



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

Examining the text & our hearts:

Bible Reading: Ephesians 6:11; 2 Cor. 2:11; Luke 4:1~13

1. Tailor-Made Schemes

- a. Schemes (methodia) – systematic steps, w goal of discouraging & distracting U from God's mission
 - a. *"The evil temptations that appeal to your specific desires are not accidental. The discord and disharmony that threaten your most valuable relationships are not coincidental. The temptations that tug at you during your weakest moments are not uncalculated...They are [the devil's] deceptive tactics,...specifically designed and personalized to keep you from experiencing abundant life."* (Priscilla Shirer, p. 18)
- b. Different schemes for different people
 - a. In the devil's office there is a file with UR name on it and it's filled with all your weaknesses, vulnerabilities, tendencies, past wounds, etc. Satan targets those things to keep you from enjoying the life God has designed for you
 - b. *"...Your patient has become a Christian...There is no need to despair...All the habits of the patient, both mental and bodily, are still in our favour."* (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter 2)
 - c. *"The enemy is a master of choosing the right kind of bait to snag you. Sure, he uses some overarching, one-size-fits-all tactics to disarm God's people in general, but he doesn't use only one type of bait for every person, or even the same type of bait for any one individual over time. No, he carefully considers and calculates your current situation, taking into account your weaknesses and strengths, your interests and tendencies, your history and past abuses, everything. Then, utilizing this available information, he crafts a specific strategy to hook you and reel you in."* (Priscilla Shirer, p. 28)

2. Satan's Tailor-Made Schemes for Jesus (Lk. 4:1-13)

- a. The goal of the temptation: independence from God
- b. Question God's provision and care
- c. Bypass hardships and still attain the goal – take the easy way

Device 9: *"Says Satan, do you not see that there are none in the world that are so vexed, afflicted, and tossed, as those who walk more circumspectly and holily than their neighbours?...Therefore, says Satan, you were better to walk in ways that are less troublesome, and less afflicted, though they be more sinful; for who but a madman would spend his days in sorrow, vexation and affliction, when it may be prevented by walking in the ways that I set before him?"* Remedy: *"All the afflictions that attend the people of God, are such as shall turn to*

their profit and glorious advantage (Rom. 5:3-5; Heb. 12:10, 11)." (Thomas Brooks, Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices, p.)

d. Have God prove himself to you – "If U R God..."

3. Satan's Tailor-Made Temptations for You

a. Zealous: strong and energetic desire to get something done

"Paul, in his pre-christian state, was convinced that because he was loyal to his inherited framework of thought and set of practices that he was clearly pleasing to God. He discovered, however, that his passion had put him in the position of opposition to God, attempting to destroy the work that God was building." (T. Gombis, Power in Weakness, p. 26)

"Cosmic enslavement shows up in the human realm whenever there are practices and community patterns of destructive competition, such as (1) divisive community dynamics where a few competing community leaders gather to themselves people who are loyal to them rather than ultimately to Christ; (2) divisions along racial, ethnic, and socio-economic lines; (3) outbursts of anger, denunciation, and condemnation; and (4) when some community members are made to feel they are second-class citizens, or in some way unwelcome. We may detect the work of God's Cosmic enemies whenever and wherever we witness God's order of flourishing being ruined in some ways." (T. Gombis, pp. 73-74)

"This is the great irony: before conversion, Paul thought he was fighting the powers...on God's behalf. But in his zealous ministry mode, he was actually serving the powers...to ensure that humanity did not enjoy God's gracious reign...Paul realized] all his efforts were positively working to further Satan's reign as 'god of this world' (2 Cor. 4:4)." (T. Gombis, pp. 75-76)

b. Repeating the same sin?

Device 7: *"Says Satan, your heart is not right with God...You flatter yourself to think that ever God will eternally embrace such a one as you are – who complains against sin...[and] with cheers and groans confesses [his] sin, and yet always falls into the same sin."* Remedy: *"Consider that there are many scriptures which clearly evidence the possibility of saints falling into the same sins where they had formally repented (Hos. 14:4; Jer. 3:12, 14)." Remedy: "Consider that God has nowhere engaged himself by any particular promise, that souls converted and united to Christ shall not fall again and again into the same sin after conversion. I cannot find in the whole book of God where he has promised any such strength or power against this or that particular sin...And where God has not a mouth to speak, I must not have a heart to believe."* (Thomas Brooks, Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices, p.)

c. Externally focused? Judgmental? Idealistic?

"One of our great allies at present is the church itself...your patient...when he gets to his pew and looks around him he sees [a] selection of his neighbours whom he [previously] avoided. You want to lean pretty heavily on those neighbours...[who] sing out of tune or have boots that squeak or double chins, or odd clothes, the patient will quite easily believe that their religion must therefore be somehow ridiculous. At this present stage, you see, he has an idea of 'Christians' in his mind he supposes to be spiritual but which, in fact, is largely pictorial...Work hard, then, on the disappointment or anticlimax which is certainly coming to the patient during his first few weeks as a churchman." (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter 2)

d. Do you like special interests?

"If men become Christians at all, ...keep them in the state of mind I call 'Christianity And'. You know – Christianity and Crisis, Christianity and the New Psychology, Christianity and Faith healing, Christianity and vegetarianism...If they must be Christians, let them at least be Christians with a difference. Substitute for the faith itself some Fashion with a Christian colouring." (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter 25)

e. Dissatisfied? Critical? Fussy?

"If a man can't be cured of church-going, the next best thing is to send him all over the neighbourhood looking for the church that 'suits' him until he's a taster or connoisseur of churches...[This] search for a 'suitable' church makes the man of critic where the Enemy [God] wants him to be a pupil." (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter 16)

f. Think of oneself as being 'spiritual': too spiritual for anyone's good

"Keep his mind off the most elementary duties by directing it to the most advanced and spiritual ones...Make sure [his prayer for his mother] is always concerned with the state of her soul and never with her rheumatism." (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter 3)

g. Self-centred? Proud?

"Your patient has been humbled; have you drawn his attention to the fact? All virtues are less formidable to us once the man is aware that he has them, but this is especially true of humility. Catch him at the moment when he is really poor in spirit and smuggle into his mind the gratifying reflection, 'By jove! I'm being humble', and almost immediately pride – pride at his own humility – will appear." (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter

14)

"While the Enemy [God]...is drawing the young barbarian up to levels he could never otherwise have reached, you must make him feel that he is finding his 'own' level..He must be made to feel 'how different we Christians are'; and by 'we Christians' he must really, but unknowingly, mean 'my set'..." (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter 24)

h. Self-motivated? Determined?

"The simplest misdirection is to turn their gaze away from God toward themselves. Keep them watching their own minds and trying to produce feelings there by the actions of their own wills...When they meant to pray for courage, let them really be trying to feel brave." (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter 4)

i. Regret?

"The humans live in time but our Enemy [God] destines them to Eternity. He wants them to attend chiefly to two things, to Eternity itself, and to... the Present...Our business is to get them away from the Eternal, and from the Present. With this in view, we...tempt a human to live in the past." (CS Lewis, The Screwtape Letters, Letter 15)

4. Our Stand Against the Devil (Eph. 6:11)

- a. God's word (Lk. 4:4, 8, 10 & 11) – bridge
- b. The blood of the lamb (Rev. 12:11)
- c. Helmet (Eph. 6:17)
- d. The name of Jesus (Matt. 28:18; Phil. 2:10 & 11)