

SPIRITUAL WARFARE KNOW YOUR ENEMY AND HIS STRATEGIES

I. SATAN'S PERSON

A. The Existence of Satan – He is referenced throughout Biblical history.

1. The teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures (Gen. 3; 1 Chron. 21:1; Job 1, 2; Isa. 14; Ezek. 28; Zech 3) plus many references to the adversary & enemy could be a reference to Satan.
2. The teaching of Christ in the New Testament (Matt. 4,12,13,25; Mk. 1,3,4; Lk. 4,8,10,11,22; Jn. 8,12,13,14,16)
3. The teaching of the Apostles in the New Testament (Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 2,5,7; 2 Cor. 2,4,11,12; Eph. 2,4,6; James 4;6-10; 1 Pet. 5:8-9 1 John 2,4,5; Jude 9; Rev.3,9,12,20)

B. The Names & Titles of Satan – He has identity.

1. Satan, used 52 times means “adversary” or “oppressor” - he is the enemy of God, His holy angels, Jesus Christ & all believers.(1 Chron. 21;1: Job 1:6; Zech. 3:1; Matt. 4:10; Matt.12:24,26; Mk.3:23; Lk. 4:8; 10;18; John 13:27; Acts 26;18; Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Cor. 7:5; 2 Cor.2:11;11:14; 1 Thess.2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; 1 Tim. 3:6; Rev. 2:9; 2:13,24; 3:9; 20:2 Matt.16:23)
2. Lucifer – means “daystar” or “son of the morning” “star of the morning” “son of the dawn” (Isa.14:12 – various translations) – shining one
3. The Devil – used 35 times. “Diabolus” means one who slanders or one who trips up” Rev.12:9-10; Matt. 4:1,5,11; Lk.8:12; 4:5-7; Jn. 8:44; 13:2; Acts 13:10; Eph.4:27; 1 Tim.3:7 2 Tim.2:26; Heb.2:14; James 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8; Jude 9; Rev. 2:10;12:9; 20:2; 20:10
4. The Tempter (1 Thess. 3:5) He entices people to do evil from the very beginning (Gen.3: 1-15) he tempted Jesus, but “met his match” (Matt. 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13)
5. Beelzebub – “Prince of demons” (Matt. 10:25;12:24,27; Lk. 11:18)
Means “lord of the flies” – an actual Philistine god.
6. The Wicked One (Matt. 13:38, 1 Jn. 2:13; 3:12; 5:18-19)
7. The Ruler/Prince of this World (Jn. 12:31, 14:30, 16:11)
8. The Prince & Power of the Air (Eph. 2:2; 6:16)
9. The god of this Age (2 Cor. 4:4)
10. The Spirit of this world (Eph. 2:2 -some translations)
11. The Old Serpent – (Gen.3:1-15 – first reveals him as “crafty, sneaky, deceitful, subtle) (2Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9, 20:2)

12. Angel of Light (2 Cor. 11:14-15)
13. The Evil One (2 Thess. 3:3; Matt. 5:37; 6:13, Jn. 17:15)
14. The Great Dragon – Referring to his destruction, nature, power – out to destroy (Rev. 12: 3, 7, 9 “with horns & a tail” Rev. 13:4; 20:2 – dragon 13:4)
15. The Beast – As the Antichrist – apparently Satan incarnate (Rev. 13: 1-8)
16. Belial (2Cor. 6:15) An ancient name for Satan – meaning “utterly vile, worthless one” (Deut. 13:13)
17. The Accuser – of the brethren (Rev.12:10) however Christ is our advocate defending us (1 Jn. 2:1) (Rom. 8:1)
18. A Roaring Lion (1Pet. 5:8) Seeking whom he may devour - swallow them up in sin & evil. A lion roars when they have their prey!
19. Apollyon – means “destroyer” (Greek) Abaddon (Hebrew) Rev. 9:11 – The king of the bottomless pit.
20. The Enemy (Matt. 13:39) in continual opposition to all that’s right
21. The Father of Lies (Jn 8:44) Liar
22. Power of Darkness (Col. 1:13)
23. Prince of the devils (Matt.12:24)
24. Spirit that works in children of disobedience (Eph. 2:2)
25. Unclean spirit (Matt. 12:43)

C. The Personality of Satan – He is a person.

Satan is a created spirit being that has individuality, identity, distinctive traits, characteristics & personality just like that of a human being – but does not have a physical body like us; of course his powers & abilities are supernatural beyond ours.

1. Personal pronouns are used of him

- a. “He” (Matt.4:3; 12:24; John 8:44, Rev. 12:9; Rev. 12:12; 20:3)
- b. “I” (Isa. 14:13)
- c. “Himself” (Matt.12:26 – divided against himself”; Lk. 11:18; 2 Cor.11:14)
- d. “Him” (2 Tim. 2:26; Rev. 12:9; 20:3)
- e. “His” (2 Cor.2:11; 11:3)
- f. “Whom” (1 Pet. 5:9)

2. He has attributes of personality – just like we have.
 - a. Intellectual – (he knows how we think)
 - (1) 2 Cor. 11:3 “the serpent beguiled Eve through craftiness”
 - (2) Isa. 14:13 “I will” (he planned an overthrow)
 - (3) Eph. 6:11 “stand against the methods, strategy of the devil”
 - b. Emotional – (he knows how we feel)
 - (1) He expresses wrath, anger (Rev. 12:12,17)
 - c. Will (he knows the importance of choices)
 - (1) He has a will to exercise (2 Tim. 2:26)
 - (2) He is treated as a morally responsible person (Matt.25:41)

3. He performs functions of a person, for example he:
 - a. speaks (Job 1:7; 2:4) communicates (Gen. 3:1-6; Matt. 4:1-11)
 - b. accuses (Rev. 12:10)
 - c. tempts (Matt. 4:1; Mk. 1:13; 1 Thess. 3:5)
 - d. resists God (Isa. 14:13; Zech. 3:2)
 - e. makes war (Eph. 6:16; Rev. 20:8)
 - f. has pride (Isa. 14:14) – “I will ascend”)
 - g. challenges (Matt. 4:3 – “If thou be the Son of God”; Gen. 3:1 – “Hath God said?”)
 - h. looks for trouble (Job 1:7 – “Walking to and fro in the earth”) plans his attacks!
 - i. seeking (1 Pet. 5:8) – “whom he may devour”)

D. The Nature of Satan – He is a spirit

1. He is an invisible & immaterial spirit being (Lk. 8:2; 11:24)
2. He can materialize at times (Matt 4:1-11) There are physical bodies & angelic bodies (1Cor. 15:39-40)
3. He can never die. (Rev. 20:10)
4. He has limitations – he is not in anyway equal to God (even though he’d like you to think so).
 - a. Not self-existent – he is a created being (Ezek. 28:13, 15)
 - b. Not omnipotent (1 Jn. 4:4)
 - c. Not omniscient (1Cor. 2:8; 1Pet. 1:11-12; Acts 19:13-16)
 - d. Not omnipresent (Job 1:7) – Limited spatially he has to travel to get around (Dan. 10:12-14, 20-21)
 - e. Not sovereign (Eph 1:20-21) – Christ is far above...) God uses Satan for His own purposes(2Cor 12:7)

E The Original State of Satan – He was a perfect angelic being

1. An anointed cherub who covers (guards, protects) (Ezek. 28:14)
2. Possessed perfection in beauty (Ezek 28:12)
3. Full of wisdom (Ezek. 28:12)
4. Present in the Garden of Eden (Ezek. 28:13)
5. Clothed in precious stones “regally” (Ezek. 28:13)
6. Endowed with musical powers (Ezek. 28:13)
7. “Perfect” holy, without sin (Ezek. 28:14-15)
8. In heaven (Lk 10:18; Isa 14:12) on the holy mountain of God (Ezek. 28:14)

F. The Fall of Satan – He is a fallen angel from heaven

1. The Cause:

- a. Pride – his heart was lifted up because of his beauty & brightness (Ezek 28:17; Prov. 16:18; 1Tim. 3:16)
- b. Selfish & perverse ambition – 5 “I wills” (Isa. 14: 13-14) to usurp God.
 - (1) To be higher in location – “I will ascend into heaven (Isa. 14:13)
 - (2) To be higher in position – “I will exalt my throne above (angels) & God (Isa 14:13)
 - (3) To be higher in authority – “I will sit on the mount of the congregation Isa 14:13. In Isa 2:2 & Ps. 48:2 the “mount” represents the center of God’s kingdom rule.
 - (4) To be higher in glory – “I will ascend above the heights of the clouds (Isa 14:14) “Clouds” represent Gods glory (Ex 16:10; 40:34-38). Satan wanted to be above the glory of God.
 - (5) To be higher in being & ownership – “I will be like the most high(14:14). God’s title here claims that He alone is “The possessor of heaven & earth” (Gen.14:19,22) “Elyon” (Hebrew) speaks of God’s supremacy over all creation... Satan wanted to be the Supreme one! & he even appealed to Eve lying to her that she would be like God (Gen. 3:1-6)

2. The results:

- a. He fell from heaven (Lk. 10:18)
- b. He was cast out by God as a “profane thing”(Ezek. 28:16)
- c. He was “destroyed” by God. Ezek 28:16 means “caused to wander”
- d. His wisdom became corrupted (Ezek. 28:17)
- e. He became filled with iniquity, sin, violence and defilement (Ezek. 28:15-18)
- f. He was expelled from Heaven (Rev.12: 7-10. Ezek. 28:16-17)
- g. He lost his privileged position & ranking (Ezek. 28:11-19)
- h. He was cast down to the earth (Ezek. 28:17; Job 1:7; Eph. 2:2)
- i. He became a “horror” (terror) (Ezek. 28:19)
- j. His rebellion/ambitions influenced 1/3 of the angelic force to follow into his sin (Rev.12:4) & they too were cast out with him (Rev. 12:9). Just remember they’re out numbered... 2 to 1!!!!
- k. He and his demonic followers were locked into their choice and doomed to Hell forever. (Matt. 25:41; Isa.14:15-17; Rev. 20:3,10)

G. The Powers of Satan – He has supernatural abilities

1. Over Eve – convinced her to disobey God (Gen. 3:1-6)
2. Over David – enticed him to number the people (1Chron. 21:1)
3. Over Job – caused affliction, sickness, suffering, crisis... (Job 2:1-8)
4. Over Job's family – destroyed them (Job 1:13-19)
5. Over people – to attack, rob & kill (Job 1:13-19)
6. Over fire & wind (Job 1:13-19) used it destructively
7. Over Peter – influenced him to contradict the Lord (Matt. 16:21-23)
8. Over nations (Isa. 14:12) & kingdoms (Mt. 4:9; Lk. 4:5-8; Rev. 13:1-2, 5; 16:13-14)
9. Over the human heart (Acts 5:3)
10. Over a human being – possessed Judas (Jn. 13:27)
11. Over demonic forces (Lk. 11:15-18)
12. Over Christians – to tempt them (1 Cor. 7:5; 1 Thes. 3:5)
13. Over Christians – to hurt/destroy them (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20)
14. Over the elements of nature – to “create” signs & wonders (2 Thes. 2:9)

However, God limits His power & control to fulfill God's sovereign purposes (Job 1:10, 2:6, 2 Cor. 12:7)

H. The Description of Satan – He has evil characteristics; he is now described as:

1. A sinner (Ezek. 28:16; 1 Jn. 3:8) The “arch-sinner” of the universe from the beginning! Sin originated with him & he instigated it (Gen 3:1-6)
2. Wicked (1 Jn. 2:13; 5:4, 18-19)
3. A murderer (Jn 8:44) & the instigator of it (1 Jn. 3:11-12)
4. A liar (Jn. 8:44) & the instigator of it (Acts 5:3)
5. Full of iniquity (Ezek. 28:15)
6. Full of pride (Ezek. 28:15)
7. The devil – “slanderer” & accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10)
8. Deceiver (Rev. 12:9) beguiled Eve (2 Cor. 11:3)
9. A profane thing (Ezek. 28:16)
10. Filled with violence (Ezek. 28:16)
11. Corrupted wisdom (Ezek. 28:17) & a corrupter
12. Defiled & defiles (Ezek. 28:18)
13. A “horror” (Ezek. 28:19)
14. Under condemnation (1 Tim. 3:6 NASV)
15. A destroyer who makes desolate (Isa. 14:17); Rev. 9:11)
16. A powerful ruler (Jn. 12:31; Eph. 2:2; Acts 26:18)
17. Cunning, crafty & subtle (Gen. 3:1-6; Eph. 6:11-12)
18. Evil & the source of it (2 Thes. 3:3; Matt. 5:37; 6:13)
19. The power of darkness (Lk. 22:53; Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13)

Refer back to his names & titles as well as to the next section “Satan's Strategies” to see other characteristics evidenced by who he is & what he does.

I. The Future of Satan - He will be judged

1. All human eyes will watch him be crushed by God (Rom. 16:20; Ezek. 28:17-19; Isa. 14:16-17; Rev.18:19-20; 19:19-21)
2. An angel from God captures him, he is bound with chains & imprisoned, cast into the bottomless pit, and he is shut up & sealed there for 1000 years.(during the reign of Christ on the earth – millennium) (Rev.20:1-3)
3. At the end of that 1000 years he is released (Rev. 20:3) & deceives the nations (20:7-8). He gathers them together for battle (20:8) against God & surrounds God’s people (20:9). But God devours the armies with fire (20:9).
4. The devil is ultimately & finally cast into the Lake of Fire...& will be tormented day & night forever & ever (20:10). Jesus said that this “everlasting fire” was originally prepared for the devil & his angels (Matt. 25:41).

II SATAN’S STRATEGIES

A. AGAINST THE NATIONS

1. To weaken them - bring them down (Isa. 14:12)
2. To deceive them (Rev. 12:9; 20:3, 7-9)
3. To influence & “control” them through his demonic princes (Dan.10:10-21)
4. To possess & control the kingdoms of the world (Matt.4:9)
5. To manipulate them to rebellion & war against God & His people (Rev.20:7-9)

B. AGAINST THE WORLD – The unsaved – his own children (Jn.8:44; 1Jn.5:19)

1. To influence & control them for his own evil purposes (1Jn. 5:19)
2. To prevent the gospel from resulting in faith & salvation (Lk. 8:11-12)
3. To snatch away the seed from the hearts (Mk. 4:14-15)
4. To keep the word of the kingdom from bearing fruit in their hearts (Matt.13:19)
5. To blind the minds of the unsaved (2Cor. 4:4)
6. To work in the sons of disobedience at will (Eph.2:2)
7. To deceive with powers, signs & wonders (2Thes. 2:9)
8. To hold them in deceptions & lies (Rev. 12:9; 20:3)
9. To beguile and deceive anyone (2Cor. 11:3; Gen. 3:1-6)
10. To promote ungodliness (Jn. 13:2)
11. To plant evil thoughts in their hearts (Jn. 13:2)
12. To enter into them & control them. (Jn. 13:27)
13. To take them captive to do his will (2Tim. 2:26)
14. To energize & perpetuate his false prophets/ministers (2Cor. 11:13-15; Rev. 3:9)
15. To cause death (Job 1:12-19; Jn. 8:44; Heb. 2:14)
16. To make the preaching of the cross foolishness (1Cor. 1:18)
17. To instigate false doctrines (1Tim. 4:1-4) erroneous belief systems
18. To appear as an angel of light (2Cor. 11:13-15)
 - a. To pretend he’s right & true
 - b. To propagate counterfeit religions and lies that appear to be true.
 - c. To pervert the Word of God (Gen. 3:1-6; Mt. 4:5-7)
 - d. To transform his false prophets into “apostles” (2Cor. 11:13)
 - e. To raise up deceitful workers (2Cor. 11:13) & false prophets
 - f. To replace God’s Word with false doctrine (1Tim. 4:1-4)(See 1 Jn. 4:1-6 for how to “test the spirits” to discern truth & error)

19. To energize the antichrist (2Thes. 2:9-10; Rev. 12:9, 17; 13:1-18) during the Tribulation
 - a. To deceive
 - b. To use powers, signs & wonders
 - c. To counterfeit a resurrection that deceives the unsaved
 - d. To blaspheme against God & His people
 - e. To overcome the saints (not) the church – see Matt 16:18
 - f. To give him authority & power
 - g. To rule over every tribe, tongue & nation
 - h. To cause the world to worship him
20. To raise up a false prophet (Rev. 13:11-17) during the tribulation
 - a. To exercise authority
 - b. To cause the unsaved to worship the beast (antichrist)
 - c. To perform great signs...fire from heaven
 - d. To deceive the earth dwellers
 - e. To create an image of the beast that speaks
 - f. To “give it life” & demand worship
 - g. To kill those who don’t worship it
 - h. To cause everyone to receive the mark of the beast
 - i. To control the whole economic system of the world
21. To “oppress” – dominate, overpower, tyrannize those who only Christ can restore, heal and set free (Acts 10:38)

C. AGAINST CHRISTIANS – The Saved – God’s people especially when and where they are most vulnerable...feeling _____ (tired, offended, hungry, hurt, frustrated...)

1. To tempt & entice believers to sin against God (1Thes. 3:5)
 - a. Eve (Gen. 3:1-6)
 - (1) To deceive/beguile her & us (2 Cor.11:3) & lead us astray from the truth
 - (2) To use something “innocent” to get our attention (Gen.3:1)
 - (3) To communicate his “message” of rebellion gradually (3:1)
 - (4) To challenge God’s absolute authority & word (3:1)
 - (5) To create doubt regarding God & His truths (3:1)
 - (6) To debate the issues (3:2-5) an attempt to compromise our stand
 - (7) To engage us in rationalization/reasoning limited by our own feelings & understanding (Prov. 3:5-6) Thinking void of absolute truth (3:2-5)
 - (8) To contradict the truth of God’s words (3:4)
 - (9) To pervert & twist God’s commands (3:4)
 - (10) To deny & ignore God’s law & present alternative behaviors (3:4-5)
 - (11) To do whatever he can to make his way our choice (3:4-6)
 - (12) To make sin look advantageous (3:5) that if we don’t do it we’re missing out on _____ Thereby imposing “our” values & judgment over God’s.
 - (13) To appeal to our desire to be “God” – we control our own lives & do whatever we want to do apart from His rule (3:5)
 - (14) To make God look like a “cosmic” kill joy – He’s depriving us of _____ (3:5)
 - (15) To get us to take “a second look” in light of his spin (3:6)

- (16) To make sin look good, desirable, pleasing, fun --- (3:6) & that it will meet our needs. – providing what God can't. Behind all sin is the doubt that God is good (& trustworthy).
 - (17) To convince us to make a choice to act on false beliefs/reasonings & actually sin (transgress, rebel, disobey) without considering the consequences... wages of sin... death (Gen. 2:16; 3:3; Rom. 6:23). Note all the consequences (Gen 3:6-24)!!!
- b. David (1Chron. 21:1-7) also see (2 Sam. 24:1)
- (1) To move in David's heart to number the people – wrong motives
 - (2) To use David's pride in his kingdom & military force & tempt him to further sin
 - (3) To use David's personal ambition/selfish/goals to sin
 - (4) To use David's possible trusting in "his forces" rather than God
 - (5) To use David's possibly taking credit for his victories & having a great army....to cause him to become prideful.
2. To tempt believers to lie/be dishonest (Acts 5:3; Jn.8:44)
 3. To tempt us to be proud (1Tim. 3:6)
 4. To tempt us to sin sexually (1Cor. 7:3-5); 1Thes. 4:3-8)
 5. To tempt us to lose faith in God & His Word (Lk. 22:31-32; 1 Pet. 5:8; Eph.6:16)
 6. To tempt us with the things of the world (1Jn. 2:15-17; 2 Tim. 4:10)
 - a. The lust of the flesh
 - b. The lust of the eyes
 - c. The pride of life
 7. To tempt us from our own hearts (Mk. 7:21-23)
 8. To tempt us from our own lusts (Js.1:13-15) desires- good or bad
 9. To tempt us to trust in our own resources (1Chron. 21:1-7; Matt.4:1-4)
 10. To tempt us to be discouraged (1Pet. 5:6-10)
 11. To tempt us to lose faith in God through worry (1 Pet. 5:8)
 12. To plant evil, sinful, & wrong thoughts & plans into our hearts & minds
 - a. Peter (Matt. 16:22-23)
 - b. Judas (unsaved) (Jn. 13:2)
 - c. Ananias & Sapphira (Acts 5:3)
 13. To devour us (1Pet. 5:8 (6-10) to "swallow us up" (word used to drown Heb 11:29) to engulf us in (fear, guilt, anxiety (5:7), disappointment, discouragement, depression, complacency, anger, lust, pride, selfishness, doubt, hate, bitterness, unforgiveness, unbelief...all sorts of negative, destructive emotions which would potentially cause us to make foolish & sinful choices.
 14. To hurl "fiery darts" at us (Eph. 6:16) wherever we are vulnerable he will attack us, he knows what "buttons to push" to divert our attention, derail & defeat us. They come in the form of destructive temptations (see previous list.) starting with wrong thinking – exactly why Paul says "bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ" so they don't become strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4-5)! (more said on this plan later)
 15. To use pride destructively (Isa. 14:12-14; 1Tim. 3:6)
 16. To "sift Peter like wheat" & destroy his faith (Lk. 22:31-32)
 17. To destroy our faith (1 Thes. 3:2-8)
 18. To gain ground (control jurisdiction) in our lives through anger (Eph. 4:26-27).
Unresolved conflicts & unreconciled relationships must be brought to Biblical solutions & unity immediately otherwise you're inviting Satan to control & use you...!
 19. To destroy without cause (Job 2:3)

20. To cause affliction, suffering, sickness... Job 1 & 21; Lk. 13:16; Acts 10:38; 2 Cor. 12:7) even against the righteous!
21. To contend, strive, dispute (Jude 9)
22. To take people captive to do his will (2 Tim. 2:26; 1 Tim. 3:7)
23. To lay snares (traps) for men (2 Tim. 2:26; 1 Tim. 3:7)
 - a. Money (1Tim. 6:9)
 - b. Fear of man (Prov. 29:25)
 - c. Idolatries (Judges 2:3) Substitutes, fakes, counterfeits in place of God
24. To accuse the brethren day & night (Rev. 12:10; Job 1:6-12; 2:3; Zech 3:1-4)
25. To persecute & throw Christians into prison (Rev. 2:10)
26. To harass us with problems & afflictions (2 Cor. 12:7-10) which God allows sometimes to humble & mature us – deepening our dependence upon Him and His grace & power.
27. To hinder our prayers from being answered (Dan. 10:10-13)
28. To oppose the work of God in us and through us (Zech. 3:1-2)
29. To send discord, disagreement, division, divisiveness among God’s people (Rev. 12:10; 2 Cor. 2:5-11)
30. To hinder “chop up” our plans; to hinder our ministry from going forward (1Thes. 2:18)
31. To oppress “to exercise control over – tyrannize” in numerous ways (Acts 10:38)
32. To get believers to “nit pick” and get “hung up” on minor issues. (Mt. 23:24). We must “major on the major and minor on the minors.”

D. AGAINST THE CHURCH - (See all the above, only think it through in the context of the church)

Even though Jesus guarantees that “the gates of Hell will not prevail against (the church)” (Matt. 16:18) Satan hates it (us) & all of God’s work in the world through His church.

Therefore, Satan has specific strategies to tear down, hinder growth, attack, divide & conquer churches. Pastors & leaders should especially be aware & alert to the subtle tactics of the enemy to destroy ministries through his strategies. He doesn’t play by the rules. The enemy ruthlessly seeks:

1. To tempt Christians to sin & use it to corrupt the maturity, purity & unity of the body of Christ (1Cor. 5:1-13) “a little leaven leavens the whole lump” (vs 6)-sin affects, & contaminates everyone. Think about what sins have actually been used by Satan to polarize relationships, create sides & seemingly irreconcilable differences, thus splitting churches through gossip, slander, backbiting, being unloving, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unthankful, unmerciful, complaining, whispering, being deceitful, malicious, boastful, covetous, evil-minded, hurtful, unforgiving, bitter, angry, having hatred, pride, selfishness, being critical, controlling, having power –struggles, lust(s), unresolved conflicts, jealousy, envy, strife, unsubmitiveness, abuse, addictions, immorality (all types of sexual sin), dishonesty, selfish ambition, hidden agendas, dissensions, heresies, contentions, idolatries, having offenses, condemnation, legalistic rules (man-made standards), judgments, lying, discontentment, unteachableness, unrepentance, unrealistic expectations (that have become “demands”), greed, reproaches, false accusations & all unrighteousness. (see 1 Cor. 5:9-11; 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:28-32). Even some things that are not in & of themselves sin, can cause polarizing problems such as: church disciplinary issues, missions, money, differences of opinion, philosophies of ministry, policy disputes (or debates), spiritual gifts, personality conflicts, communication breakdowns, misunderstandings, divorce & remarriage, doctrinal differences, eternal security and we could go on & on. But just think how simply “love one another” would overcome all this ____!

2. To cast doubt on the authority of God's Word (Gen. 3:1-6) Satan's first tactic against Adam & Eve at the beginning was so successful, you can be sure he will continue to use it not just individually but corporately within churches. For example, when people "go with their heart or their feelings (their own understanding & experience) suddenly the Word of God is minimized avoided & ignored, opening up churches to a free-for-all! When everyone "does what is right in their own eyes" (Judges 17:6; 21:25) the people side step "the Biblical authority," resulting in confusion and chaos. We are to walk by faith, not by sight (2Cor. 5:7). In other words trust and "obey God and leave all the consequences to Him" (Charles Stanley).
3. To inspire, instigate & promote false doctrines (1Tim. 4:1-3; 2Cor. 11:13-15)
It's disturbing to see how much foolish thinking has become widely accepted by Christians & has actually become equal, if not above, "sound doctrine." Scripture warns, "that the time will come when people will not endure sound doctrine..." but only hear what they want to hear and what makes them feel good ("itching ears") and "turn away from the truth". (2 Tim. 4:3-5). We must be aware of false prophets (Matt. 7:15-20) & false teachings (doctrines of demons especially with in these last days) which are not consistent with the Biblical foundation of "historical Christianity"! There are a lot of "voices" out there; we must run every thought and belief through the grid of Scripture (2 Cor. 10:4-5) and "test the spirits" (1Jn. 4:1-6). See separate studies on cults.
4. To infiltrate the church through counterfeit (phony) Christians & false teachers (Matt. 13:24-30, 37-42; 1 Jn. 4:1; 2 Pet. 2:1-2). Sometimes it's hard to discern if a person is a genuine believer. Jesus did say "by their fruits you will know them" (Matt. 7:15-20) implying we need to discerningly judge them, not according to our standards but with righteous judgment (Jn. 7:24)! Jesus taught in Matt. 13:24 – 30 & 37-42, that the enemy (devil) (vs.39) sowed tares (look alike) in among the wheat & that the Lord will eventually deal with it in His way, and in His timing. This does not mean we tolerate, blatant unrepentant sin and false teaching in the Church – we must follow Gal. 6:1; Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:1-13 & deal with it accordingly.
5. To stir up disputes & "friction in the flock", which cause disunity & divisiveness. He then capitalizes on the dissension in order to destroy the maturity, unity & purity within the church. Jesus specifically prayed for our unity (Jn. 17:20-26). Paul said "be diligent to preserve the unity" (Eph. 4:3) implying that it won't be easy or come automatically. The enemy will attack marriages, families, pastors, elders, deacons, teachers & spiritual leadership in order to "divide & conquer." We must be vigilant, watch & pray so we can spot the things that could potentially build up & resolve them immediately. This we must do so Satan loses ground & has no foothold with which to polarize relationships & split churches (2 Cor. 2:5-11).
6. To hinder the work of Christians, churches & ministries.
 - a. Snatch away the seed -Word of God/gospel so people won't believe (Lk. 8:12)
 - b. Blind the minds of those who don't believe (2Cor. 4:4) (both of these make our witnessing more difficult- that's why we must prayerfully depend on God to supernaturally intervene and do His sovereign work.
 - c. Thwart our plans for ministry (1Thes. 2:18). Satan hindered Paul's attempts to "follow up" the new believers in Thessalonica.
 - d. Corrupting pastors & teachers & even putting false clergyman into churches (Lk. 11:52; 2 Pet. 2:1-3)

All these strategies divert the attention away from the church fulfilling its main mission – preaching the gospel & making disciples (Mk.16:15; Matt. 28:18-20; Lk. 24:46-48; Acts 1:8). Satan not only wants to destroy the church but to keep it (us) from the most fulfilling purposes we could ever involve our lives in. If he can side track us with petty & serious problems we will be wasting our time, money, energies & resources on everything but the propagation of the gospel. He can even use “good things” to keep us from the priority of God’s kingdom work in the fields white with harvest! Beware of churches with all kinds of programs but do not consistently engage in evangelism nor train their people to share their faith because “that may be offensive to unbelievers.”(2Tim. 4:3-5 – a charge to pastors; Eph. 4:11-16)

Note on sections A-D: As you personally & prayerfully study these passages in their contexts you will gain even more “insights” into the enemies strategies than I could possibly cover in this study. But make no mistake, this is not intended to be just an “informational” systematic list. You need to take it further...asking God for wisdom to identify your vulnerabilities & how Satan trips you up. Then you need to find the relevant scriptures that relate to those problematic areas & fortify your faith. As you pray & apply them into your life you will be victorious. (Much more to be said on this later).

Also another note: If you remain ignorant of Satan’s strategies & don’t actively do what’s in your control you not only deceive yourself (Js.1:22-25) but you run the risk of actually becoming one of Satan’s devices! The old adage “idle hands are the devil’s workshop” means if you aren’t active in spiritual matters & serving God, Satan will quickly step in with alternatives & use you destructively. Too many lazy Christians have become critical, gossipy, slanderous, negative & tear down the body of Christ as well as embracing every new belief that comes along! So prioritize your spiritual life – personal time with God in the Word & prayer, worship, church, developing your spiritual gifts, serving God & others, witnessing, furthering God’s kingdom (Acts 1:8) all as you walk in the Spirit increasing your ability to be discerning (Gal. 5:16, 18, 25, Eph 5:15-21; Col. 3:16-17) “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil by doing good” (Rom. 12:21).

E. SATAN’S STRATEGIES AGAINST JESUS CHRIST

(Matt. 4:1-11; Lk. 4:1-13; Mk. 1:12) – incidentally Satan did not quit at this point but tempted Christ throughout His earthly ministry. (Matt. 16:23; Lk. 22:28; Heb. 2:18; 4:15) Satan tempted Christ to: (Matt. 4:1-11)

1. “Turn stones into bread” (4:3) gratify “The lusts of the flesh”.
These are several insights that this implies.
 - a. The Father is not good enough to satisfy your hunger
 - b. Use your own power/abilities to meet your needs
 - c. Take charge of your own life to be fulfilled
 - d. Disobey God – obey Satan
 - e. Be the source of your own self-sufficiency

- HIS Response: IT IS WRITTEN... “Man does not live upon bread alone but upon every word that proceeds from the mouth of God” (4:4) (Deut. 8:3; see Jn. 4:34; 6:38; 5:30; 10:30; Heb. 10:9) Basically saying, “I will trust the Father & His will, provision & timing. I will not assert my will over the Fathers”.
2. Throw yourself off the pinnacle of the temple because the angels will bear you up & protect you (4:5-6) “The pride of life”.
 - a. Prove yourself the world’s way – show off
 - b. If you won’t work a miracle get God to.
 - c. If you want to use Scripture twist it to your own advantage.
 - d. Prove you are the Messiah with this public show.
 - e. Presume upon the Father’s care/protection

- HIS Response: IT IS WRITTEN...”You shall not tempt (test) the Lord your God” (4:7) Deut. 6:16. Basically saying, “That’s foolish I already trust the Father. I don’t need to test Him my ways, He’s already proven Himself. I will not presume on Him. That’s not Biblically based faith”.
3. Worship me (Satan) & all these glorious kingdoms of the world that you see I’ll give you (4:8-9) “The lust of the eyes”
 - a. You’re the Messiah (You’ll eventually get this) take a short cut to all the kingdoms of the world - avoid the suffering.
 - b. Fulfill your ambition my way and get what ever you want
 - c. Obey me - worship me, serve me (Satan) not God
 - d. Don’t do things God’s way and you’ll be in control of your own life
 - e. Give me your allegiance – surrender to someone or something other than God

HIS Response: “Away with you Satan! For IT IS WRITTEN...

“You shall worship the Lord your God & Him only you shall serve” (4:10) (Deut. 6:13; 10:20; Josh. 24:14). Basically saying: The supremacy of God & Him alone being worthy & deserving of worship will never change. I will not worship or serve you & throw everything away for my comfort. I will not circumvent the Father’s will & trust His timing & His way of bringing the world under my authority.

NOTE: The actual temptations Satan enticed Christ with would not necessarily be temptations for us.... I can’t make stones into bread, nor would I jump off the roof & expect angels to fly me to safety. Satan would not necessarily offer “us” the kingdoms of the world because he knows who we are & it’s clearly not in our future like it was the Messiahs! Satan’s strategies here, interestingly enough, are designed to be within the scope of one’s power & ability. Granted some have “worshipped Satan” in hopes for power... but clearly the first two are out of our league in actuality but not in principle.

NOTE: Observe how Jesus resisted the devil. He used the Word of God, relying on what was “written”. We have the complete Scripture which are fully sufficient for overcoming sin & Satan. If Jesus, The Word, made flesh, used it in spiritual warfare how much more should we?! There is no victory without it, therefore identify all the areas where you are the most vulnerable to Satan’s attacks. How are you most tempted? You are responsible to discover the Biblical solutions (wisdom) that is relevant and directly relating to your areas of struggle. Pray them into your life so you can increase your alertness in times of weakness in order to apply them victoriously.(See Steps to Moving in a Solution-oriented Direction).