

Indifference: Satan's Device

Dee Bowman

In 2 Corinthians 2:11, Paul says that Satan seeks an advantage over us and that he does so by the use of certain devices. A device is some sort of contrivance or invention which is especially made to serve some particular purpose or need. Sometimes it is a technique or scheme that is intended to accomplish a clandestine purpose. Satan is a master at devising (notice the word) the means for our spiritual erosion, even our eventual spiritual destruction.

Satan's devices are many and varied. And, sadly, they are effective. He's constantly on the prowl, seeking, deceiving, capturing. He is a most dedicated and devoted enemy. And he won't quit. Even when you give him a "thus saith the Lord" for an answer and, by doing so, drive him away, it's "only for a season"; then he's back again, patrolling, watching, deceiving, capturing.

One of the most effective of Satan's devices is indifference. There are several reasons why this device works. First, indifference is easy. You don't have to do anything. That's just the point—you don't have to commit any adverse sin or anything like that, and that makes it easy. Secondly, indifference is comfortable. It fits nicely into any plan and brings no inhibition to anything you want to do. It just doesn't get in the way. Thirdly, it's easily habitual. It's like an easy chair—easy to get into, hard to get out of. Indifference is Satan's great tool, an ingenious device.

There are symptoms of indifference. We would do well to remember them and be aware of their subtlety. When you see these symptoms, best beware:

Lack of Bible study. Bible study, except for the public preaching and teaching we get at the services of the church, is a private matter. For that reason there aren't many restraints to neglecting it. Nobody sees when we don't study. Nobody knows if we neglect, even for weeks at a time, our looking into the word of God for instruction and discipline. But God knows. He says we should keep in touch with Him by listening to what He says in His word (2 Tim. 2:15). And when we stop doing that we don't have the protection and guidance He can provide to help us deal with sin and ungodliness. Watch out when you stop studying.

Lack of personal evangelism. People have trouble discussing what they don't know. That's another reason why Bible study is important. People are hesitant to discuss the matter of salvation with their friends and neighbors if they aren't sure of themselves. Personal evangelism is one of the most important things among God's people (2 Tim. 2:2), and yet it's one of the most neglected. Why is that? Surely it's not because we don't care? And be careful about those excuses. Remember, if you have a reason for not teaching others, God will surely accept it. But if you don't do it out of neglect or

indifference, watch out.

Lack of attendance. When people don't see the need to attend, you may be sure that it comes from indifference. People want to be with those who are interested in the things they're interested in. The Hebrew writer tells us that we should be careful about neglecting what we know is right (Heb. 2:1). Is it a good thing to attend? But it's easy to let things slip. You start to miss the Sunday classes, then Sunday night, then Wednesday night. It's a device, folks--don't we see that? Few people just get up some morning and suddenly decide to quit the Lord. It's a gradual thing. One of the sure signs that there's quitting ahead is the lack of attendance. Attendance is so important because it allows to be edified and built up by our worship to God and by our participation with our brothers and sisters in Christ (Heb. 10:23-25). Cut that off and you cut off a lifeline to holiness and piety.

Indifference manifests itself in other ways, but these are some of the more obvious. And please be advised—no one is immune. It can attack any of us at any time.

What is the remedy for indifference?

Wake up. Wake up to what has value, what is really important, what you can count on, no matter what. Look at Romans 13:11-12 —"...it is high time to wake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed. The night is far spent and the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast aside all the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts."

The remedy for indifference starts when you wake up to what is really important and walk accordingly.