

# Devices Of The Devil

**Introduction.** In 1942, Patton was preparing to face Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, Germany's most decorated military leader. Rommel was preparing to launch a massive assault on Allied troops in North Africa. His specialty was tank warfare. But Patton's intelligence service had intercepted a German radio transmission bearing news of the impending attack. On the morning of the battle, Patton is awakened by his aides. A book lies open on his night stand. Its title: *The Tank in Attack*, by Erwin Rommel. The Allied forces sprung their surprise, and executed a successful assault on the enemy. They were victorious because Patton had read Rommel's own book!

How do you win a battle? You become familiar with the enemy's tactics, gain knowledge of his ways, and study his personality and strategies in previous battles. Of course, our enemy is the devil. We all know that. We are familiar with the biblical metaphors: ruler of darkness (Ephesians 6:18); roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8); old serpent (Revelation 12:9; 20:2); and, accuser of brethren (Revelation 12:10). But what are his tactics to tempt us? What is his strategy to ensnare us? Let's not be "ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11).

## I. **He Amuses**

- A. Satan has always been the master of amusement, entertainment, and pleasure. He deceived Eve into disobeying God by eating the forbidden fruit. It was pleasant to the eyes and good to eat (Genesis 3:4-6). So much is taken in by our eyes (1 John 2:15-17).
- B. The great deceiver says, "There's no harm in looking!"
  - 1. He amuses us today through TV shows that glorifies immorality and carnality.
  - 2. He piques our curiosity for carnal pleasures through the Internet.
  - 3. Through movies he titillates the senses.
  - 4. Through lascivious novels he feeds the lurid imagination.
  - 5. Through music he mocks our morals.
- C. He presents all of these as pleasurable and certainly preferable to abstinence (1 Corinthians 6:18), self-discipline (2 Peter 1:6), and sobriety (1 Thessalonians 5:8). It may seem hopeless to resist, but thankfully, some have been victorious (Hebrews 11:24-26).

## II. **He Excuses**

- A. The devil will allure you to find alibis for disobeying God's word, for neglecting His work, and for seeking the secular instead of the spiritual (Matthew 22:1-14).
- B. Excuses like "I'm too busy," "I don't have any talent," "Someone else could do a better job," "I'm too young (or old)," "I have other

obligations," "I will do more when the kids are grown," and "When I have more time, when I have more money, when work slows down, when the economy gets better, when I retire," will not satisfy the Lord. Going to heaven means sacrifice (Matthew 16:24-25; Galatians 5:24; cf. Exodus 33:6).

- C. All during this time, Satan smiles gleefully! The first couple shamefully fell for Satan's charms (Genesis 3:12-13). On the other hand, David, a man after God's own heart, was willing to confess his sin and come to grips with his own wickedness and need of repentance (2 Samuel 12:13; 24:10; Psalm 41:4; 51:4).

### III. **He Infuses**

- A. John 13:2 says the devil had entered the heart of Judas (cf. Acts 5:3). He filled it with greed, corruption, and betrayal. Of course, he cannot do it without your permission. But when our hearts are unprotected from his devices, and susceptible to sin, we are vulnerable (James 1:14-16).
  - 1. Satan infuses our minds with doubt, and so we doubt the existence of God, His promises, His word, and Christ's sacrifice.
  - 2. Discouragement is another device of the devil. He loves to infuse our hearts with emotions that drain us, wear us down, and cause us to give up or give out. Discouragement weakens our resolve and diminishes our defenses.
  - 3. This spiritual predator may fill our hearts with pride that leads to over confidence and reliance of our own abilities rather than God's. Pride precedes our fall, and is predictive of our failure.
- B. The answer to all these is faith and humility. Study the word of God and let it build faith in you (Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 1:24). The knowledge of the Bible can lift your spirits (Psalm 37:7; Philippians 4:11) and cause you to put your firm trust in God, not yourself (2 Corinthians 10:18; Philippians 2:3).

**Conclusion.** So how do we defeat the devil? Learn his devices. Observe his tactics. Recognize his schemes. After all that, follow the advice of James and Peter (James 4:7-8; 2 Peter 3:14-18). Take up the word of God and learn from it (John 6:44-45; Hebrews 4:12).

I am deeply indebted to Ken Weliever for the use of his material.