

### 3 Things the Devil Wants You to Do

#### Introduction:

- I. We have been talking about the devil for that last three weeks. We haven't spent time talking about the original of the devil, except a few passing statements, because the Bible doesn't say a whole lot about that. We haven't spent a lot of time trying to convince anyone that the devil is real because we assume that, if you are a Bible believer, you know that he is real. What we have done in this series of lessons is to look at some real ways in which the devil will try to separate as many people as he can from God. We have looked at 3 ways the devil attacks (*tries to keep people out of the church, tries to keep those in the church back in the world, and tries to get church members to become useless*). We have looked at 3 lies the devil wants you to believe (*that there is no absolute truth, that there is no eternal punishment and that one church is as good as another*). We have looked at 3 things the devil doesn't want you to do (*He doesn't want you to obey the gospel, he doesn't want you to preach the gospel and he doesn't want you to teach your children the gospel*).
  
- II. Now, as we continue along these lines this morning, in what is a natural follow up to last week's lesson, I want to talk to you about *3 Things the Devil Wants You to Do*. We know some things he doesn't want us to do, but what are some things that he wants us to do. You see, if we examine ourselves carefully, we might find that we are playing right into the devil's hands. That we are doing some of the exact things that the devil wants us to do and he is just sitting back laughing at us. Now, the main thoughts that I have this morning is pointed at the local church. The devil knows that the local church plays a central role in the salvation of souls. He wants our local churches to be weak and he knows the best way to do that is to get a local church to have a weak membership. Furthermore, he knows to get the local church to have a weak membership, the best approach is to work on one member at a time. So let's see what the devil wants you, as a vital member of this local church, to do.

#### Lesson:

##### I. He Wants You to Forsake the Assembling of the Saints.

Why? Because forsaking the assembling of the saints is sinful. I would to God that I could get more brethren to see this. Many brethren believe that they can habitually forsake the assembling of saints and God doesn't care anything about that. But God does care or else we wouldn't have Hebrews 10:25, would we? Here is what the familiar passage says.

*Heb. 10:25*

*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

Now let me make two quick points:

(A) The word “forsaking” means “to leave behind, abandon or desert” (Strong). Who wants to be known as a deserter? There is nothing but negative connotation associate with that, right? A person who becomes a deserter in the army is forever known as one who is selfish and untrustworthy. Is that the way you want to be viewed spiritually? Listen: when you forsake the assembling of the saints, you are deserting Christ Who died for you on the cross. He didn’t desert you; He suffered for you to the end. How can you now abandon Him? When you forsake the assembling of the saints, you are deserting your brothers and sisters in Christ. Assembling is not just about you, it is about helping your brethren. It is not just about the one, it is about the group. This truth rings out in a commanding way in this text (**vers. 22-24**). When you forsake the assembling, you are telling your brethren I DON’T CARE ABOUT YOU!

(B) The word “manner” in the KJV is the Greek word ethos and basically means “habit.” Listen to the ESV.

*Heb. 10:25*

*Not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

The word habit is very informative here. Why? Because it reveals something to which the Hebrews writer is not referring. He is not referring to absolute apostasy. There are those who believe that the only ones who are guilty of forsaking the assembling of the saints are those who leave the church. No, the Hebrews writer is referring to a habit. Those who leave the church, don’t leave the church continually. They just leave. It’s an isolated act with ongoing effects for the soul. But the Hebrews writer is describing individuals who have an ongoing behavioral problem of deserting Christ and His people. Let me ask you, are you in the habit of forsaking the assembling of saints? By the way, every time we meet, that is an assembling of saints. Now, do you miss any of the services that we have regularly? Are you in a habit of missing Sunday night worship services? Are you in a habit of missing Sunday morning Bible study. I’m telling you, this is what the devil wants you to do. Why would you play right into the devil’s hand? Let me tell you, whenever we figure out something the devil wants us to do, we should immediately strive to do the opposite.

## **II. He Wants You to Communicate with Corruption.**

It continues to amaze me that Christians can’t see the harm in corrupt communications. Paul put it very simply:

*1 Cor 15:33*

*Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners. KJV*

The word *communications* come from the Greek word *homilia* and means, “an association of people, those who are of the same company” (Vine's). Thayer has a little broader meaning. He says it means, “*companionship, contact, communion: 1 Cor 15:33*” (Thayer). Listen: any contact with evil, whether it be people, things or even doctrines, is harmful to the Christian's conduct. I wish that more Christians would understand this. I'll tell you one thing, the devil understands it. He wants you to communicate with corruption. He wants you to keep company with evil. He wants you to frequent places that are swarming with sin and crowded with corruption. He wants you to keep company with people who despise doing right and favor that which is foul before God. He wants you to indoctrinate yourselves with teachings that are pleasant to the ears but contrary to the gospel of Christ. Why? Because in the end he knows that evil communications corrupt good manners. I don't care how strong you are, when you associate with that which is contrary to God's will, it will have a negative impact on your spirituality and your souls. If we want to be blessed by God, we must determine to be careful about who, what and with whom we allow ourselves to associate.

*Ps 1:1*

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers;*

Do you not know that God is a God who blesses. The Psalmist said, “Blessed is the man.” *“In the Hebrew text this word is a plural noun. A more accurate reading would say, ‘Blessings are to the man....’ This word shows the intensity of God's blessings and their abundance. The truth is God pours His blessings out upon us in the plural, not the singular. Amen! His blessings are many. There are so many that we need to count them” (Mattoon's Treasures).*

*Psalm 68:19*

*Blessed be the Lord, Who daily loads us with benefits, The God of our salvation!*

Yes, we serve a God who wants to bless His people. He wants our lives to go well and for good things to happen for us in life. God wants this (**Deut. 5:29**). God wants to and therefore will bless us, but we have to behave right. There are certain rules we must follow in order to reap the benefits of God wanting to bless us, and the Psalmist tells us one thing we must do. We must avoid walking in the counsel of the wicked and standing in the way of sinners. Now listen: how, in a world of sin, do we ever avoid standing in the way of sinners? I'll tell you how. We do it by taking up more time with the people of God (**Acts 2:24-47**). We do it by spending more time doing spiritual things (**Psa. 1:2**). Oh, the devil doesn't want you to do these kind of things. He doesn't want you studying your Bibles. He doesn't want you to spend time praying. He doesn't want you spending time with God's people. No, no, no. The devil wants you to communicate with corruption. The question is are you going to do what God

wants you do and what is best for your soul, or are you going to do what the devil wants you to do.

### **III. He Wants You to Engage in Gossip.**

Few things have hurt the church more than wagging tongues. I've said before, the devil knows that the world is going to run us down as Christians. The devil knows that the false religions that we expose with the Word of God are going to spread lies about us. He, no doubt, is happy about all that. However, when he can get Christians to run down other Christians, oh that is extra special to him. When he can get members of a local church gossiping about other members, that is what you call "icing on the cake." He'll eat the cake all by itself and be glad, but if he can get the icing on the cake, if he can get a local church to be a divided house by influencing brethren to gossip, he is beside himself. Let me tell you, every time you or I talk badly about a brother or sister in Christ, regardless of the circumstances, we are playing right into the devil's hand.

*Ecc 10:12*

*The words of a wise man's mouth win him favor, but the lips of a fool consume him.*

*Prov 18:7*

*A fool's mouth is his ruin, and his lips are a snare to his soul.*

*Eph 4:29*

*Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*

*Col 4:6*

*Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.*

Then of course, there is the famous, yet very practical, teachings of James concerning our speech (**Jas. 3:1-10**).

### **Conclusion:**

These are just a few of the things the devil wants us to do but they are all devastating to the local church. Remember, if the devil can destroy a local church, he will almost always destroy some souls along the way. Let's not let the devil win. Let's not do what the devil wants us to do. Instead, let's do what God wants us to do.