

## Satan Will Settle

In the article entitled, "The Devil's Desire," it was pointed out that Satan's desire is clear. He wants you and me to be just like him. He wants us to be just as disgusting, vile, filthy and abominable as he is. He wants us to lie, cheat and steal. He wants us to stand in the way of that which is good and right. He wants us to deceive. He wants us to lead as many people away from God as we can and he wants us to stay away from the Lord as well.

Suppose we don't want to engage in such a profligate life? Suppose we turn a deaf ear to Satan's pleas to lower ourselves to his level of immorality? In this case, he'll gladly settle for a couple of alternatives.

If Satan can't get us to be vile and disgusting like him, he'll settle for our ignorance. The prophet Hosea wrote, "Hear ye the word of the Lord, ye children of Israel: for the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land... My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..." (Hosea 4:1,6). When Paul addressed the Athenians in Acts 17:23, he spoke of the unknown God, or at least unknown to them. In Ephesians 4:17-18 this same apostle wrote, "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart." Speaking of some of the zealous Jews, Paul wrote, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." (Romans 10:3). Peter wrote of the skeptics of his day and said, "For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water." (II Peter 3:5). Ignorance of God's Word leads to destruction. Solomon said, "Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good..." (Proverbs 19:2). Satan will be thrilled if we remain ignorant of the will of God which He has revealed in the Bible.

If Satan can't get us to be vile and disgusting like him, he'll settle for our apathy. To be apathetic is to be unconcerned, indifferent or unresponsive. With this attitude, we may know God's Word, but we just may not care about it. This apathy is easily seen in avoidance of daily Bible study and prayer as well as absence from or irregular attendance to worship services and Bible classes. The face of apathy is seen in Revelation 3:15 where we find Jesus saying of the Laodicean Christians, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot." They were indifferent. They didn't really care about their spiritual welfare or where they would be in eternity. They knew the truth. It just didn't matter one way or another to them. Jesus said in the next verse, "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." (Revelation 3:16). Apathy causes souls to be cast out into eternal damnation, a concept that surely delights Satan.

If Satan can't get us to be vile and disgusting like him, he'll settle for our procrastination. Let's say that we are not ignorant of God's Word and we are not apathetic. We know we need to obey and be faithful to the Lord and we really do want to go to heaven. But, we feel we have plenty of time to obey. There are so many other things to do. There are jobs to perform, ball games to attend and a million and one other distractions that keep our minds on things of a temporal nature. We need to follow God faithfully and some day we'll get around to doing just that. Here we think of Governor Felix's interaction with the apostle Paul. "And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." (Acts 24:24-25). As far as we know, Felix never found his "convenient season." Paul wrote, "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (II Corinthians 6:2). Satan is pleased when our "now" becomes "not now, but later."

Maybe we're not murderers, adulterers, thieves, liars or cheats. Just because we don't fit into Satan's mold for these types of sinful lives does not mean that he's giving up on us. He knows that

we can serve him just as well and go to him in eternity just as easily through ignorance, apathy or procrastination. He'll settle for any one of these and, by engaging in them, we will be his slaves.

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