

The Devil Made Me Do It

WHAT'S TRUE ABOUT THE DEVIL?

- The devil is **real**.
1 Peter 5:8-9/ John 16:11/ Matthew 13:36-39/ John 8:42-44/ Revelation 12:10
- **Deception** is his favorite strategy.
Genesis 3:1-10/ Matthew 4:1-11/ Revelation 20:8/ 2 Corinthians 11:14

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM WITH THIS URBAN LEGEND?

- It ignores what God has given us:
 - ✓ An **escape route**.
1 Corinthians 10:13
 - ✓ The **ultimate ally**.
1 John 4:4
 - ✓ A **guaranteed** win.
Revelation 20:10
- It gives us something to **hide behind**.
James 1:13-15/ Romans 1:20

HOW DO WE OVERCOME THE DEVIL'S INFLUENCE?

- ① Use spiritual **weapons** for spiritual **battles**.
Matthew 4:1-11/ Ephesians 6:10-18/ James 4:7/ Romans 12:1-2
- ② Stop **making excuses**.
Genesis 3:10-12/ Exodus 32:22-24/ Luke 14:18
- ③ **Take responsibility** for my choices.
Nehemiah 1:5-9/ Daniel 9:3-19/ Ephesians 4:27/ Jonah 3:6-10/ Luke 19:8

FINAL THOUGHT: If you've **messed up**, ask God for **mercy**.
Ephesians 2:4-5/ Jeremiah 3:12/ Psalm 25:1-8

Food for Thought

For the week of July 29, 2007

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. Pastor Jesse made it clear that we need to use spiritual weapons for spiritual battles. In Ephesians 6:10-18 the Apostle Paul uses the analogy of a Roman soldier suited up in full armor to help us understand what it takes to overcome the schemes of Satan. Read the passage carefully; look at each piece of armor, and in your own words, describe how it protects and why it's important.

Ephesians 6:10-18

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. [11] Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. [12] For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. [13] Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. [14] Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, [15] and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. [16] In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. [17] Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. [18] And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. [NIV]

Truth (transparency, integrity, both God's and ours)

Righteousness (progress, not perfection)

Faith (taking God at His word no matter what)

Salvation (eternal life)

God's Word (the Bible)

Looking back, can you think of a time or situation where one or more of these "pieces of armor" protected or equipped you in the midst of a tough spiritual battle or attack?

Why do you think Paul ends with such a big emphasis on prayer for one another?

2. Part of standing strong amidst a spiritual battle is understanding and leaning on the “ultimate ally” that stands with us. How could Psalm 91 help you trust in God's provision and protection in the midst of a tough situation?

Psalm 91:1-16

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.
[2] I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress,
my God, in whom I trust."
[3] Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare
and from the deadly pestilence.
[4] He will cover you with his feathers,
and under his wings you will find refuge;
his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.
[5] You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day,
[6] nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday.
[7] A thousand may fall at your side,
ten thousand at your right hand,
but it will not come near you.
[8] You will only observe with your eyes
and see the punishment of the wicked.
[9] If you make the Most High your dwelling--
even the Lord, who is my refuge--
[10] then no harm will befall you,
no disaster will come near your tent.
[11] For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways;
[12] they will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.
[13] You will tread upon the lion and the cobra;
you will trample the great lion and the serpent.
[14] "Because he loves me," says the Lord, "I will rescue him;
I will protect him, for he acknowledges my name."
[15] He will call upon me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in trouble,
I will deliver him and honor him.
[16] With long life will I satisfy him
and show him my salvation." [NIV]

3. King David gives a great snapshot of what taking responsibility for our choices looks like. Read Psalm 51 and then take some time to make it your prayer.

Psalm 51:1-19

For the director of music. A psalm of David. When the prophet Nathan came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your unfailing love;

according to your great compassion
blot out my transgressions.

[2] Wash away all my iniquity
and cleanse me from my sin.

[3] For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is always before me.

[4] Against you, you only, have I sinned
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you are proved right when you speak
and justified when you judge.

[5] Surely I was sinful at birth,
sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

[6] Surely you desire truth in the inner parts;
you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

[7] Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean;
wash me, and I will be whiter than snow.

[8] Let me hear joy and gladness;
let the bones you have crushed rejoice.

[9] Hide your face from my sins
and blot out all my iniquity.

[10] Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

[11] Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.

[12] Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

[13] Then I will teach transgressors your ways,
and sinners will turn back to you.

[14] Save me from bloodguilt, O God,
the God who saves me,
and my tongue will sing of your righteousness.

[15] O Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will declare your praise.

[16] You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it;
you do not take pleasure in burnt offerings.

[17] The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart,
O God, you will not despise.

[18] In your good pleasure make Zion prosper;
build up the walls of Jerusalem.

[19] Then there will be righteous sacrifices,
whole burnt offerings to delight you;
then bulls will be offered on your altar. [NIV]