



Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices

Satan's Devices to Draw the Soul to Sin, Pt. 7

Introduction

***When comparing yourself with others, do you normally look down on them or yourself?**

We're constantly comparing and measuring ourselves. This is because of our nature and our environment. As relational creatures that are sinful, we constantly compare ourselves with others, finding both dignity and depravity. We live in a globalized world where marketing and social media fuel our compulsion to compare ourselves with others. Aside from people, we are measured by standards. These could be standards from our God, spouse, children, employers, or even culture.

When I've done something selfish in my marriage and Katy feels really hurt, my first reaction is usually, "You're making this into such a big issue. It's not that big of an issue. At least I'm not like Billy Bob who never (*or always*)..." It plays out in so many other areas of life, as well, both past and present. I always justified my drug use, saying, "At least I'm not like..." There will always be someone worse off than ourselves. Is this a good standard by which we should judge ourselves, though? We must be pay careful attention to this, for in this way, Satan will draw our souls to sin.

Device: "By causing saints to compare themselves with those who are reportedly more wicked than they."

Definition: "Why," says Satan, "you are now and then a **little** lustful – but such and such do daily defile and pollute themselves by **actual** immorality and filthiness; you deceive and take advantage of your neighbors in things that are but small toys and unimportant things – but such and such deceive and take advantage of others in things of greatest concern, even to their own ruin and undoing. You only sit, chat, and sip with the drunkard; but such and such sit, drink, and are drunk with the drunkard. You are only a little proud in heart and habit, in looks and words."

***In what ways do you compare yourself with others in order to build yourself up? Why?**

Luke 18:19-11: *To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: "Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people – robbers, evildoers, adulterers – or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'"*

***How is this device of Satan working in the life of the Pharisee?**

Remedies

1. Solemnly consider that there is not a greater argument to prove that a man is hypocrite than to see a speck in another man's eye and not the log in his own.

"It's clear evidence that a man is a hypocrite when he is quick-sighted abroad and blind at home; when he uses spectacles to behold other men's sins rather than using glasses to behold his own; when he is always holding his finger upon other men's sores, and to be amplifying and aggravating other men's sins – and minimizing his own."

*Is there a difference between hypocritical judgement and godly judgement/assessment? What is it?

*Why do you think comparison and hypocrisy are effective devices for *drawing your soul to sin*?

2. To spend more time in comparing your internal & external actions with the Word instead of with the actions of those who are worse than yourself.

"The person who compares himself with others who are worse than himself may seem, to himself and others, to be an angel. Yet comparing himself with the Word of God may see himself to be like the devil."

"The nearer we draw to God and his Word the more rottenness we shall find in our bones. The more any man looks into the body of the sun, the less he sees when he looks down again. It is said of the basilisk, that if he looks into a mirror he presently dies; so will sin, and a sinner (in a spiritual sense), when the soul looks into the Word, which is God's mirror."

"Ah! what monsters would these men appear to be, if they only compared themselves with a righteous rule, and not with the most unrighteous men; they would appear to be as black as hell itself."

*Why is it easier to use other 'rules' to judge ourselves rather than God's Word?

Heb. 4:12-13: For the Word of God is alive and active. It's sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joint and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

*According to this passage, why is it necessary that we compare ourselves with God's Word?

*What are some of the standards, other than God's Word, that you use to judge/compare yourself?

3. Seriously consider that though your sins aren't as great as others – yet without sound repentance on your part and pardoning mercy on God's side – you will be as certainly damned as others, though not equally tormented with others.

"Though hell shall not be as hot to you as to others, yet you must as certainly go to hell as others – unless the glorious grace of God shines forth upon you in the face of Christ. God will suit men's punishment to their sins; the greatest sins shall be attended with the greatest punishments, and lesser sins with lesser punishments."

Gal. 6:7-9: Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Matt. 25:29: For whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them.

Augustine: As in heaven one is more glorious than another, so in hell one shall be more miserable than another.

***Why is the distinction between condemnation and punishment helpful?**

***What do we need to be careful about?**

“What a poor comfort it will be when you to come to die to realize that you will not be as equally tormented as with others, yet you must be forever shut out from the glorious presence of God, Christ, angels, and saints, and from those good things of eternal life, that are so many that they exceed number, so great that they exceed measure, so precious that they exceed estimation!”

“But this is not all: you shall not only be shut out of heaven, you will be shut up in hell forever; not only shut out from the presence of God and angels, but shut up with devils and damned spirits forever; not only shut out from those sweet, surpassing, inexpressible, and everlasting pleasures that are at God’s right hand – but shut up forever under those torments that are ceaseless, remediless, and endless.

“It was a good saying of Chrysostom, speaking of hell: Let us not seek to figure out where it is – but how we shall escape it!”

“God is very merciful. Ah, that you would repent and return, that your souls might live forever! Remember this... for to be tormented without end – this is that which goes beyond the bounds of all desperation. Ah, how do the thoughts of this make the damned roar and cry out for unquietness of heart, and tear their hair, and gnash their teeth, and rage for madness, that they must dwell in ‘everlasting burnings’ forever.”

“Surely one good means to escape hell is to take a turn or two in hell by our daily meditations.”

***How does this encourage you (as a remedy) to examine your life against the Word rather than people more wicked than you?**

Conclusion

May we examine our own hearts and failings before looking to others, compare our lives against God’s Word, and remember the destiny of those who don’t repent unto mercy.

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