



Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices

Satan's Devices to Draw the Soul to Sin, Pt. 5

Introduction

By my freshman year in high school, I had become addicted to a variety of drugs. Because of a close friend's invitation, however, I went to a Christian youth conference in Denver, CO called "Acquire the Fire". For the first time, I felt conviction for my sin and a need for Jesus as Savior, and especially, as Lord. I left that conference believing in Jesus, having a genuine relationship with him, an awareness of his presence, and a confidence that I would quit using drugs.

Once I returned to my hometown and normal rhythms, I thought I could still hang out with my friends – "I would just refrain," I told myself. That lasted about 24 hours, and I experienced my first of many relapses. This cycle happened again and again, and each time I would relapse, it was because I thought I had become strong enough to be in the presence of sin without partaking.

For all of us, although it may not be with substances, this is our experience in our patterns of sin. We may do fine for a period, but we grow confident, prideful, or naïve, and we put ourselves in positions where we can be tempted, thinking we'll be okay or strong enough to resist. In this way, Satan will work hard to draw your souls to sin.

The Device: "By making the soul bold to venture upon the occasions of sin."

Definition: Says Satan, "You may walk by the harlot's door though you won't go into the harlot's bed; you may sit and sup with the drunkard, though you won't be drunk with the drunkard; you may look upon Jezebel's beauty, and you may play and toy with Delilah, though you do not commit wickedness with the one or the other; you may with Achan handle the golden wedge, though you do not steal the golden wedge."

***In what ways have you experienced this?**

Matthew 18:7-9: Woe to the world for temptations to sin! For it is necessary that temptations come, but woe to the one by whom the temptation comes! And if your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than with two hands or two feet to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into the hell of fire.

***What does Jesus teach us about being bold to enter occasions to sin?**

***What situations, circumstances, or people do you become most tempted by?**

***What would it look like to "cut that off"? What's the cost?**

The Remedies

1. Solemnly to dwell upon those scriptures which expressly command us to avoid the occasions to sin and the least appearance of evil.

1 Thess. 5:22: Abstain from every form of evil.

“Whatever is heterodox, unsound or unsavory, shun it as you would do a serpent in your way, or poison in your food.”

“So in *Proverbs 5:8*, ‘Remove your way far from her, and come not near the door of her house.’ He who would not be burnt, must dread the fire; he who would not hear the bell, must not meddle with the rope.”

“To venture upon the occasions of sin, and then to pray, ‘Lead us not into temptation,’ is all one as to thrust your finger into the fire, and then to pray that it might not be burnt.”

“So in *Prov. 4:14-15*, you have another command: ‘Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.’ This triple gradation of Solomon shows with a great emphasis how necessary it is for men to flee from all appearances of sin, as a seaman shuns rocks and shelves; and as men shun those who have plague-sores running upon them.”

***For you, what’s challenging about avoiding the occasions to sin? How can ‘dwelling upon these scriptural commands’ be a helpful remedy for you?**

“Friendship with wicked companions is one of the strongest chains of hell, and it binds us to a participation in both their sin and their punishment.” (*Introduction to friendship w/ non-believers*)

***To what degree can/should we have friendships with non-Christians? Do you?**

2. Solemnly to consider that, ordinarily, there is no conquest over sin, without the soul turning from the occasions of sin.

“It is impossible for that person to get the conquest over sin – who plays and sports with the occasions of sin. God will not remove the temptation to sin, except you turn from the occasion of it.”

“As long as there is fuel in our hearts for a temptation, we cannot be secure. He who has gunpowder about him had need keep far enough off from sparks. To rush upon the occasions of sin is both to tempt ourselves, and to tempt Satan to tempt our souls.”

“The fable says, that the butterfly asked the owl how she should deal with the fire which had singed her wings, who counseled her not to behold so much as its smoke.”

“He who adventures upon the occasions of sin is as he who would quench the fire with gasoline. Ah, souls, often remember how frequently you have been overcome by sin, when you have boldly gone upon the occasions of sin. Look back to the days of your vanity wherein you have been as easily conquered as tempted, vanquished as assaulted – when you have played with the occasions of sin.”

3. Seriously consider that other precious saints (who were once glorious on earth and are now triumphing in heaven!) have turned from the occasions of sin, as hell itself.

“As you may see in Joseph: **Gen. 39:10**, ‘And it came to pass, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not engage with her to lie by her, or to be with her.’ Joseph was famous for all the four cardinal virtues, if ever any were. In this one temptation you may see his fortitude, justice, temperance, and prudence, in that he shuns the occasion: for he would not as much be with her.”

“The devil knows that corrupt nature has a seed-plot for all sin, which being drawn forth and watered by some sinful occasion is soon set to work in the producing of death and destruction.”

Job 31:1: *I made a covenant with my eyes not to look with lust upon a young woman.*

“I set a watch at the entrance of my senses, so that my soul might not by them be infected or endangered... A man may not look upon that which he may not love entirely... It is best and safest to have the eyes always fixed on the highest and noblest objects: as a mariner’s eye is fixed upon the star when his hand is on the stern.”

“Everyone should strive to be like them in grace, that they desire to be equal with in glory. He who shoots at the sun, though he be far short, will shoot higher than he who aims at a shrub. It is best, and speaks out much of Christ within, to eye the highest and the worthiest examples.”

Rom. 8:29: *For those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son.*

***How and why are godly examples necessary for growing in the Christian life?**

***What examples are you looking to or engaging with?**

4. Solemnly consider that the avoiding of the occasions of sin is an evidence of grace, and that which lifts up a man above most other men in the world.

[*What is a man?*] “A man is indeed that which he is in temptation; and when sinful occasions present themselves before the soul, this speaks out both the truth and the strength of grace; when with Lot, a man can be chaste in Sodom; and with Timothy, who lived temperate in Asia among the luxurious Ephesians; and with Job, who walked uprightly in the land of Uz, where the people profane their lives in superstitious worship; and with Daniel, who was holy in Babylon.”

“A man is surely godly, who in his course will not be bad, though tempted by occasions to sin. A Christless soul is so far from refusing occasions to sin, when they come his way that he looks and longs after them so that rather than going without them, he buys them with love and money.”

“Nothing but grace can fence a man against the occasions of sin, when he is strongly tempted to it. Therefore, as you would cherish precious evidence in your own heart of the truth and strength of your graces, shun all sinful occasions.”

Conclusion

May we ponder God’s Word, looking to examples and resting in grace, to avoid all occasions to sin.

***Prayer Requests for the Devotees and Remedies in your lives, as well as in those you know & love.**