



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

Unmasking Satan: The Con Artist (Part 5 of 8)

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A con artist is a person skilled and experienced in devising and executing scams and other fraudulent schemes; he persuades typically by deception and its purpose is for profit. As Christians, we must understand Satan as a con artist so that we will know his ways and avoid becoming victims.

1. Satan is the deadliest con artist:

- 1.1. His plan to deceive is almost flawless.
- 1.2. His goals are to kill (Jn 10:10) and destroy the unity of God's family (Acts 20:29-30).
- 1.3. He is ruthless and his schemes are shrewd and deadly.
- 1.4. He distorts God's truth.
- 1.5. He takes advantage of our ignorance.
- 1.6. He is an opportunist. We have to be cautious on the weaknesses of our flesh.
- 1.7. He is a deceiver.
- 1.8. He is persistent.

2. What are the occasions when we need to be careful and avoid temptation?

- 2.1. Temptation usually comes at the height of spiritual experience, like Jesus' temptation (Mt. 4). When we become God's servant, we have to be more cautious of the devil's temptations.
- 2.2. Temptation comes during physical stress and loneliness.
- 2.3. Temptation itself is not sin. But when we succumb to it, then we commit a sin.
- 2.4. He uses our natural instincts to tempt us.
- 2.5. He tempts us to love money (1Tim. 6:10).
- 2.6. He works overtime to flood our senses and sidetrack our Christian faith (2Tim. 4:3-4).
- 2.7. He corrupts our mind (2 Cor. 4:4).

3. Satan has 6 D's that make us pessimistic:

- 3.1 Disappointment. He is a master at exploiting our weaknesses

- 3.2 Discouragement. He snatches the Word of God from our hearts.

- 3.3 Division. He divides our churches.

- 3.4 Doubt. He has a convincing tongue. He tries to rationalize people who do evil deeds.

- 3.5 Damage. He needs or uses our physical bodies in attacking.

- 3.6 Delay. Our impatience to God's perfect time fuels the devil's plan to doubt our worth as children of God.

4. How do we recognize the con artist, Satan?

We recognize him by:

- 4.1 knowing he is our enemy, his plans and schemes (Jn. 10:10; Jn 8:44).

- 4.2 knowing God's truth and rejecting falsehood and lies of Satan (1Cor. 15:33; Jas. 1:6-8).

- 4.3 listening to our conscience to discern and take time in decision-making (Rev. 12:10; 2 Tim. 1:7).

- 4.4. praying and consulting the word of God (Jn. 16:33).

Conclusion:

In this part 5 of the 8-part series, Satan as a con artist should be avoided at all cost. God has been teaching, training, and walking with us as we become spiritually strong and mature. We should continue to follow God's word, never succumb to temptation, and pray for protection against the scheme of the deadly con-man.

Reflection:

1. How do you protect yourself from Satan?
2. What areas in your life do you think need protection from the con-man?
3. What are your prayers for protection against Satan? How often do you pray it?

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