichotomous. These are two big theological words. All of the seminary students here know these words and they love them very much.

There is a view among theologians: Is man three parts, or is man two parts? Does man have three parts to his being or does he have two parts to his being? You might say that is a silly argument. It seems like the Bible is very specific. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, the apostle Paul says, “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” God the Holy Spirit does not repeat words uselessly. Those are no meaningless words. The Bible tells us the Word of God it’s like a sword that can divide asunder between the soul and the spirit. That’s exactly what the Word of God does. It distinguishes between the soul and the spirit.

I think it’s interesting that when man died spiritually, I think it is evident that when man died spiritually, this is another evidence that trichotomy is indeed the position of the Word of God and that dichotomy is wrong. Man is not two parts. He is three parts, because when man died, what died within him? The Bible tells us that when a person dies physically, what leaves the body? The soul. It is the soul that leaves the body. Now the spirit does too, but if you’re an unsaved person you have a dead human spirit. Consequently, it is the soul that is living that keeps the body alive. When an unbeliever dies, it is his soul that leaves, and he dies. The Bible indicates it is the soul that leaves and makes the body die. What left Adam, because he died the very day he ate? Obviously not his soul, or he would have dropped dead physically on the spot too. Something died in him. It could not have been his soul. It had to be something else, and it was his spirit. This is another evidence that man is spirit, he is soul, and he is body.

So Adam knew what was going to happen. God said that if he ate, he would die spiritually and in time he would die physically. You and I receive our physical death, consequently, directly from Adam because you were in him in God’s eyes, and when he ate of that fruit, you ate with him. That’s why you die physically, because you ate the fruit with Adam. We die spiritually because of something our parents gave us—the old sin nature. We inherit spiritual death directly from our parents through our father. We inherit physical death directly through Adam.

This separation of man from God by spiritual death was Satan’s goal. To do this, he had to foul up man’s thinking with some human viewpoint, and here’s how he proceeded to do it:

First of all, in Genesis 3:1, we read, “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field.” Satan is going to approach the woman, and he uses an agent because Satan uses the technique of a disguise, and he always uses an agent. This word for “serpent” comes from two words. One word means to hiss, and the other word means to shine. The serpent was not the kind of a creature that you and I are associated with today—that creates a response of loathing within us. One of the things that God placed in judgment upon the animal the serpent, for his part of being used by Satan in the fall of man was that God said, “Henceforth you will crawl on your belly and eat the dust of the ground.” This indicates that this is not the way he moved before. The serpent actually moved in an upright position, and it was a very attractive animal.

As you read the Scriptures, it seems obviously evident that Eve was used to having animals around her, and she was used to seeing serpents around her. Furthermore, the serpent apparently had some ability to communicate, because she did not find it unusual that he could come up and begin a conversation with her. He could talk, probably better than a parrot or a mina bird. But there was some ability to communicate. Satan decided that he was going to use this attractive animal to approach the woman.

Now you might say, “Well why didn’t Satan just stand up in front of her? He’s a beautiful fellow himself.” But in the Garden of Eden there were nothing but animals, and the only other intelligent creature was her husband. So if suddenly this person with the ability to reason in the form of the archangel Satan stands before her, even though he is very handsome, and even though he had a beautiful mellifluous voice, she would have been somewhat put on her guard wondering, “Where did you come from?” Immediately she would not have been totally at ease.

Satan is so clever, he says, “Now I’m going to approach this gal, but I’m not going to get her nervous in any way.” So along comes this snake, slithering along on his tail, bouncing along, and he comes up to her. Inside is Satan making his approach making his approach to the woman. He is subtle. The serpent, by natural capacity, is an animal, we’re told, that was more subtle and more clever than all the other beasts of the field. He had a natural quality of cleverness about him. Satan wanted to use the subtlety in order to implant a false idea.

Once the idea has been implanted, and once he gets this woman to choose negative volition toward God, and to go on Satan’s will, then the man is going to be in a very difficult place. He’s going to walk up and he’s going to be forced to make a choice. He’s going to realize that he is going to have to choose between his right woman Eve, and go with her into sin, or else he’s going to have to choose God and stay on positive volition to the will of God and lose her forever. Now here’s a fantastic attachment between a particular man and his particular woman, for Adam, as you know, chose to go with her. But the only way that Satan could set this in motion was to get into the woman’s mind.

2 Corinthians 2:11 refers to the devices of Satan. The word “devices” here means the plot, or the designs of Satan. It’s the Greek word, “noema.” It’s the word that is used in 2 Corinthians 10:5 for “thought.” So the devices of Satan have to do with thinking. We are not to be ignorant of his devices. 2 Corinthians 4:4 tells us that he blinds the minds of the unbelievers so that they cannot receive the truth of the gospel. The Bible is full of examples of how Satan gets at one person through another. That’s what he was doing here. He’s going to get at the man through the woman.

This is why the Bible gives you so many instructions and guidelines as to how you should deal with people. Human relationships are constantly laid out in the Word of God. This is why it’s important to have a relaxed mental attitude. If you do not have a relaxed mental attitude, you cannot be on a right level on the human plane of relationships with people. You may confess the fact that you have mental attitude sins, but they still bear a destructive effect on your personality and on your relationships to people. Satan uses the lives, even of Christians, to get at you. If you don’t have a relaxed mental attitude, you’re going to be impressed by religion, and you’re going to be impresses by spiritual phonies. That’s why we have a lot of Christians going around practicing religion, and practicing a lot of sweetness and light spiritual phonies. This is where Pentecostalism appeals with its tongues and its healing, and there is vast production of human good out of Pentecostalism which makes it look very impressive to people who are uninformed about doctrine. Satan’s angels are presented as angels of truth (2 Corinthians 11:14-15). They’re attractive and they’re warm. We have preachers who are willing to take church members who like to major on sweetness and light, and they like to make over these people, and it makes good membership numbers. It makes a bad congregation, but it helps your numbers.

We have a lot of people who are sitting in other churches this morning, even Bible churches, who used to come here, who found that they couldn’t get away with sweetness and light. They couldn’t get away with their phony fronts. Because they were exposed to themselves, they decided it was too hot in this kitchen, and they found themselves someplace where somebody would make over them. Satan is going to appeal to the old sin nature to produce all the human good that you can.

So we’ve got sentimentalism, sincerity, do-goodism, brotherhood, ecumenism, and social action involvement, but only doctrine can preserve you from a misconception of the subtlety of Satan. If you’re here without a relaxed mental attitude this morning, you will be prone to sit here having all kinds of critical comments about how some people here are dressed, or how some people here are wearing their hair, or how some people are talking, or how some people act—any number of things that are not basically your responsibility or business, for everyone will answer for himself before the Lord. If you’re not careful, Satan will use other people to get at you and to destroy your usefulness.

That’s the subtlety of his approach here to Eve. 2 Corinthians 11:3 equates the serpent to Satan so that when the serpent spoke, it was actually Satan who was speaking. Genesis 3:1 says, “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made.” I want you to notice the phrase, “the LORD God” (with capital “LORD,” and “God”). This is the Hebrew for “Jehovah Elohim.” This is the creator God, particularly the name which is regularly used for Jesus Christ, and it refers to Jesus Christ here in Genesis 3:1 for He is the creator. It says the serpent was more subtle than anything else that Jesus Christ had made—the LORD God. He’s using the serpent for his technique of orienting people to his line of thinking.

He goes on and says to the woman, “Yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” Notice something about the word that he uses for “God.” He chops off “Jehovah,” and he says, “Has Elohim said…?” Here is a principal that you can learn about the devices of Satan.

Some people think that Satan doesn’t believe in a supreme being, or that he doesn’t wasn’t people to believe in a supreme being. They’re wrong. He wants people to believe in a supreme being, and he wants to be that supreme being. But he does not want you to say “Jehovah,” because the word “Jehovah” refers to Jesus Christ as Savior. He wants you to believe in God. He wants you to think that all these religions of the world are leading to the same place. They’re all reaching out to the same God. He knows that without the savior you will be doomed. That’s why he promotes religion. That’s why he promotes the idea that if you believe in a supreme being, all will be well with your soul.

The question that he asks the woman is a question that is introduced by two Hebrew words which are an expression of surprise. So you read this in terms of, “Is it really a fact that God has prohibited you from eating from all of the trees of the garden?” He says it in such a way that, “I’m really surprised at that. That’s not very nice of God.” The implication is that God is doing something very mean and wrong.

Sometimes Christians do this. They come up to you with that surprise—an intriguing inquire that makes you think, “You know, somebody is doing something wrong. They shouldn’t do that.” “Is it really true that God has prohibited you from eating from all of the trees of the garden?” What is the woman’s reaction going to be? We’re going to pick the story up there next week.

What we wanted to establish today is that Satan uses agents, he comes in disguise, and he will use other people to manipulate your mind. He approaches the mind, and he leads into sin by getting at your thinking. It is your thought life, which is guided either by doctrine or by human viewpoint, that makes the difference. How many times have some of your snotty Christian friends dropped remarks to you to bestir your mind to make you think that you’re suffering some injustice, or that you’re being denied a fair shake? This is what Satan was doing with Eve toward God. What do you think she’ll do? What decision do you think she’ll make. Will she eat of the fruit or not? Come back next week and find out.

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