

Making the Devil Sweat

by Sandeep Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding the deceptive nature of the devil and how to make him 'sweat' or be fearful. It discusses the various ways the devil deceives individuals, including distractions, persecutions, prosperity, challenges for new converts, and religiosity. The key message is to be vigilant, maintain a pure devotion to Jesus, overcome sins, and seek unity with other believers to combat the devil's deceit.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 11:3, Romans 8:35, Luke 8:14, Romans 8:7

Topics: "Spiritual Vigilance", "Overcoming Deception"

Description

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Transcript

So I want to share a brief message. I put some slides together to make it easier. Making the devil sweat.

First of all, the devil can't sweat, in case you were wondering. I don't know what kind of body he has, but as far as I understand, he's a spirit. But that's besides the point.

It's an expression. When we say that the devil is going to sweat, it means that the devil is going to get scared. The devil is going to shake a quake or tremble.

What's going to make the devil scared? I think most of us live our lives, especially with children, we grow up thinking we have to be scared of the devil. And you look at images in Bible pictures or other things, and they always just pick the devil to be a scary person. And most Christians too, I believe, are scared of the devil.

Now, you can have a sense of false courage or bravado and say, I'm not scared of the devil. But here's another question to you. Are you making the devil scared? Are you making the devil sweat? Is the devil worried about his existence when he thinks about you? He was extremely worried when he saw Jesus on this earth.

Just like Jesus is, so are we, it says in the Bible. How do we make the devil sweat? We must not lower the calling to be just we're going to go to heaven. If we are going to be like Jesus, the intention is that we also can make the devil sweat.

But let's first remember who the devil is. That will help us understand what it's going to take for us to make him nervous. He's the most evil of beings.

He's the most dangerous of beings. But why is he dangerous? Is it because he's scary? No, because he is tricky. What makes the devil the devil is because he's the most deceitful person in the universe.

So children, especially from the children up, I want you to understand you don't have to be the scared of the devil because he's going to come in the middle of the night and do something to you. He's not. The devil is not scary in that sense.

What is really dangerous about the devil is that he's sly and deceitful and tricky. And if you see in that picture, what he's doing is he's offering you a lot of sometimes money. It can be candy.

It could be pleasures of this world. It could be all kinds of things that he's offering. But what do you see in the back of his hand? He's got something he's going to whack you with.

He's not showing it to you. He's hiding it before he's hiding it from you. But the moment you get drawn to whatever it is, the money or the attractions of the world, the pleasures of this world, and you get sucked in, he's going to whack you with it.

That person is not a scary person because he's so like a big dragon. No, he's deceitful and he's smiling at you and he's drawing you to come in and then he's going to attack you. The question is, do I see this picture when I see the devil? Do I see him drawing me in with all of those attractions? And from a young age, we need to change our mind not to have the horns and the scary dragon and say that's the picture of the devil.

He's not that. For families who are in the faith, for those who are for Christ, he's not that. But he remains a deceiver and a liar.

And when we see that, we have to watch for him in different ways. This is how we have to change our perspective of who the devil is. So children, how is the devil going to get you? Is he going to scare you by getting a dragon to come after you? No, he's going to get you by trying to lie and to deceive you.

So children, it is one of the worst things you can do to hide things from your parents. It is horrible to want to hide things from your parents. Children, remember that it is deep within you.

I know because I was like that when I was a child. When you do something wrong and you know your parents are not going to be happy, it is very easy to hide things from your parents. Be very careful of a friend who tells you, don't tell your daddy and mommy about this.

The moment they say that, I hope you'll remember this picture. There's a devil hiding in there. There's no devil trying to offer you with all the scary things in the middle of the night, in the dark.

Don't worry, Jesus has protected you from it. But when some friend of yours at school, maybe a church or anywhere, tells you, whispers to you, hey, don't tell daddy and mommy this. I want to show it just to you.

Be very careful. Run. Run for your life because there's a devil behind that who's trying to attract you to hide and to deceive and to lie.

I wish I knew this many years ago. I'd have been protected. And I know, children, that's the way it is.

That's how the world tends to you. So now when friends tell you that, don't tell them, hey, you're the devil. Please don't say that.

But tell it in your head. The devil is trying to talk to you right now. Don't listen to it.

Do not hide things from your parents. They are the people who love you. That's why we should take lying, parents, we should take lying extremely seriously.

Because the devil is a liar and a father of lies. And so when children start to lie, when we start to deceive and want to hide things from us, people who love us, it is the spirit of the devil himself. Our culture tends to think a lot of other things are from the devil.

But this is how we need to see that this is what is the root of the devil. Lying and deception. So children, I hope you'll see that.

I wanted to share with you some ways in which I remember the messages I'm going to speak on is how do you make the devil sweat? How do you make the devil nervous? How do you get the devil to be scared of you? Maybe you've grown up this life to be scared of the devil. How do you make the devil to be scared of you? But let me show you the ways, some of the ways very quickly on how the devil tends to deceive you. This is from the parable of the sower.

I'm not going to go into it. But Jesus tells a story of a God who's sowing seeds. And he's saying, I wanted it to bear fruit.

I wanted you to be a good fruitful Christian. But you didn't. You know why? Because the devil deceived you in different ways.

And the first one it says, because you were so easily distracted. Jesus talks about the picture of a road. The road, when you try to put a seed in the road, do you think it'll go very deep? No, it won't.

Right. The birds can just come and eat it up. The seed has to go into the ground for it to bear fruit.

And so the distractions of this world, you hear something in church on Sunday, and then you forget about it because you get some email Monday through Friday. You've just forgotten about God's word that has been trying to speak to you. Immediate distractions, addictions, the loving of this world, the pressures of work, whatever it is, it can just become an immediate distraction.

And the devil has deceived you from allowing God's word to sink in. The next one is persecution and affliction. It says that, that persecution and affliction is the next thing.

When things are not going well in your life, that's the next reason the devil will trick you into saying, God doesn't love you. Has that happened to you? When things don't go well, you start to hear a voice saying, I don't think you're really a child of God. Otherwise, how could God allow this thing to happen to you? And you've got to fight it.

This is the lie of the devil. This is the deceiver trying to dangle this little affliction. And Jesus used the picture of a seed that goes in, but then the moment something bad happens, it completely loses its life.

This is the next trick of the devil, is when persecutions and afflictions come. Are you going through a hard time? Can you remember that verse, Romans chapter 8, which we just memorized? In all these things, we overwhelmingly talk of. You know what these things were? Look it up.

I think it's in verse 35 or something. Famine. When famine happens, what is the response of the Christian? Overwhelmingly conquer.

What happens when you're faced with the sword? Somebody's coming to chop off your head. What's the response of the Christian? We overwhelmingly conquer. That's the context in which Paul is saying, so now think about your troubles.

What are your troubles? How come we cannot also take that verse and say, we overwhelmingly conquer? So persecutions, afflictions, the devil is trying to tell you God doesn't love you. The next one, making the devil swear, this is how the devil deceives you, is the next one is through prosperity. That's a much more deceitful trick of the devil.

Are things going well in your life? Did you just get an incredible bonus? Did you just get a promotion in work and more access at work that you never had before? Be even more careful that there's a devil. So that's what it says that the deceitfulness of riches, now it could be prosperity in work, it could be prosperity in your bank balance, in your stock market, any kind of things, it's not that it is wrong, but you just need to be careful that there's a devil nearby trying to get you attracted to it, seduced to it, to whack you and kill you. That's what the Bible says in the story of the parable of the sower.

Read that in Luke chapter 8 or Mark chapter 4. The deceitfulness of riches, the desire for other things, for more things than what God has given you and worry about your future, these are all the things that God will say, prosperity. You have some problem in your life, some kind of health problem, it could be an affliction, that's easy compared to when you get lots of money and you're really healthy and everything is going well, the devil is trying to say, be attracted to it. And then all of these things God says, here's the next one in which the devil can trick us.

Now these are for Christians, all of these are for Christians, but this one especially, you are born again so your eternal destiny is secure. Dear brothers and sisters, we think that because we have made a decision, because we gave our life over to Jesus two years ago, that the devil cannot deceive us. It is very easy for the devil to grab a hold of a convert, very easy.

I remember the message was, how do you make the devil nervous? And I want to say something that may be provocative, but I used to think that the devil is really nervous when somebody becomes a Christian, but I don't believe that. The devil says, okay he got converted, no problem, I can still get him. There are plenty of ways in which the devil can still get somebody who just gave his life to Jesus, because he's just become a convert, he's just turned around.

And I'll talk more about what really makes the devil sweat. And the reason why the devil is not nervous when we decide to become a Christian is because, and this is extremely important, because one of his greatest allies is still around, and that is my will. My will, for all the time that I've not been a Christian, has always been listening to the devil.

And after I became a Christian, I made my will surrender to Jesus at a particular point in time. But that doesn't mean my will is surrendered forever. And every day I'm going to be tested by the devil to lose my composure, to get angry, to not forgive, to lust after women, to hold on to bitterness, and on and on.

To have a wrong attitude towards my body, to have a wrong attitude towards food, to think that what the mirror tells me is what I really am, all kinds of things. The devil says, I know I still have a great ally in your will. He's one of my best friends.

I've got to see this. One of the devil's best friends is my selfish will. That's what it says in Romans 8, verse 7 and 8. That the mindset on the flesh, that means the mindset on doing whatever I want, is an enemy of God.

It's an enemy of God. So whatever you're feeling can be an enemy of God, if you're not careful. The devil can twist it.

And this is where a lot of Christians can be deceived. My dad said this, that one of the theologies that have sent most people to hell is the theology of once saved, always saved. Because people just think, once saved always saved.

I'm good for the rest of my life. I'm never going to have to, cannot lose my salvation. What ends up happening is they're not persevering till the very end.

They're not holding fast the beginning of their hope till the very end. The last way that the devil can trick us, not the last way, just one of the other ways that I want to talk about, and this is the worst, is religiosity. This is for people well set in the church.

And it says about the Pharisees and the scribes, the people who are reading the Bible every day, the people who are maybe the closest to following God's word, but we're missing the mark. He said that when you go and become, make a convert, you make people, the converts twice, double fold the sons of hell. So it's sitting in church, it's pretending to be a Christian, but having a religious spirit, not having a vibrant, present, continuous life with Jesus.

A spirit of religiosity, but not a relationship. So these are five little tricks that the devil can use. They're not the only ones, but these are the ones that are often used.

So let's just to summarize, these are the five ones on the next slide. But I want to go on to the next one, how do you make the devil sweat? This is the first way, the first way we can make the devil sweat on the next slide. When a convert chooses to become a disciple, we want to be in the business of making disciples.

And I give two ways in which we can be a disciple. You seek to preserve that first simple and pure love for Jesus that you had. Think about the time when you decided to give everything over to Jesus.

I often tell people, think about the day when you got baptized. If you don't have that love, the Bible says in 2nd Corinthians 11 verse 3 that you are deceived. That means the deceiver has already succeeded.

So no point criticizing the murderer, no point criticizing the adulterer, no point saying, hey look at least I'm not a liar, I'm not a thief, and I'm not an adulterer. If we've lost our simple and pure love to Jesus, we too are deceived. That's what the Bible clearly says in 2nd Corinthians 11 verse 3. So what's the point arguing

our relative morality when we've both been royally deceived by the devil? And so the only way we're going to make the devil sweat, the first way is when a convert says I'm going to be a disciple.

And what it means to be a disciple is two things. One, I'm going to have a simple and pure devotion to Jesus. If you've lost it, dear brother and sister, please tell yourself what I've told myself over and over again.

Have you, Sandeep, have you lost your simple and pure devotion to Jesus? Then you're deceived. Don't think you're some great prophet who can talk about other people and talk about all of their deceptions. You too are deceived.

Who are you to talk? And I find that as I preserve my simple and pure devotion to Jesus, I have very little interest to talk about other people. I'm busy caught up being devoted to Jesus. I know what I think about all those deceivers and other people who are deceived, but I don't waste my time having to focus on that because I'm caught up with being devoted to Jesus.

I have a purpose and it's not to expose the false prophets. My purpose is to be devoted to Jesus. Nothing compares to that.

And the other thing is that we overwhelmingly conquer. We are increasing overcomers with the sins in our lives. That is the mark that we have gone from being converts to being disciples.

We must see the fruit of the spirit in our lives. If the seed has gone into the soil and the plant is coming up, you have to see fruit over time. The fruit of love, joy, peace, patience and other things.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us not be deceived. If we want to make the devil nervous, if we want to make the devil sweat when he sees us waking up in the morning, let him see a person who's radically decided to be a disciple and it's such a person who loves Jesus with all of their heart and is going to long for fruit. If you look at all the churches in Revelation chapter 2 and 3, every one of them Jesus said overcome.

You need to overcome. You need to overcome. You need to overcome.

Have a love for Jesus that's simple and pure and look and expect. It's guaranteed just as much as guaranteed that a seed that is sown on the good soil and it's watered and get all the sun just as guaranteed as it is that the seed will bear fruit. So it is that when God's word is planted into our lives, if we are maintaining a simple and pure devotion to Jesus, God guarantees that we will bear fruit.

Next the second point that I want to make and that's the other point which is disciples seek to be united. There is no such thing as a lone disciple. There is no such thing as a lone Christian.

You want to make the devil sweat? Seek to be a disciple and seek to be united with other believers. Dear brothers and sisters, do not be disturbed by data points of people around you. Those are not data points.

The data points which are facts are God's word. It is written and it is also written and that's where I'm going to live and die for. I don't care if thousand fall on my left hand and ten thousand fall on my right hand.

I don't know don't care if these people or all the people who are being deceived are people who have such great reputations. They can offer their body to be burnt and their religion will be worthless. They can give all of their money to the poor and their religion can be worthless.

They can speak in the tongues of angels and their religion can be worthless because they don't have that simple and pure love for God and for other people. And God will expose us over time if we are deceived. So let's go back to that picture, the second slide.

Dear brothers and sisters, the devil is a deceiver. The devil wants to deceive you. Let us not be deceived.

Let us seek to have a simple and pure devotion to Jesus. Let us seek to look for the fruit of sins being conquered in our lives and let us seek to love our brothers and sisters in the church. This is the surefire way to know that we can wake up in the morning every day and the devil will start to get more nervous for us.

So I want to turn the tables on us from all of us from children onwards. Remember children what I said, don't ever let the devil deceive you. Be very careful if somebody comes and tells you to hide things.

Be very careful when you are tempted to hide things from your parents or from the teachers. You have to be very careful of that because that catches up and stays with us even when we are adults. Let us not live with a devil who is a deceiver.

Let us seek to live lives where we are disciples and united with other disciples. May God help us.

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