



Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices

To keep saints sad, doubting, and questioning: Pt. 7

Introduction

Covid made life in church difficult. There were so many different opinions, and people became divided over differences. Even aside from Covid, we struggle with bitterness, unforgiveness, and divisions. I experienced this with a friend who complained about the length of my sermons, the volume of my music, and the style of my clothing.

Satan will capitalize on these moments to work people to become cold and bitter so that they will become divided.

Device: “Destroying the saints by working them to be cold and then to divide.”

Definition: Satan has his devices to destroy the saints; and one great device that he has is by working them to first be cold and then to divide. Then he will work them to become bitter and jealous, and then he will move them 'to bite and devour one another' (Gal. 5:15). Our own woeful experience is too great a proof of this. The Israelites in Egypt did not more vex one another than Christians in these days have done, which occasioned a deadly consumption to fall upon some... Dissolution is the daughter of dissension.

*What are some ways you have experienced this?

James 4:1-12: *What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ² You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. ⁴ You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵ Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, "He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us"? ⁶ But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." ⁷ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸ Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹ Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰ Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

¹¹ Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. ¹² There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

*According to James, what lies at the heart of our quarrels and divisions?

Remedies

1. To dwell more upon one another's graces than upon one another's weaknesses and infirmities.

“It is sad to consider that saints should have many eyes to behold one another's infirmities, and not one eye to see each other's graces, that they should use spectacles to behold one another weaknesses, rather than looking through glasses to behold one another's grace.”

“Tell me, saints, is it not a more sweet, comfortable, and delightful thing to look more upon one another's graces than upon one another's infirmities? Tell me what pleasure, what delight, what comfort is there is looking upon the enemies, the wounds, the sores, the sicknesses, and the nakedness of our friends?”

“Tell me, saints, does not God look more upon his people's graces than upon their weaknesses? Surely he does. He looks more at David's and Asaph's uprightness than upon their infirmities, though they were great and many... God puts his finger on people's scars so that no blemish will appear. Ah! saints, that you would make it the top of your glory to be like your heavenly Father in this! By doing so, much sin would be prevented, the designs of the wicked frustrated, Satan outwitted, many wounds healed, many sad hearts cheered, and God more abundantly honored.”

**In what ways do you emphasize others' weaknesses? What would it look like to focus on their graces?*

2. To dwell upon those commands of God which require you to love one another.

“When your hearts begin to rise against each other, charge the commands of God upon your hearts, and say to your souls, ‘O soul! Has not the eternal God commanded you to love those who love the Lord? And is it not life to obey and death to rebel? Therefore, fulfill the commands of the Lord, for his commands cannot be changed, and they are not burdensome. They bring life and health and peace.’”

John 13:34: A new commandment I give you, that you would love one another; as I have loved you, so you also must love one another.

In former times, it was much taken notice of by the heathens that in the depth of misery, when fathers and mothers forsook their children, Christians, otherwise strangers, stuck one to another, whose love of religion proved firmer than that of nature. Ah! that there was more of that spirit among the saints in these days! The world was once destroyed with water for the heat of lusts, and it is thought that it will again be destroyed with fire for the coldness of love.”

**How can God's commandments 'to love' shape the way you handle conflicts?*

**What are some other commandments 'to love' that you can think of?*

3. Consider that God delights to be styled – ‘the God of peace’; and Christ to be styled – ‘The Prince of peace’; and the Spirit is the ‘Spirit of peace.’

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace. Oh! Why then should not the saints be children of peace? Certainly, men of mean and fiery spirits cannot have the sweet evidence of their interest in the God of peace, and in the Prince of peace, and in the Spirit of peace, as those precious souls have who follow after things that make for love and peace.”

“The very name of peace is sweet and comfortable; the fruit and effects thereof are pleasant and profitable, more to be desired than innumerable triumphs. Peace is a blessing which ushers in a multitude of other blessings. Where Peace is, there is Christ, because Christ is peace.” (Is. 9:6)

2 Cor. 13:11: Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.

**How does Paul’s final exhortation to the Corinthians encourage us toward this end?*

4. Above all, labor to be clothed with humility.

“Humility makes a man peaceable among brethren, fruitful in well-doing, cheerful in suffering, and constant in holy walking. Humility fits for the highest services we owe to Christ, and yet will not neglect the lowest service to the lowest saint.”

“Humility can feed upon the lowest dish, and yet it is maintained by the choicest delicacies, as God, Christ, and glory. Humility will make a man bless him who curses him, and pray for those who persecute him. A humble heart is a habitation for God, a scholar for Christ, a companion of angels, and preserver of grace, and fitter for glory.”

“Humility will make a man excellent at covering others’ infirmities, and at recording their gracious services, and at delighting in their graces. It makes a man rejoice in every light which outshines his own, and every wind which blows others good. Humility is better at believing, than it is at questioning other men’s happiness.”

“The humble soul is like the violet, which grows low, hangs the head downwards, and hides itself with its own leaves; and were it not that the fragrant smell of his many virtues discovered him to the world, he would choose to live and die in his self-contenting secrecy.”

**Where, and in whom, have you noticed humility? Where can you see your need for it?*

Conclusion

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