Daily Devotion #148

**The Devil Made Me Do It**

**1 John 4:4 (NASB) –** *“Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world*.”

Some of you may remember the comedian Flip Wilson. He acted out the parts of many different characters, but his most popular one was a woman by the name of Geraldine. This character was full of herself to say the least - always bragging about her beauty and how everyone should notice her. And if she were to do or say something inappropriate, she would shift the blame by saying, “The devil made me do it”.

While that was a funny statement as part of the comedic skit, it was truer that we may give it credit. We are told in Scripture that Satan was a powerful angel, the most beautiful of the created beings. But in his arrogance, he rebelled against God, causing God to cast him out of heaven, to roam the earth in a perpetual rebellion against the Almighty. (Isaiah 14, Luke 10:18). And from that day, he has been working his evil plan. A plan to use the sinful natures of people against themselves and against others.

In Scripture, Satan is known in many different ways. Predominately, he is a liar. In fact, Jesus called him the father of lies. (John 8:44) Everything about him is a lie. He has built his existence on the lie that he is God and can be god. All those who reject Christ and His saving work are puppets for Satan’s lies. He makes them believe lies that promote themselves above others. He causes people to do evil things and say evil things toward others.

To be clear, he doesn’t so much cause those problems as much as he is able to manipulate situations based on the sinful natures of people. He has the ability to entice and trap people into things because he uses their sinfulness against them. People are still accountable for their sin, but Satan can tempt them to follow their sinfulness, making situations much worse than they would otherwise be.

Satan also has the ability to cause people to follow their sinful hearts in other ways. He uses life against us to cause us to be indifferent to God. That is a horrible sin - one that rejects God and puts us on the throne of our lives instead of having God on that throne.

And Satan works feverishly to divide. One of his main goals is to cause division among family members, spouses, children, co-workers, and even churches. Many, many churches have fallen apart simply because Satan was allowed to enter in covertly and work his evil magic in the hearts and minds of those who are not paying attention spiritually. When he is allowed to do so, hearts and homes and relationships are divided.

You may say that you don’t like to talk so much about Satan. I would agree that this is not a great subject to dwell on. But it is important to know our enemy and the ways in which he operates. Any good general knows that to defeat an enemy is to know its tactics, its thoughts, its moves, etc. So, as followers of Christ, we need to know when Satan is operating and how he is operating in our lives so we can head him off. We must constantly be on our guard against him because he is relentless.

Thankfully even though all this is true, there is Someone greater - The Lord Jesus Christ. Notice John said that as powerful as Satan is in his ability to trip us in many ways, Jesus is greater. To be Biblically accurate, the Holy Spirit is greater. He is the one who lives in our hearts at the moment of salvation as Jesus is in heaven seated at the right hand of the Father, continually making intercession for us. (Ephesians 1:20, Colossians 3:1) Not dying again, but interceding because we have been rescued; we are now children of God. (Romans 8:34) Therefore, Satan is powerless against us except for the power we give over to him by not paying attention. We still wrestle with the sin that remains in us simply because we are still in our fleshly bodies, but we no longer are in bondage to sin and its effects. We will and do fail, but unlike those who don’t have the Spirit of God in us, we are free to follow Christ and leave the devil and his schemes behind.

So how are you doing in life? How are you doing as you pay attention to the attempts of Satan to distract and confuse and divide you in life? Remember, there is someone inside you who is greater than Satan. The Holy Spirit is in you, giving you eternal life and truth. Don’t fall for Satan’s traps. Fall for the Holy Spirit’s power.