



Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices

Satan's Devices to keep Saints from holy duties, Pt. 2

Introduction

I'm a huge fan of Tom Clancy's series featuring Jack Ryan. Amazon recently partnered with Clancy to create a video series based on his characters in a show called: Jack Ryan. In the latest season (season 3), the story is set in Russia, and it's about a secret movement in the Russian government to restore the country to what it had formerly been in the USSR. Through a series of events, this group and its leader(s) were attempting to create another world war.

Without giving away any spoilers, there is a man named Luka, who became my favorite character in the season. Luka is a general in the Russian military, who advises the president and had formerly shut down the Sokol Project. Having heard that there is a secret group of Russians bring it back through the 'Seven Days', he wants to protect his country. So, he works with Jack Ryan, sharing Russian intel with him and the CIA. He does so at great risk to himself – his life is at stake every time he does something to oppose this movement in the Russian government. It would have been easy for him to see the danger and turn away, telling himself and others, "It's not worth the risk of opposing them and being found out." He did so in order to save his country and prevent them from starting a war with the U.S. & rest of the world. Although he could've turned away from his duty in light of the dangers and troubles, he was faithful to his country and wellbeing of all. This temptation and worry is there for Christians as well. Satan will highlight it and press it upon you to keep you from engaging in the holy duties and religious services necessary for following Christ.

Device: "By presenting to them the danger, losses, and sufferings which attend the performance of such and such religious services."

Definition: By this device Satan kept those who believed on Christ from confessing of Christ (Jn. 12:42) ... "I would walk in all the ways of God, I would give up myself to the strictest ways of holiness – but I am afraid dangers will attend me on the one hand, and losses, and such and such sufferings on the other hand," say many people. Oh, how we must help ourselves against this temptation and device of Satan!

**What are some examples of 'dangers, losses, or sufferings' that can come on a person (i.e., you) for pursuing Christ and the things of Heaven?*

John 12:37, 42-43: *Even after Jesus had performed so many signs in their presence, the people still would not believe in him... Yet at the same time, many of the leaders even believed in Him. But because of the Pharisees they would not openly acknowledge their faith for fear they would be put out of the synagogue; for they loved human praise more than praise from God.*

**How is this Device of Satan seen in the actions of the leaders?*

**When have you faced something similar?*

Remedies

- 1. Consider that other precious saints, who were shining lights on earth (and are now triumphing in heaven!), held on in their religious services, despite all the troubles and dangers that surrounded them.**

**What are some examples of people in scripture facing troubles and dangers for being faithful to God?*

“Nehemiah and Ezra were surrounded with dangers on the left hand and on the right, and yet, in the face of all, they held on building the temple and the wall of Jerusalem. So Daniel, and those precious worthies, under the lack of outward encouragements, and in the face of a world of very great discouragements, their souls cleaved to God and his ways.”

“Though bonds and imprisonments did attend Paul and the rest of the apostles in every place, yet they held on in the work and service of the Lord; and why, then, should you denigrate from their worthy examples, which is your duty and your glory to follow?”

*Philippians 3:12-15, 17: No that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own, but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead. I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way... **Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.***

**Why and how is ‘imitation’ helpful for your growth in discipleship? Who are you imitating?*

Acts 5:27-32, 40-42: And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” But Peter and the apostles answer, “We must obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. We are witnesses to these things and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him... So, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus and let them go. Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the Name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

**What can we learn from the apostles about resisting this device of Satan?*

“William Fowler, the martyr, said: ‘Heaven will as soon fail as I will forsake my profession or budge in the least degree from it.’ Likewise, Sanctus, being under great torments, cried out, ‘I am a Christian!’ No torments could work him to decline the service of God. I might produce a cloud of witnesses; but if these do not assist you to be noble and brave, I am afraid more will not.”

2. Consider that God knows how to deliver from troubles by troubles, from afflictions by afflictions, from dangers by dangers.

“God, by lesser troubles and afflictions, does often deliver his people from greater ones, so that they shall say, ‘We would have perished – if we had not perished; we would have been undone – if we had not been undone; we would have been in danger – if we had not been in danger.’”

***What’s an example from your life of God using a lesser affliction to deliver you from a greater one?**

“God will so order the afflictions that befall you in the way of righteousness, that your souls shall say – We would not for all the world give up those troubles and afflictions; for surely, had not these befallen us, it would have been worse and worse with us. Oh the carnal security, pride, formality, dead-heartedness, lukewarmness, and worldliness, which God has cured us of by the troubles and dangers that we have met with in the ways and services of the Lord!”

“I remember a story of a godly man, that, as he was going to take a ship to France, he broke his leg; and it pleased Providence so to order it, that the ship he would have boarded was sunk at sea, and not a man was saved. So, by breaking a bone, his life was saved. So the Lord many times breaks our bones – but it is in order to the saving of our lives and our souls forever.”

“He gives us a portion that makes us heart-sick – but it is in order to the making us perfectly well, and to the purging of us from those ill humors that have made our heads ache, and God’s heart ache, and our souls sick, and heave to the death. Oh, therefore, let no danger or misery hinder you from your duty.”

3. Solemnly consider that you shall gain more in the service of God, and by walking in righteous and holy ways, though troubles and afflictions should attend you – than you can possibly suffer, or lose, by your being found in the service of God.

1 Tim. 6:6: Godliness is great gain.

“Oh the joy, the peace, the comfort, the rest – which saints meet with in the ways and service of God! They find that religious services are not empty things – but things in which God is pleased to reveal his beauty and glory to their souls.”

“Oh the sweet looks, the sweet words, the sweet hints, the sweet pursuits, the sweet influences, the sweet love-letters, which gracious souls have from heaven, when they wait upon God in holy and heavenly services, the least of which will darken and outweigh all the finery and glory of this world, and richly repay the soul for all the troubles, afflictions, and dangers that have attended it in the service of God.”

“Let a Christian compare his external losses with his spiritual, internal, and eternal gain – and he shall find that for every penny he loses in the service of God, he gains a pound; and for every pound he loses, he gains a hundred; for every hundred lost, he gains a thousand. We lose pins in his service, and find pearls!”

***What do you think me means in the last statement?**

“We lose the favor of the creature, and peace with the creature, and perhaps the comforts and contentment of the creature – and we gain the favor of God, peace of conscience, and the comforts and contentment of a better life.”

“Oh, therefore, let not afflictions or troubles cause you to shun the ways of God, or to leave that service that should be dearer to you than this world, yes, than your very life. When the noble General Zedislaus had lost his hand in the war, the king sent him a golden hand for it. What we lose in Christ’s service he will make up, by giving us some golden mercies. Though the cross be bitter, yet it is but short; a little storm, as one said of Julian’s persecution, and an eternal calm follows!”

***In what ways would you like to see these remedies reshape how you view your life?**

***What would it look like for you to do this at Faith?**

Conclusion

May we look to and imitate those who have gone before us and who faithfully live before us, trust God’s providence in our afflictions, and remember the glorious gain of serving Christ our King.

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