

# Satan's Tactics to Deceive the World from the Truth | 2/25/18

- Introduction
  - The world we live in today is certainly not one that overwhelmingly accepts the Gospel, accepts the message about Christ.
    - This of course is why we as Christians are here and are called to proclaim the Gospel into all the world, to show them the truth of the Scriptures and point them to God.
  - However, while we are doing this, Satan at the same time is sewing discord. He is doing anything he can to make it difficult for us to share the message of the Gospel.
    - He has many tactics to do this, many ways he leads people astray to make it more difficult for them to see the truth.
  - Today we are going to look at a few of methods that he uses to do this.
    - Satan uses false religions and beliefs.
    - Satan uses false prophets who “look good” on the outside but in reality, are there to turn people away from Christ.
      - They will twist the Scriptures to give a false view of their clear meaning.
      - We find these people even within the church or among the professed believers.
    - He uses people who profess to be Christians, but by their actions they demonstrate instead one who is lost.
      - This is done to give a false view of Christianity into the world.
  - We will talk about why the world is blinded from the truth of the Gospel, why human intellect alone cannot lead you to God.
  - We'll look at why God chose the simple message of the Gospel to lead people to Him.
  - Then conclude with our duty as Christians to guide and lead others to the truth.
- The world is influenced by Satan, he seeks to satisfy our desires with anything that isn't the truth.
  - Satan has significant influence in our world and that will be the case until the time of Christ's return, he is roaming the earth spewing his lies.
    - 1 Peter 5:8
      - “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”
  - **Of all the objectives that Satan may have, his greatest is to turn people from the truth of the Gospel, to deceive the world into believing anything but the absolute truth.**
    - He has sown the seeds for false religion.
    - He has sown the seeds of atheism and agnosticism.
    - He has sown the seeds for a false version of Christianity.
  - Jesus came to testify to the truth...Satan is here to twist and push people away from it.
    - John 18:37b
      - “...For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world to bear witness to the truth...”
  - Satan does this by leveraging our sinful desires that are within our hearts, to entice us with thoughts and things that kindle the sinful passions within us.
    - 2 Timothy 4:3-4
      - “For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”
    - He will use anything he can to tempt us into following anything that isn't the truth.
      - 2 Corinthians 4:4

- In their case the god of this world has **blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel** of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”
    - His nature is to lie.
      - John 8:44b
        - “...He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because **there is no truth in him.**”
    - **While the truth is clearly there (the Gospel) people will turn from it because they have an itch for something else, Satan will make it seem as if it is the truth.**
    - This is where our false religions and beliefs come from.
      - According to Pew research 84% of the world believes in some sort of religion or higher power.
        - The top two are Christianity (34%) followed by Islam (23%)
        - The 3<sup>rd</sup> largest group is the unaffiliated (16%) which for reference is equal to the world's Catholic population.
  - **How effective is Satan at blinding the minds of the unbelievers?**
  - **Why are people so easily drawn away from the truth? To those passions (2 Timothy 4:3) that are within us?**
- Satan will use those who profess to be Christians but in reality, are lost and are used to turn the world from the truth.
  - **Of Satan’s many ways in which he turns the world from the truth, one effective way is to portray a false version of Christianity.**
    - 2 Corinthians 11:12-13
      - “And what I am doing I will continue to do, in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission they work on the same terms as we do. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, **disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.**”
  - He does this by masquerading himself and those in world as servants of God, when in reality they are not.
    - 2 Corinthians 11:14-15
      - “**And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.** So it is no surprise if **his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.** Their end will correspond to their deeds.”
    - **Satan does well at portraying evil and sin as something that is “good”.**
  - This is a very powerful tactic that Satan uses, he convinces people of a false version of Christianity that doesn’t lead one to salvation.
    - **This is of course more than just disagreements on minor forms of church doctrine, but a significant turn from the clear truth of the Scriptures.**
    - These false prophets who claim to be Christian **will throw bits and pieces of the truth** to entice listeners, but then bring them into a false truth.
    - They come under the disguise as a sheep, but in reality, are wolves who are seeking to devour.
      - Matthew 7:15
        - “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”
  - Satan does this in both **extreme cases and also the more subtle**, but both are powerful tools to turn the world from the truth.
    - David Koresh a false prophet.

- David Koresh was recognized as a spiritual leader of a religious group known as the “Branch Davidians” that was originally an offshoot of the Davidian Seventh-day Adventists in 1955.
- He proclaimed that he was “the Lamb” found in Revelation 5:2 that opened the scroll to lead the way for the return of Jesus Christ.
- He believed and convinced his followers that he was the final prophet sent by God.
  - His original name was Vernon Howell but had it changed to “Koresh” to reflect the biblical king Cyrus the Great who was named a Messiah for freeing the Jews.
  - He took David to symbolize a lineage directly to King David.
- He convinced his followers that he needed to procreate 24 children to serve as ruling elders over the millennium after the return of Christ. He took many “wives” even some underage.
- This ended with the Waco siege on the compound in 1993 where David died along with 82 of his followers.
- **He claimed to be a Christian**
  - While we shutter at his actions he did all of this under the disguise as a “Christian”.
- False Christian religion of the Mormon church
  - The Mormon church is founded by Joseph Smith who they believe to be a true prophet of God.
  - That he was visited by God, Jesus, the angel Gabriel and even John the Baptist to return Christianity to its true form because ALL churches had become corrupt. That the church had been put “on hold” until his calling.
  - This lead to the continuation of the Bible in the Book of Mormon and that only they are true “Christians”
  - They believe in many “god’s” and that the God of the Old Testament is evil.
  - Jesus and Satan are “spirit brothers”
  - Denial of the virgin birth etc.,
  - **The Mormon Church claims to be Christian**
    - Here we have a very large religion that proclaims to be Christian and will use the same words and term etc to sound like they are no different.
    - This is to entice people to listen to their message, however on the inside the truth comes out and we find that they are contrary to many truths of the Scripture.
    - **Just because some of the same words are used, does NOT mean they have the same meaning.**
- A more subtle approach is when people call themselves Christians, but their speech and actions are completely contrary to the Gospel.
  - Titus 1:16
    - “They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.”
  - **All too often we have people who claim to be Christian but through their speech and actions they can lead others astray.**
  - **Because they show a false view of Christianity because they are “Christian” in name only.**

- Examples of this can be the notion that you can be a Christian but live your life ANY way you choose because it's just a check box.
- Or that the Scriptures can be interpreted anyway you chooses, that the Scriptures are not inerrant.
- Or you have celebrities and politicians that claim to be Christians yet at the same time mock others for their faith.
  - The recent dig at Mike Pence from the View because he prays to and hears from Jesus.
  - Quote from Omarosa Manigault Newman
    - *"I am Christian, I love Jesus, but he thinks Jesus tells him to say things"*
  - **We do not know the hearts of others so we cannot truly know where they stand, but these actions do not help the cause of Christ.**
- We can quickly see that not everyone who claims to be a Christian see's it in the same light.
  - It is vital that we stand firm in the truth as Christians.
- **In what other ways does Satan or his servants disguise themselves as agents of righteousness?**
- **How effective are these tactics?**
- Satan will seek to disrupt the church.
  - The Scriptures also warn us that Satan will attempt to disrupt the church by saying things that twist the Scripture. His intention is to break down the house of God.
    - Acts 20:29-30
      - "I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted tings, to draw away the disciples after them."
  - Satan will do whatever he can to stop the spreading of the Gospel. If he can disrupt the church by planting lies and causing internal conflict he will do so.
  - And the Scriptures tell us that he will be successful.
    - 2 Peter 2:1-3
      - "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. **And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed.** And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep."
  - We cannot let Satan tear us apart from the inside, but that is one of his tactics and it is quite effective.
- Satan seeks to discredit Christianity as being foolish, but God delights in His simple message.
  - **A great tactic that Satan uses to turn people away from the Gospel is to simply make it seem as if Christianity is foolish and something of a fairy tale.**
    - This of course is quite effective, even though there seems to be a significant number of Christians and believers in general in the world, the voice of those who see Christianity as foolish is very loud.
    - We are told this would happen in the Scriptures
      - 1 Corinthians 1:18

- “For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.
  - God told us that His message would be folly to the unbelievers in the world, that many would see it as simply ridicules.
  - **What parts of the Gospel do you think are commonly looked upon as foolish to the world?**
- God however chose to use the simple message of the cross to send His message into the world.
  - God could have come down and shown Himself to everyone, He could speak in a voice that the whole world could hear. However, He chose instead the simple message of the cross.
  - 1 Corinthians 1:20-25
    - “Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, **it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.** For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles. But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.”
  - **God is well aware that we seek to use our knowledge and intellect to understand things, however He made it so that these alone could not be used to hear and understand the Message.**
    - It pleased God for it to be done this way, for it to be by FAITH.
    - If we could figure it out ourselves then we could boast, but since it is by faith in the things that are humanly impossible we HAVE to rely upon Him.
  - **How would you describe the power in the simple message of the cross? The message that seems folly with human wisdom alone? Yet to the Christian it is more real than anything else?**
- Christians must preserve and continue to shine the light of the Gospel.
  - We will always face a world in which Satan is against us, however that does not mean that we take it lying down.
  - In fact, it is quite the opposite, Christian must more than ever take a stand for the Gospel and share their faith.
  - We must share the knowledge of the glory of God.
    - 2 Corinthians 4:6
      - “For God who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”
  - **We must put aside our fears of being ridiculed or being made fun of for our beliefs, and take a stand for the truth.**
  - We must have mercy on the lost and try to save those we can.
    - Jude 20-23
      - “But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. And have mercy on those who doubt; save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.