

Give No Room To The Devil

by Zac Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the importance of not giving room to the devil in our lives, focusing on avoiding anger, pride, lies, and accusations. It highlights the need to counter these negative influences by practicing humility, intercession, truth, and love towards others. The speaker encourages building a church where Satan cannot overcome, by living a life that makes the devil angry through obedience to God's commandments and holding to the testimony of Jesus.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:27, Ephesians 4:31, John 8:44, Hebrews 7:25, Zechariah 3:1, Matthew 16:18, Revelation 12:10, Revelation 12:17

Topics: "Resisting Temptation", "Building a Strong Community in Christ"

Description

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Transcript

Good to see you all. I want to turn to a verse in Ephesians and chapter 4. Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 27 in the margin of my Bible, it reads like this, don't give a place to the devil. It's a very simple command.

We're not to give any place to Satan. And it is in the context in verse 26 of anger. It says if you get angry and you don't settle it before sunset, sunset is a time when people go to bed in those days when there was no electricity.

So if you don't settle your anger, get rid of your anger before you go to bed, according to this verse, you have given place to the devil. And if you keep doing that, he's going to get more and more place in your life. The reason why a lot of husband wife relationships are in so even if they lived in the same house, the glory in the fact they don't divorce, but there's such strain and tension between them.

It's the devil without a doubt. And how did the devil get a place there in that home? It's because they gave some room to the devil. And we need to see very clearly that Satan was once and for all defeated on the cross Calvary.

We need to understand something about Satan, about his origin and how he attacks and how he was defeated. So for those of you who are not familiar with that, let me give you some elementary teaching on that so that you understand and those of you who are experts in it, you can revise your knowledge also. The first thing you need to know, how do we give Satan room in our life or in our home? The Lord says give no room to the devil or don't give the devil an opportunity.

And there are so many things he mentions here in Ephesians 4. One is anger. And then he says, taking money, verse 26, 28 rather, work hard and earn your money and don't steal. Don't take somebody else's money.

You know, we human beings don't have a sense about this. Jesus never wanted, never asked for and never wanted anybody else's money. Recently I sent a circular to all our church elders saying this habit in America of having registries for weddings and what they call baby showers.

What is it basically? I mean, sometimes we get into certain habits that are practiced in the country without thinking and not just, is it Christian? What you need to ask about anything you do is, would Jesus do this? So I have to say, do you think Jesus would send a registry out to people saying, well, next month is my birthday and here's a list of things I would like you to get? I hope some people will pick out these 10 things and picking out most important things. That is no better than a homeless man standing on the street and he's better actually. He just stands there and said, give me anything.

But those who send out registries are asking, I want this, I want this, I want this, I want this. And it's amazing how Christians don't have any light on this. How in the world do they ask people to, Jesus never asked anybody for anything.

He knew that his heavenly father would give him what he needs and I've lived like that for 57 years. I've trusted the Lord for everything from the day one. I mean, my wife and I have served the Lord and we've never, ever, ever sent out a prayer letter or a registry or ever expected anything from any human being.

Not taken care of us in our family till today. I believe many people are missing such an experience because of a thing like this, where they ask for something. Be very careful.

Don't give a place to the devil by covetousness. And the other is by words that we speak, verse 29. Words that we speak.

These are the ways in which it says the devil gets a foothold, anger, verse 26, and coveting and work with your own hands. It says in verse 28, and so that you have enough, why you want other people's things. And verse 29, the words you speak, especially at home, when you speak between husband and wife, all these things are greening the Holy Spirit.

And then other ways in which you give room to the devil, the bitterness, you can have a bitterness against somebody and you're not saying anything, but you keep that in your heart. You've given room to the devil. And once he gets into your heart, he's going to get into your home.

Just a little bitterness in the heart against something somebody did. You know, sometimes a husband and wife can have some bitterness. They don't say anything and they think they're very spiritual because they control their tongues.

But when it speaks about bitterness in verse 31 here, it's not spoken at all. It's just inside the heart. It can be against somebody in your place of work or somebody who did something, some relative who hurt you or cheated you or something like that.

And all that must be put away from you completely. And all slander, it says in verse 31, you know, speaking about all types of things that don't concern you. Very often, you don't know all the facts and we say so many things as we know all the facts.

And all these things are going to give verse 27 room to the devil. So we need to ask ourselves whether the problems we face in our life, we ourselves are the cause of it. Because we have given room to Satan and once Satan comes in, he's going to attack your children.

He's going to attack so many things, he's going to attack your marriage, he's going to attack so many things in your life. And if we know that he was defeated once for all and for all on the cross, he has absolutely no place. I decided long ago that the devil will have no place in my life.

He will have no place in my thoughts. He will have no place in my speech. And he'll have no place in my home.

And he'll have no place in my finances. I'd rather live with less than have anything which is not righteously earned and which I did not get by begging anyone, even indirectly. I want to just trust my Heavenly Father.

These are little, little areas. Be very careful that you don't, it says, don't be conformed to this world. Don't be conformed to the habits that other people in your country are doing, even Christians, without any question.

But you're a disciple of Jesus, you should not be doing those things. So how did, first of all, how did Satan become Satan? Let me begin with that. Ezekiel chapter 28.

Some of you know this already. And if the devil has got no room in your life, then wonderful. It's good a revision for you to hear it again.

But I feel that maybe, I don't know why the Lord laid this on my heart today to speak on. I hadn't originally planned on it. But there must be some reason I found that.

Ezekiel 28 says, you know that before Adam was in Eden, the Lucifer, the head of the angels was there. We don't know his name. They call him Lucifer, but the name is not given.

The name of, the original name of Satan is not given anywhere in the Bible. Lucifer is sort of a name, Morningstar or something, in Latin or something, I don't know. I don't know where that name came from.

But anyway, we know him as the head of the angels. That's what he was. And it says here in Ezekiel 28 in verse, say this, the son of man, verse 11 and 12, son of man, pick up this lamentation against the king of Tyre.

Now there was a prince of Tyre mentioned in the leader of Tyre in verse two, who was the earthly leader. But behind the earthly leader was a king. That king was the devil.

And he's talking to him saying, you were perfect. You were full of wisdom, perfect in beauty. That's not a human being.

You were in Eden, the garden of God, and you were, verse 14, not a human being. You were the anointed cherub or angel who I placed there on the holy mountain of God. And you were blameless, verse 15.

From the day you were created until unrighteousness was found in you, and that unrighteousness was pride, and your heart was lifted up, verse 17, because of your beauty and your wisdom. And how many other human beings since that day have become proud of their physical beauty and their spiritual beauty, or they imagine they're very spiritual, and their apparent knowledge which they have. These are things which originally this head of the angels became proud of.

I'm so good looking. I'm better than the others. I'm cleverer than the others.

Do such thoughts come to you? Please remember who got them first. And when such thoughts came to him, instead of rejecting them, this person, this head of the angels, kept them. And so he corrupted, it says in verse 17, he corrupted his wisdom, and the Lord pushed him down.

The other passage is Isaiah 14, which, you see, if you know what made the devil the devil, you will see how you don't give room to him at all. Isaiah 14, it says, he said, how are you fallen, verse 12, Isaiah 14, 12, O star of the morning, O shining one. I think it is from here that that word Lucifer comes, I think so, I'm not sure.

But you said in your heart, Isaiah 14, 13, I will ascend to heaven, I'll raise my throne above the stars of God. Just let me pause there. So it's very interesting to see one thing here.

The head of the angels, who's already the ruler of everything, was not satisfied with his position. Whenever you are dissatisfied with whatever God has given you, whether it's your appearance, your face, or your physique, or you think you're too thin or too fat, or too ugly, or too dark, or all types of things we can be unhappy with. Remember it started with the head of the angels.

He was the one who was not happy with the way, even though he was so perfect, he was not happy with the way God had made him. And you allow that thought to come into your mind, and you're giving room to Satan. And so he wanted to somehow ascend and come to the place of God, maybe so that he could change certain things and have power over certain things.

As soon as that thought came into his heart, and he gathered a whole lot of others who had a similar sort of rebellion against God, they were all cast out. And that's how he became the devil, and all his followers became the demons who harass people today. That is how evil came into the world, long, long, probably millions of years before Adam was created.

So remember that, that is how evil came, not in the garden of Eden. This is where evil originated, in a perfect world where everything was perfect. Somebody got a little pride in his heart, and wanting to go above the others.

You can find this in churches, where one brother wants to show he's better than the other brother, one elder wants to show he's better than the other elder, and all this desire to do better and to show that I'm better than the others and to rule over others in the church. That's the devil, that's how the devil gets into the church. It's the desire to push other people down and to go up, and you see that among Christians.

So here's the way this angel became the devil, by wanting to go up and up and up and up, and God immediately cast him down, because there's a law, there's a law of God that you see operating there, God

resists the proud. You read that in 1 Peter 5, I think it's verse 5, he resists the proud and it started here. As soon as he started going up and got all those angels with him, the devil, I mean God pushed him down and he became the devil, and his followers became the demons, and they're like that forever now, they've ruined themselves for all eternity, and that's a warning for us.

Now this is the devil for whom the Holy Spirit says in Ephesians 4, don't give room to this spirit in you, this desire to go up to show that you're better than the other believers in your church, or to be puffed up, God allowed you to be served in some way and everybody appreciated it, and you get all puffed up. You can come to a preacher after he preaches a good sermon, and the devil is just waiting to puff him up. We have to be so alert all the time, this word, I hope you will keep it in your mind always, always, give no room to the devil, and there are numerous ways he comes.

See we are angry, we saw in Ephesians 4, it is related to anger. I believe there's a close connection between anger and pride, it's our pride that makes us angry, angry because somebody has made life a bit inconvenient for me, that's the only thing that can make me angry, this person has made life a little difficult for me through something they did or did not do, and I'm the important person you see, and I'm not able to do what I want to do because of this person, and I get angry. I've given room to the devil, that's what it says there.

So here's how the evil came into the world, this is long before Adam sinned, somebody wanting to exalt himself above others, fearless, fearless, fearless like anything. Now how did salvation come, now to rectify something which is wrong, like this pride, God has to do the opposite, and that's why Jesus had to come down, the angel wanted to go up and become God, and became the devil, and to deliver man from Satan's grip, Jesus had to come the opposite direction, Jesus came down, though he was God, he came all the way down below the level of any man, became like a criminal on the cross, even though he was not a criminal, that's how salvation came. Now I want to say that these two spirits, one going up and the other going down, are all the time operating in the world today.

It's definitely operating in the secular world, unfortunately it's operating in Christendom also, it is operating in the best of churches, it's operating in Christian families, where one wants to show that I'm better and the other wants to go down there. If you follow Jesus, it will always be the way down, always down, and if you find yourself at any time tempted to go up and to show that you're better than somebody else, please recognize what spirit is whispering to you, and what spirit is prompting you to show that you are better than somebody else, or your marriage is better than other people's marriages, or you brought up your children better than somebody else brought them up, and all the numerous ways in which the devil would like to inject a little pride in you. If you turn to Revelation in chapter 12, we read of the operation of Satan in the midst of the church.

How does he operate in the midst of the church, in the midst of believers? In Revelation 12, Satan is called in verse 9, the deceiver of the whole world. He's got a title, deceiver of the whole world, and that includes Christians. If you don't know the word of God, if you're not, if your mind is not soaked with the word of God, I can tell you that you are a prime candidate for Satan's deception.

If you just casually read the Bible just to ease your conscience, yeah, I read the Bible today, you are a number one candidate to be deceived by the devil. There's only one book in the whole world that can show you Satan's schemes, and through the Holy Spirit. You need the Holy Spirit and God's word, and I've seen that through, I started studying the Bible 64 years ago, very deeply, and with the help of the Holy

Spirit, I see so many ways in which the devil tries to trap me or lead me astray, very subtle.

The devil is not, as they say, dumb, he's not dumb, he's very shrewd and sharp. He deceives the whole world, it says in verse 9. He's a deceiver, and in that connection, I'll keep your finger here, I want to show you a verse in Matthew chapter, sorry, John chapter 8, and I'll come back to Revelation 12. In John chapter 8, the devil says, God says, Jesus said something about the devil.

In John chapter 8, he says, in verse 44, you are of your father the devil, he was a murderer, there's no truth in him, the last part of verse 44, he's a liar, and the father of lies. That's another characteristic of Satan, he's a liar, he is proud, that's a characteristic of Satan, anything that wants to pop you up, make you above all the others, he's a deceiver, and coupled with deceiver is he's a liar, and that's why we have to be very careful that no lie is found in our mouth at any time, and that we don't live a lie, a hypocrite is one who lives a lie, that's why hypocrisy is so serious. That's why Jesus told the Pharisees, you hypocrites, how will you escape the damnation of hell? Because you've got that poison of Satan in you, you're pretending to be something that you are not, that's what a hypocrite is.

The hypocrite, by the way, is not an English word, see some words have been imported into the English language from another language, and hypocrite is a Greek word, imported into the English language maybe 2,000 years ago, but the original meaning of hypocrite 2,000 years ago in the Greek language is actor, so if you went to Rome or to Greece and asked people where are all the hypocrites, they'll say in the theater where they have the dramas, that's where all the hypocrites are. What about today, in the church, the actors, people who act, and for example, think of the songs we sing, I've been tremendously convicted, how in my younger days I sang so many songs without even thinking what I'm singing. So many lies are spoken, Jesus said the devil's a liar, and if I have any lying in me, I'm unconsciously giving room to Satan and he'll then influence me in so many other ways.

That's why I have learned now to be very careful when I sing. I remember some years ago, and the Lord first gave me light on this, it was in one of our church services in Bangalore many, many years ago, and somebody else was leading the singing and I was there. We had a songbook in those days, and they turned to a particular number of a song, and I sang through the whole thing, and then they turned to the next song, and he turned to the hymn book, he didn't have any projected verses in those days, there were no such projections in those days.

He turned to the next hymn, and all of a sudden it hit me, what did I just sing to the Lord two minutes ago? I don't remember, because I was so familiar with that song, that without thinking, I didn't even know to look, I didn't even need to look at the book, I've sung it so many times, I would sing it by heart, I would sing it, sing it, and I was not conscious that I was singing to the Lord, that Jesus is there where two or three are gathered in his name, and I said, Lord, I'm really sorry, you are here in the midst of this church meeting, and I was just singing something without thinking, what am I saying? I'm really sorry, please forgive me, and so while the others were singing this new song number in the book, I turned the book back to the old song, which we had already finished singing, and I looked at those words, and I said, Lord, I want to repeat it now to you while the others are singing the next song, I want to repeat these words which I meaninglessly said five minutes ago, and I want to say it to you meaningfully. Have you ever done that? Have you ever been convicted that you were not aware of the Lord's presence? You know, like, for example, if I'm talking to somebody, I don't look that side and talk to somebody who's over here, or concentrate on something here, while I'm talking to some man who's standing here, I felt that's what I was doing to the Lord. The Lord is here in the church, and I'm just occupied with the words of a song, I like the

tune, and I'm familiar with the words, and without thinking that I'm speaking to Jesus, Thou art worthy, O Lord, how many times I have sung that without thinking I'm speaking to Jesus, I repent of it.

So I try my best now, when I sing that, Lord Jesus, whether I sing it the right tune or not is absolutely unimportant. That's what many people concentrate on, they sing in parts and all that type of stuff. But I want to be more particular that I'm actually telling Jesus, who's in the midst of the church, Lord Jesus, my Savior, you are really worthy of everything I have.

You're worthy of honor and glory and everything. You try doing that, my brothers, sisters, it'll change your life. That is worship, meaningful worship.

How are we supposed to worship? Turn with me to John chapter 4. Remember I'm speaking on the subject that the devil is a liar. A liar means someone who doesn't mean what he says. He tells you something, but he doesn't mean it.

And if I sing a song, a hymn in the church, and I'm not speaking to the Lord, I'm just going through a ritual, it's a lie. John 4, Jesus told this man and woman, verse 24, God is a spirit and those who worship him must worship him in their spirit, but in truth. In truth means they must mean what they say, did you hear that? You worship God in song.

I tell you all these, you go to YouTube, there are so many wonderful songs, hymns and all that sung by people. I don't know if 99% of them are singing them to the Lord. It's just a nice song and all the music is great and they're singing parts and all that wonderful thing and people listen to it and get all excited with it and there are some houses, they have music playing all the time, they're listening to all this, it's all a good habit.

All I say is my dear brothers, sisters, don't give a place to sin. This will take a little effort because we are not used to this. We've been telling lies so often, carelessly saying things without thinking about it.

Let's make a beginning and remind ourselves, you know, you'll get into the old habit, I tell you, if you listen to this message today, by next Sunday you'll be going into the old habit of just repeating something. So you need to check yourself, check yourself and let the Holy Spirit remind you, hey, remember what you heard on Wednesday. Speak the truth.

Jesus, where two or three are gathered, the Lord Jesus says, I'm there, he's there in your church meeting. If he's not there in your church meeting, you shouldn't be going to church at all. Don't go to a church where Christ is not there.

But if you go to a church which is sincerely seeking to worship Christ, he's there, then worship him. And it says here, God wants worship in truth. In truth means he wants you to mean what you say.

That's all. He doesn't say it must be the right tune. I tell you, honestly, it's good to sing in tune with the others.

But as far as God is concerned, he could not care less about your tune. He's listening whether you mean it in your heart. I'm not a very good singer, but I want to mean in my heart what I say to the Lord.

And I believe that will sound more clearly in heaven than if I get the tune right. Very, very important. God is eager for people to worship him in truth.

I say, my heavenly father, if that's what you're looking for all over the earth, and everybody is just, all Christians are only singing according to the tune and all that, let me be one who will bring some delight to your heart on Sundays by meaning what I say, even if I can't sing properly. Okay, if I can't sing the tune properly, let me sing it softly so I don't confuse people with the wrong tune. But let me mean it from my heart, and I'll tell you, God will be listening to you more than to all the others who are singing in parts and singing in all the right tune.

You understand that? I hope you do. It all comes under that word I said at the beginning, give no place to Satan. He's a liar.

He's a deceiver. Something more. I want to turn back to Revelation and chapter 12.

He's a deceiver who deceives the whole world, we saw in verse nine, and that's connected with his being a liar, and that also applies in our conversations. We don't have to tell people everything we know. To speak the truth always does not mean I have to tell everything we know to people.

I may not tell something, I'm sorry, I don't want to give you an answer to that. If somebody asks me something about something which I know the answer, maybe it's confidential. So I'd say, I'd rather not answer that.

I'd rather not answer that, but I'm not going to tell a lie. I remember once, you know, in Bangalore, somebody who was a secretary to a boss in the office said, Brother Zach, what do we do if I'm sitting with my boss in the office and the phone rings there? You know, those days when there's these phones that come through the telephone line. And the phone rang and the boss said, pick it up and if he asks for me, say I'm not here.

So this brother asked me, what shall I do if I do that? He says, if it's a so and so, the boss said, if it's a so and so, and he asks if I'm here, say I'm not here. So he said, Brother Zach, what shall I do? I'll have to tell a lie there. So I said, I'll tell you what to do.

When you pick up the phone, there is a solution to every problem under the sun. God has it if you seek his wisdom. I said, pick up the phone and if it's that guy whom your boss told you about and he says, is your boss there, put the phone down.

Don't reply. Put the phone down. He'll think it's just disconnected.

He'll ring again. Then before he rings again, tell the boss, sir, I'm a Christian. Please don't ask me to tell a lie.

Please ask somebody else to pick up the phone because I know he'll ring again. He said, Brother Zach, I'll lose my job. Better to lose your job than go to hell.

Don't you think so? Brother, okay, don't go to hell. You can be forgiven. But better to lose your job than displease God.

Forget about going to hell. I'm not afraid of hell. But I'll tell you what I'm really afraid of.

Displeasing my savior who died on the cross that I might not tell lies. I don't want to displease him. That is a salvation I have.

It brings in me not a fear of judgment. I have zero fear of judgment. I have zero fear of going to hell.

But I have a tremendous fear that I might hurt. Not that God will hurt me. I don't have any such fear.

I have a fear that I may hurt my savior's heart by doing something which displeases him. So, I would tell that man, if you lose your job, lose your job. I tell you, God will give you a better one.

You have that faith? I've experienced that many times when I was working in the Navy. And I was in charge of all the boats in the naval base in India. And I was a young person, just 23 years old, but I was committed, totally committed Christian.

And we as officers were permitted to use the boat for any, if you wanted to go for a picnic with your family, provided you paid for the diesel in the boat. But whenever the commanding officer, the captain used the boat, we were not supposed to send him a bill. Even if he went for a picnic, we had to write down on that form that he went to examine, to do a harbor examination or something like that, so that he doesn't get a bill.

So, when I was a boat officer, I said, I can't tell a lie like that. He didn't go for a harbor examination. He went for a picnic.

So, I sent the bill. The first time in his life, the captain got a bill using the boat. And the captain is a too big a man to come and talk to me.

So, he sent his second in command, the junior commander, go and tell Lieutenant Poonam, ask him why he sent me a bill. So, the commander came to me and said, why did you send the captain a bill? Didn't the previous boat officer tell you what to do? I said, yes, sir, but I'm a Christian and I can't tell a lie. But how could he tell me to tell a lie? So, he went back to his office.

And in half an hour, I was transferred from my job. I was removed from my position. I said, praise the Lord.

I've had some wonderful experiences like that. Some people don't think it's wonderful. It's inconvenient.

But those are the days as a 24-year-old young person, I got an inner strength to stand for the Lord. There are a number of situations like this. And then one day the Lord said, okay, you're fit for my service.

Quit your job. Come out and serve me. I'll use you.

I said, thank you, Lord. Now, when I look back, I say, Lord, what a tremendous joy you've given me to serve you all these 57 years. And I'd have missed it completely if in those days I had given room to the devil and told a lie or done something just to please man or just to keep my job and not get transferred or lose my job.

If I had done anything like that, I would have kept my job. I would have made money and got promotion and all that. But I would have missed out on what God wanted to do with my life.

And I think in eternity when people look back on their life, they will discover there are so many things God wanted to do through them. But because they told lies or gave room to the devil or were afraid of man and displeased the Lord, God almost said, well, you can remain as a Christian, but I can't call you for any higher service. You're unfit.

You know, just like in the world, they won't give a person a committed important position without testing him out. Is he fit for it? Is it possible that some of you, God has some plan for you which is not fulfilled? Because somewhere or the other you compromised and gave the devil a little place in your life. And if you're a parent, what are you teaching your children? I hope you're teaching your children not to give any room to the devil in your life.

I remember when my children were very, very small. The Lord told me, there are two things you must teach your children. One, they must honor and obey their parents 100%.

Speak respectfully to both daddy and mommy and to all older people and obey. And the second is they should never tell a lie. That's all.

I mean, there are so many other things you get children to do. They must study hard and do well and all that. It's a very good eat their food, etc.

But these were the two important things. And that's what I stressed with my children right from the beginning. Yeah.

Always speak respectfully to daddy and mommy and to every older person. Even if it's a beggar on the road, speak respectfully to him because he's older than you. Just because he's lower in society, don't speak to him in a rude way.

So many Christians, they speak in a rude way to someone who's lower in the social scale. They're not fit to call themselves Christians. And the second is never teach your children never to tell a lie.

And I remember in the early days, I had to sit with them sometimes. I asked them, did you do this? Did you do this? And they dilly-dally-dilly on it and say, I'm going to sit with you till you tell me the truth. So I don't want my children to give room to the devil.

That word in Ephesians 4 is a strong word. Don't give room to Satan. Okay.

The other thing in Revelation 12 is it says here in verse 10. Revelation 12 and verse 10. Salvation, the power and kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ has come.

And here the devil is given another title. He's a proud person. He's a liar.

He's a deceiver. But he's called here the accuser. Not of the world.

He doesn't accuse the world. The world is already in his lap. He accuses believers, particularly accuses the brothers of Jesus Christ.

Accused believers of something or the other. And how often does he do it? Verse 11, verse 10, last part. Day and night.

Now, someone who works day and night is called a full-time worker. That's a common expression among Christians. Full-time worker.

I'll tell you the real full-time worker is the devil. He's full-time in the business of accusing somebody or the other. Particularly believers.

Which means that he's always looking out all over the world with all his demons and saying, ah, he accuses them to God. It says here in verse 10. He's accusing them to God.

God, see that child of yours? See what he's doing? You see him? He's telling a lie now. You see that child of yours? God, he calls him. You see your child singing all those songs on Sunday? He's watching pornography now.

What do you say, God, to that? These people who watch pornography. Believers. They think nobody's watching them.

The door is unlocked. Brother, 1,000 demons are behind your back. Delighted that you're watching pornography.

Delighted and happy. Laughing with glee. Ah, got this so-called child of God to pollute his mind and fill it with filth.

And he thinks he's very holy when he goes to church and sings all those songs. All the 1,000 demons laughing with glee. And the devil accusing God.

You call this guy your child? You see what he's watching? He doesn't spend so much time with the Bible as he spends watching all this rubbish. Yeah. Accuses them day and night.

Let me show you the opposite of that in Hebrews and chapter 7. Hebrews chapter 7 says in verse 24 and 25, it talks about Jesus who is in heaven. And he's able to save all those who come to him in Hebrews chapter 7 and verse 25. He's able to save all those who come, who draw near to God through him because he's always living to make intercession for them.

So what is Jesus doing 24 hours? Praying, praying, praying, praying, praying. What is the devil doing 24 hours? Accusing, accusing, accusing, accusing. So think of these two ministries.

Like I told you, the devil's always wanting to go up and Jesus is coming down, always humbling himself, humbling himself. And there's other spirits exalting themselves. In the same way, there are these two spirits also operating.

The devil is always trying to find some fault, looking at somebody, finding some fault. There are some believers like that. They have very sharp eyes to look at people and say, Ah, you see that way that sister is dressed? Yeah, that's, look at that, immodest.

Just to accuse or see that way that person is doing something. They go to church and instead of worshipping God, they're trying to find fault with somebody or the other and some brother or sister that they see there. Imagine going to church and seeing all this.

And on the other hand, Jesus, it says day and night, ever lives. Ever lives means 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Intercession means he's praying.

So now picture this in your mind. Some brother or sister is doing something wrong there, contrary to his conscience. And the devil immediately says, God, see what he's doing.

And Jesus immediately is praying for that person. So just like there are these two ministries of the devil wanting to go up and Jesus wanting to go down. The devil is accusing and Jesus is praying.

So in both these areas, here I'm standing between them and I say, which am I going to choose? Am I going to go up or go down? Am I going to accuse or am I going to pray for that person? If you're alert in these areas, the devil will not get room. Don't give the devil room in your life. And there's enough given in scripture to show us these schemes of Satan.

So if you are alert to this thing, you can be protected and you can fulfill a useful ministry in the Lord's church. You know, Paul often would write to the churches saying, I'm praying for you. He was hand in hand with Jesus Christ.

I'll show you one more passage of scripture, and that is in the book of Zechariah. Some of you already know this. I've spoken about it many times.

I don't mind speaking about it a hundred times because people forget. Even some of you who may have heard these things from me before, you may have forgotten. In Zechariah chapter 3, the Lord gave Zechariah, who was a young man, a vision.

And in that vision, he saw Joshua the high priest, who was a picture of a believer. Now see Joshua the high priest, Zechariah 3 verse 1, as a picture of a believer and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. By the way, this is one of the two or three places in the entire Old Testament where you read about Satan.

Satan doesn't come very often in the Old Testament because he was not defeated on the cross, so God kept him away from Israel and all. But now and then he comes forth, and this is one of those places in a vision. He saw Satan standing at the right hand.

See Joshua as a believer, and Satan is standing there to accuse him. And the Lord is standing there to protect him. And the Lord says to Satan, the Lord rebuke you.

See I told you these two ministries, one accusing and one praying. So the Lord says, I rebuke you. This is a brand chosen from the fire, plucked from the fire of sin.

And what the devil said was right. Verse 3, he was clothed with filthy garments. Some sin was there in this believer's life.

And the Lord says, take away those filthy garments. Verse 4, and says I've taken away your iniquity, and I'll put on new robes on you, the robe of Christ's righteousness. Beautiful picture.

And here's the best part, which encouraged me when I read it first, and encourages me today as well. Verse 5, then Zachariah, watching this, this is a picture of a believer, watching this going on, says hey, Lord, don't just give him a robe, but put a clean turban on his head as well. This is called the ministry of making a brother glorious.

Instead of the other ministries accusing a brother. And this is where, when the Lord is clothing a person with a clean garment, Zachariah chimes in and says, not only that, Lord, make him even more glorious. Put a turban on his head.

Make him great. What a wonderful spirit to have towards our fellow believers, that we want that person not only to be cleansed from his sin, but Lord, make him glorious. Make him a wonderful brother in the church.

Make her a wonderful sister in the church. Oh, can you imagine what will happen to your church, whichever church you're in, if everyone in your church became like this? That is the real revival. Not just a lot of singing and excitement and all.

This is a revival where the spirit of love and forgiveness and concern and fellowship and prayer and lifting a person up before the Lord, the opposite of accusation. Don't give room to the devil. It can happen between a husband and wife.

Something you see in the other person is not exactly the way you were brought up. And inwardly, even if you don't open your mouth, you have a spirit of accusation. Why is she doing it like that? Why is he doing it like that? I'll give you the answer.

Because she's not you, and he's not you. That's why they're doing it differently. You were brought up in a different way.

If your way is not spiritual, more spiritual, by the way. You live in a way you were brought up by your parents. He or she is brought up in the way they were brought up in their parents.

There's a difference. And the Lord takes two imperfect people in marriage and puts them together and says, let me show the world that these two imperfect people can be joined together and become perfect. That is God's plan.

And if your partner is not willing to do his or her part, you do your part. You won't have a perfect marriage because your partner is not cooperating, but you'll become a perfect person. God doesn't guarantee perfect marriages, but he guarantees that he'll make you perfect.

If you humble yourself and say, Lord, I have decided from today, I am not going to give room to the devil in any of these things, anger, pride, accusation, telling lies, any of these wretched things. And I'm going to counter it not by keeping quiet, but by doing the opposite. The opposite of pride is humility.

Let me go down. The opposite of accusation is intercession. Let me pray.

The opposite of telling lies is speaking the truth. The way to overcome these things is by doing the opposite. I'm going to be a person who's going to get a reputation for being absolutely true, but yet not true in the way of hurting other people with the truth.

But Jesus said you shall know the truth and the truth shall what? Set you free. So I must exercise truth not in a way to condemn someone, but to liberate people. The truth shall set you free.

The truth that condemns people, that's not the devil's truth, Jesus is proclaiming. Condemnation is not from the Holy Spirit. It's not from God, but truth that liberates people.

If you go and tell somebody a truth that makes them feel condemned, what have you done? That may be the truth, but you're not cooperating with the Holy Spirit, because there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus. So we are not here to bring condemnation to the other people's lives by telling them the truth. Keep quiet.

Pray for them. That's far better. So let's be wise in all these things and make sure that in our home our children can grow up in a home where there's no place for the devil.

I feel so sad when I see so many children growing up in a wrong way. And you know why they're growing up in a wrong way? Because somewhere or the other their parents have allowed the devil to come into their home. What a wonderful thing if you make sure that your church will be like the church described.

I'll read this verse in closing, Matthew 16 and verse 18. Matthew 16 and verse 18. Jesus said, I will build my church and the gates of hell will not be able to overpower it.

You have a passion to build a fellowship, which is what a church is, in your town. Not a big one, but one which the devil cannot overcome. That's not such a big, mighty feat.

That means a church which cannot be overcome by accusation or by telling lies or by hatred or anger or bitterness or any of these wretched characteristics of Satan is eliminated. Doesn't have to be a big church, maybe 10 people, but it's a local church that Satan cannot overcome. I remember when I was 25 years old, I had a little burden in my heart.

And a burden in the heart is like a baby being born in a mother's womb, a little embryo that will one day be born as a baby, a burden in the heart. I had it when I was 25 years old and I read the Bible. I said, Lord, I don't want just to live a holy life.

I want to see a local church built. And that was a burden in my heart for 10 years before it came forth in the first CFC church in our home in Bangalore in 1975. We just celebrated our 48th anniversary in Bangalore last month.

But I realized it took a long time. And in between I had a few Ishmaels before the Isaac was born, you know, those which are the result of human effort, which never turned out to be the church that God gave birth to. Yeah, I made mistakes.

I'm not afraid to say I make mistakes. But I was sincerely seeking God's will. And I want to say to every one of you that God has got a plan for your life.

And if you don't give the devil room in your mind or thought, even if everybody around you is giving room to the devil, you will be the overcomer. And you'll have such an influence over those other people that your influence will bring light into the darkness, even in your home. Be watchful.

Be extremely watchful. Because it says in Revelation itself, it says, let me turn that verse there, Revelation chapter 12 and verse 17, the dragon, the devil, was enraged and went off to make war with the rest of our children, with those who keep God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. It says there earlier that the devil had great anger.

And that's why he went out and did this. So the devil is angry whenever he sees overcomers. I want to be one who makes the devil angry.

Do you want to do that? Are you afraid of the devil? Are you afraid of making him angry? I'll tell you, I'm not afraid. Because he's a defeated foe. Satan was defeated on the cross.

And I can say, tell him straight to his face, I want to make you angry by my life, that you have no foothold in my life with any lying or accusing spirit or pride or anything like that. I'm going to keep that out so that I have power over Satan. So, dear brothers and sisters, may God help you to remember all that is said today and make you a blessing in your local church.

Amen. ■■

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