

“The Enemy’s Strategy For The Fight, Part 2”

Ephesians 6:11

Sermon Series: “The Fight Of Your Life”

Introduction: Ephesians 6:11

Wiles refers to Satan’s wicked, deceptive schemer and strategies to destroy us. Satan’s desire is to destroy us and his primary method is deception. Thomas Brooks: “Satan’s first device to draw the soul into sin is, to present the bait-and hide the hook.” He has to try to deceive us because his authority over us is broken so he cannot force us to sin.

While Satan’s primary method is deception, it is not the only way he works. I think that deception permeates his other strategies, but he does have other strategies. Last Sunday we began looking at four strategies that we see Satan use directly against people in Scripture (analogy of studying game film). These strategies are pointed out in a book called *The Strategy of Satan*, by Warren Wiersbe. We looked at one last week. We will review it briefly and then try to look at the other three.

Strategy #1: Satan is the deceiver.

- 1. His weapon is lies.**
- 2. His target is our mind.**
- 3. Our defense is the truth of the Word of God.**

Strategy #2: Satan is the destroyer.

1. His weapon is suffering. Warren Wiersbe writes, “Satan wants to control the circumstances around the body so that the believer will suffer. He wants to touch the body and create suffering. All of this is illustrated in the story of Job (**Job 1-2**). First, Satan attacked Job’s body through the circumstances around him, and Job lost his children, his wealth, and the favor of his wife, friends, and neighbors. Then Satan attacked Job’s person with a horrible disease. When Job looked around, his situation was painful. When he looked within, it was even more painful. And when he looked up, it seemed that God had forsaken him, although Job maintained his faith in God and was honored at the end. It is important to note that God was always in control. Satan could not attack Job’s possessions until God gave him permission. Satan could not attack Job’s person until God allowed it. Satan cannot touch the child of God without the heavenly Father’s permission. This is a great encouragement to us, for we know that whatever suffering may come to our lives, God has ordained it and is in complete control.”

2. His target is our body. However, he is ultimately using our body to get to us spiritually. He wants us to despair, stop trusting God, give up, and do sinful things impatiently on our own. Why do we experience sickness and other types of physical suffering? Is it always coming from Satan? Does God make people sick? Here are seven possible biblical reasons we experience physical suffering. Sometimes it may be a combination of reasons this is happening in our lives.

- A. Satan's attacks**
- B. God's discipline**
- C. God's glory (John 9:1-3)**
- D. God's pruning and purposes**
- E. Life in a fallen world**
- F. Reap what we sow**
- G. Suffering for the sake of the gospel**

3. Our defense is trusting the character of God (James 5:11). We see that God is in control and has a good purpose even when we are suffering (Romans 8:28). It is vital that we hang on to those truths when we are suffering. He is using our trials to bless, refine, and restore. He is compassionate and merciful. It is important for us to seek God during our trials through His Word and prayer. We can continue to praise and worship Him during our trials. We can look for ways to glorify Him through the trials.

Strategy #3: Satan is the ruler.

1. His weapon is pride. We see this in the Old Testament example of David (1 Chronicles 21:1-18, see also Proverbs 16:18). Satan's sin was pride (the five "I will's" of Isaiah 14). He is "the prince of the power of the air" who wants to rule over us. His authority is broken, but we can let him rule over us.

2. His target is our will.

3. Our defense is humbling ourselves and submitting to God (James 4:6-10).

However, the key to humbling ourselves is the gospel and fixing our eyes on Jesus. The cross destroys pride because it shows us that we have no righteousness and that it took the sacrifice of the Son of God for us to be forgiven. Trying to be more humble doesn't really work because we then tend to get proud of our humility. Humility isn't thinking less of ourselves. It's thinking of ourselves less because our focus is on Jesus.

Strategy #4: Satan is the accuser.

1. His weapon is accusations (Revelation 12:10, Zechariah 3:1-7). He tempts us on the front end and condemns us on the back end.

2. His target is our conscience and heart. This happens sometimes when we actually sin, and he condemns us for it, but sometimes it is even false guilt when we actually have not sinned.

3. Our defense is the finished work of the Son of God.

We can confess, repent, and live differently through the power of Jesus. Satan is defeated through the cross, and his accusations will not stand under the blood of Jesus. Come to Jesus for salvation. Come back to Jesus for restoration. Rest in the finished work of the cross.

In Christ:

A. We have no condemnation (v. 1-2, Romans 8:1). Satan is the accuser, but Jesus is the defender of His followers. He would not let Satan make accusations against Joshua, even though they were true. It is true that there are many things Satan can truly accuse us of, but the greater truth is that Jesus has forgiven us and made us just like we never sinned (Romans 3:24). Jesus is our Advocate (1 John 2:1-2) and Intercessor (Hebrews 7:25-27).

B. We are clean, pure, and righteous (v. 3-5). God forgives us of every sin through the Lord Jesus (Colossians 2:13-14, Ephesians 1:7, 1 John 1:7-9). In our text today, Joshua is an object lesson for the nation of Israel and for us. He pictures the fact that Jesus completely removes the stain of sin and clothes us with purity.

C. We can repent and walk in God's ways by living out of what Jesus has done for us (v. 6-7, Romans 6:1-4). This is the key to change. Biblical change is from the inside out instead of the outside in. We often get that backwards. We don't change in order to get Jesus to accept us, but we change because He has accepted us and changed us. That is the difference between the gospel and religion. Trust Jesus and let Him give you a new heart. That is the beginning of change. This also speaks to us of the fact that we can't claim to be forgiven and still go on pursuing sin. God's grace empowers us not to sin instead of giving us a license to sin. If we have God's nature, we will desire the things of God. Does the fruit of your life give evidence that you truly have a new heart?