

Our Adversary the Devil: His Mission Cont

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[0 : 00] All right, good morning, everyone. Let's get started here and find our place where we left off last Sunday.

We were in, well, I'll tell you what, let's go to 1 Thessalonians 4 to open up. 1 Thessalonians and chapter number 4, we're studying the mission of our adversary, the devil, right now.

And to put it in a concise statement, it's to oppose God. Anything God's interested in, he's going to oppose it. And if you're going to live for God, then he's going to be against you.

If you're not going to live for God, what in the world does he care about you? What are you going to do? But if you're going to do what's right, and there's some things in this Bible that tells you how to please God, and we can see pretty evidently in all those areas, there he is.

There's the opposition, there it shows up. And so as we studied in the last few Sundays together this thought of his mission, we've covered the things in the scripture, a few things that are described as something that pleases God, or being well-pleasing to the Lord, something that he has pleasure in, or even one thing, in one case, where he does not take pleasure in.

[1 : 12] And we'll see how Satan is working in those ways then, against God. And then last week, we got into this thought of the will of God, what it is that the Bible or God reveals in the scripture as something that is his will.

He desires, he longs to see, he wants to have it accomplished. And I'm showing you that in every case, there's the adversary showing up to resist, and to interfere with the will or the work of God.

So we're going to pick it up in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 this morning, and there's two more things, two more points I want to make here about the will of God, and I think it's going to be real obvious in these areas, and evident that our adversary is against them.

And the world itself, the world is just so opposite in some of these areas. So let's pray together, and then let's get into the Bible. Father, please bless as we open up this scripture.

We thank you for it. We appreciate having it and being able to read it and being able to study it together. I pray that this hour would be beneficial. Thank you to you.

[2 : 18] Thank you for each one that's come out here to hear the words of God and to study them. And Lord, may you open our eyes to some truth, and may you just embed them into our being and help us to love this book and to trust this book and to go to this book and to recite and memorize and to use this book as our weapon and to grow because of it.

Please bless our time, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. All right, 1 Thessalonians 4, and we just need verse number 3, where the Bible says, For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication, that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor.

The will of God, it's maybe in a twofold thought here. The first was that ye should abstain from fornication. It's your sanctification, your personal, you possess your vessel unto sanctification and honor.

And secondly, in verse 4, he says that you should know this, you should know how to possess your vessel in sanctification and honor. Not be deceived about that, what is acceptable and unacceptable.

Not be deceived by what you see and by what you hear and by what's around you and by what other people are doing and by thinking there's nothing wrong with that or getting deceived and not knowing how to possess your vessel.

[3 : 44] That's the will of God, is that you know how to possess your vessel and that you do it in sanctification and honor, abstaining from fornication. So that's God's will.

He created mankind and he has a will for individuals and it's to be sanctified. It's to abstain specifically in this case from fornication or from sexual sin.

To do that, you'll have to control your lust. You'll have to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

You'll have to daily submit yourself to God as his property. He did buy you with a price after all, so that body belongs to God if you're born again. Now I think, and I did a little research on this in years past and then I did it again recently, I think probably the most prominent sin in our day or our culture is sexual immorality.

There's a lot of sin. You can make a list. And what's out there, what you see, what you're exposed to, just by walking through this life, you see a lot of sin.

[4 : 56] But if there's one that is on top of all of them and way on top, it is sexual perversion and immorality. Why would that be?

I think this is why. Because God's will is holiness in this area and purity and honor. And there we have an adversary that's going to be against that.

God's will for mankind is to conduct themselves uprightly. We studied that last week, or two weeks maybe, that he takes pleasure in the upright in heart. And that's what God wants to see you possess your vessel in that clean, sanctified manner.

Now the statistics, to me, if you read up on it, they're absurd in this area. They're statistics. There's tests, or what do you want to call those, surveys, or just analyzing data and putting it out.

And the statistics are absurd in this way. And it's so bad that you could, I mean, for the last, I don't know how many years, there's been articles that are online you could find that are just putting out this.

[6 : 02] The Washington Post puts out an article describing how television is just completely fallen into a degraded sense of entertaining value.

And it goes not just into sexual things, but just, it covers a list of things of how just debauchery, just filth, is being portrayed in just a good way, a positive way.

A main character that everybody has grown to love in a series comes off doing something just completely out in left field sick, and they walk away just unscathed, and it's, you know, good job.

They conquered that one. They murdered him, and it's okay. They got away with it, and we go on loving that character and rooting for him. And that stuff has been, but this one is way on top.

Of all the ungodly things portrayed in entertainment, specifically television or movies or online, this is way on top of the rest. Above covetousness and pride and lying, above Satanism, above drugs or any crime or violence and blood and gore, by far the most common depicted is sexual immorality.

[7 : 18] Now here's a, I'll just read you one paragraph here, and when I read this, you probably won't be surprised, but I will try to surprise you with one thought. There's an analysis of broadcast media content indicates that on average, teenage viewers see about 150 incidents of sexual behavior on network television at prime time each week, each week, and three quarters of these portrayals that they're viewing are between unmarried partners.

The analysis describes that this content also shows that sexual messages on television are almost universally presented in a positive light.

Almost every situation is good and acceptable and very, extremely rare is there anything that suggests risks involved or even shows adverse consequences to the actions.

So at least 150 times a week, teenagers on prime time television in the average home would be exposed to just seeing this immorality immorality as if it's just that's the way it is, that's good stuff, do what you gotta do and enjoy yourself, live your life, you only live once and no consequences.

Now reality is there's consequences, but when you're exposed to something showing you the other side, a false view of it, you get twisted in your mind. You think it's gonna be fine and okay and you dive right in.

[8 : 52] It intrigues you, it draws you, it entices you. Now the catch here is while you probably think yeah that's pretty much, that sounds like a lot or that sounds, that was, this analysis is 20 years old.

That's from back in early 2000s. Do you think it got better since then? What's the number up to now? 300? And it's probably far more, you know what's being portrayed today that wasn't being portrayed 20 years ago.

It's not just a girl and a guy. It's, it's the whole spectrum. Nothing's off limits anymore. And what is the will of God? It's plain and black and white.

It's your sanctification and that's you know how to possess your vessel in sanctification and honor. And Satan, no doubt, the God of this world, the prince of the power of the air, using that medium of entertainment all over the thing to program men and women to be perverted and to be immoral and to think there's nothing wrong with it.

You were born that way. Just on and on and on. All right, look, turn the page if you're in first, look at 1 Thessalonians 5. I want to look at one more here. 1 Thessalonians 5, 18.

[10:12] And one more thought here on the will of God. Verse 18. The Bible says, in everything, give thanks. Why? For this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

That's God's will for this church, for his people. To be thankful. It's his will. Is that a bad thing? To be thankful? I don't see it as a bad thing at all.

God desires to see that attitude in man. That's a good attitude. It's a godly attitude. It's his will to see that. And so Satan opposes. And in 2 Timothy 3, the Bible says that men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy. And in this list, we're seeing some of these topics we've been studying these last two weeks. The perilous times that are coming, men are just falling away from everything that is God's will and everything in these particulars that bring him pleasure.

And this is what the society is. This is what mankind is. They've gone, fallen so far away. And now they're unthankful and discontent and filled with lust and greed and covetousness.

[11:30] So, enough of that. There's these particulars that we studied. We could probably go on. I want to make one more case here, kind of in a conclusive manner. Come back to Daniel chapter 10 about what his mission is in opposing God.

Come to Daniel chapter 10. And I know we peeked at this chapter here in one of the previous weeks of study for a different purpose. But I want to make the case because it really illustrates his mission here again in opposition to whatever God does on any level.

So, Daniel 10, an interesting thing takes place here. And let's read the first few verses here just to get the context.

In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia, a thing was revealed unto Daniel whose name was called Belteshazzar. And the thing was true, but the time appointed was long and he understood the thing and had understanding of the vision.

So, that's just about the rest of the chapter. Something was revealed to him. But look how it takes place. Verse 2 says, In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks.

[12:42] I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled. Now, a vision comes through.

He's mourning, he's seeking the Lord, and a vision finally gets through. We skip ahead to verse 11 to get a little more understanding of what's happening here and why he's mourning.

and praying before God. In verse 11 it says, And he said unto me, this is a messenger sent from God, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee and stand upright, for unto thee am I now sent.

And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one in twenty days. But lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, and I remained there with the kings of Persia. Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days, for the vision is yet for many days.

[13:58] And now he speaks, when he speaks, Daniel's, in verse 15, I set my face toward the ground and became dumb. So this is a vision, a spiritual interaction. He's in the presence of a spiritual being that is a messenger from the throne of God sent to him to reveal truth.

And the thing was true, he said. I had understanding in it, but it took twenty-one days for that vision to come through or that messenger to get through. He's completely unaware during those twenty-one days while he is eating no pleasant bread, neither came flesh, nor, he's fasting.

He did not anoint himself during those twenty-one days. He's completely unaware that there's this heavenly activity above his head where the, he prayed, thy prayer was heard, I am sent, right over, it was all boom, boom, boom, but then twenty-one days of a battle, of some spiritual, or of principalities and powers resisting and interfering and conflicting with what God was sending this

messenger to Daniel to do.

God's messenger was interfered with and opposed by spiritual, or by principalities and powers, and what is that? That's Satan's mission to oppose God, to oppose his will, to oppose his work, to oppose him from getting pleasure, to oppose his servants.

Whatever God desires, Satan attempts to hinder and to obstruct if possible. So, what about your life? Internalize this and make it personal.

[15 : 40] What does God desire from your life? We've already studied several points. We've looked at several things in scripture specifically, individually, that God wants. Thankfulness, sanctification, obedience, to be upright, to fear God, and the list goes on, to worship him in spirit rather than this carnal, confused mess today.

And if that's what God wants in your life, I'd say you can count on opposition to all of it in every area. You can count on opposition from without and from within.

And beyond that, when you seek God and you desire to please him, when you draw nigh to God and he draws nigh to you, when your heart is right, but things start going wrong, things start falling apart, it's not the first time or you wouldn't be the first person to turn your heart to God and start walking with the Lord and then things start blowing up in your life.

Well, then just understand something. You have an adversary. You have an enemy. Somebody said this, the closer you get to God, the closer you get to the devil. And I think that's true.

I think now you can know why that is because his fight is with God. He's engaged in opposing God. He seeks to be that being.

[17 : 05] He wants to be God. He wants to be like the Most High and his fight's with him. And so anything you do for the Lord, you can count on opposition. So I hope that's pretty plain. I think we made a strong enough case about that in the scripture there.

So I'm going to move to the next thought here, the next point in this study and that is his methods. Understanding his mission, opposing God, declaring, just understanding that fully.

Now let's zoom in and analyze by what means he uses to accomplish that. We've noticed certain, I'd say, specific areas that he attempts to keep God from fulfilling his will, from receiving pleasure, and these things that he has designed for you in life.

But what are his methods? That is, how does he go about accomplishing that mission that we've studied? And I think we need to study this. I think we need to be aware of this and concerned with this because from the very beginning the Apostle Paul said, we're not ignorant of his devices.

But today, yes we are if we're not studying our Bible and considering what these truths that God revealed to us are. So, what is it that he's devised?

[18 : 20] How is it that he works in these areas to oppose? Take a look at Revelation chapter 20. Revelation 20 and this is going to be a great text to kind of make a blanket statement about him.

As always, the word of God will reveal what information we need to know in these areas and it will expose what our adversary tries to conceal.

In Revelation 20, we'll just begin at the top of the chapter here in verse 1. chapter 1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent which is called the devil and Satan and bound him a thousand years and cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up and set a seal upon him that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled and after that he must be loosed a little season.

Alright, skip to chapter 7 when he gets loosed. When the thousand years are expired Satan shall be loosed out of his prison and shall go out to deceive the nations.

[19 : 45] That's exactly what he did before he was cast in in verse 3. That he should deceive the nations no more. For a thousand years the nations are going to have no being deceiving them.

As soon as he's loosed he go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth. Look at verse number 10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone.

I think you picked up the theme there. What are his methods? I'd say number one is deception. I think this is probably the biggest of all. This probably takes the cake.

I think even other things we study could fall under this umbrella of deception. He casts it wide. He's a master of deception. The Lord Jesus Christ said that he is a liar and the father of it.

And he seeks to deceive. This is his calling card. He's a deceiver through and through. You can't trust him. What he has or I'm sorry whether it's subtle or whether it's bold whether it's whether it's direct or whether it's coming from another way indirectly.

[20 : 57] Satan is practiced and he's prolific at pulling the wool over the eyes of man. Deception. Think about a magician.

A magician. An illusionist. That man they're entertaining and they just make your jaw drop and you can't believe your own eyes. Why?

Because he deceived you. Did he really do magic? Did he really do something supernatural? If you've had some guy do some shuffling around some card trick or just pull a bird out of his sleeve or his coat and turn a ball into a rabbit.

I mean did he really turn a ball into a rabbit in front of your face? Did he really do magic? No. You know what he did? He deceived you. And magicians have a lot of tactics that they use to deceive your eyes and your mind.

and slight a hand. They get so practiced and so fast with their hands that they can deceive you. They'll use mirrors. They'll use illusions. They'll use misdirection.

[22 : 06] Look here while I reach here. And you never saw it and you believed it. But they tricked you. This is Satan. This is stuff he uses. Magicians use manipulated props.

Things that appear real but they're false. They're fake. They're already prepared to just set up so that you believe it. Satan's an expert at this. An absolute expert at deceiving.

And so much the same as a magician uses all these things I think there are many devices many avenues that Satan uses to deceive. I think deception is his go-to when it comes to opposing God when it relates to mankind at least.

So we've seen things like this like compromising what is spiritual worship and is acceptable to God before his throne.

Whether he's interested or active engaged in compromising what God would receive from man as pure and right and holy worship.

[23 : 13] I mentioned it the other week about pictures I had. I could easily show you the leather sleeveless tattooed long hair chained screaming into a microphone heavy metal Christian band.

And while the Christian teens are on the ground just waving their hands and just screaming out in delight. And there's the other side of the spectrum too.

This one's one that gets me and I've probably said it before but I've been at some camp meetings where I mean it's the Baptist preaching camp meeting this fireball preacher is a preacher of the preachers and everybody's live wired up and excited and running the bases and praising the Lord in the songs and brother so and so why don't you come up here and pray and he prays and oh God and he gets himself into a lather where he's sweating shouting at God God bring the Holy Ghost and God I love you and everybody's amen and all over the place and I'm telling you I'm cringing in my pew thinking you believe in your heart you would walk up you would stand in the throne room of God and scream at him you fool total fool you know what they're just they're worked up in this atmosphere and they're not even paying attention that there's a deceiver in their midst I don't doubt it for a minute he's in that far end of the light show and the smoke and the deception of what's acceptable worship and he's in the other one that thinks they're pure and holy and dressed in suits and ties and he's deceiving them too he covers the whole spectrum he knows what he's doing compromising spiritual worship compromising the music that God accepts from his people or teaching rebellion these things we've looked at rather than obedience or even just destroying our concept of morality

Satan deceives he deceives humanity now a few thoughts and we won't spend a lot of time on this I think it's pretty obvious I don't want to just turn all over the Bible to state the obvious here but men are deceived about sin woe unto them that call evil good and good evil they're deceived and you know what they say today what's wrong with that what's wrong with it you know what you're probably deceived you know what men forget is that God is holy they forget the holiness of God and they see the filthiness of man and they look and say well what's wrong with this they're not looking at through his eyes and if God walked into this room like in his holiness in his being walked into here you know we'd be we'd be running for the doors or we'd be crawling under the pews that holiness would be pressing us and pushing us away we couldn't stand in his presence no not even close you would be you'd repent and dust and ashes you'd say

I am vile I am an unclean thing if you could get into the holiness of God you wouldn't say yeah God what's what's wrong with it huh you'd be running to get away amen men are deceived about their sin accepting things permitting things pretending it's okay justifying things Christians are deceived about sin men are deceived about self-righteousness they forgot they didn't read that they come short of the glory of God and they think no God will accept me he's fine with me I'm a pretty good person do you know for sure that you're going to go to heaven when you die I think so why is that I'm pretty good deceived deceived thinking that they're good enough insisting that their good works will gain God's favor men are deceived about eternity they're deceived about heaven and hell they're deceived about creation for generations that fight's been going on and losing they're deceived about the finished work of the cross the gospel of Jesus Christ let's look at this one here in 2nd Corinthians because this is a big one look at 2nd Corinthians chapter 3 or chapter 4 sorry 2nd Corinthians 4 he uses deception to ultimately oppose

[27 : 46] God or the work of God or the will of God he uses deception in verse number 3 Paul writes if our gospel be hid it is hid to them that are lost in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them deceived about the gospel of Jesus Christ blinded Jesus Christ is hid or hidden in plain view to the world plain view Bibles all over the place any store Amazon you can have it in a day same day delivery King James Bible there's no Jesus Christ is not removed from mankind or from his knowledge or from being the Bible says that the word is nigh thee even in thy that is the word of faith even in thy mouth I mean it's close salvation is so close to any man on this planet and yet in plain view

Jesus Christ is hidden because his eyes have been blinded he's been fed something else he's not counting on a bloodied crucified Jew to take his place and pay for his sins he's really believed you know what if I'm just good enough that's what God is and God is love and he doesn't hate anyone and God made everybody this way and that way and we're all trying to get to God in one way or another and there's so many different little catch phrases thrown around in religion and in the world they're all deceived look at Ephesians chapter 4 come to Ephesians if you could look back in your life and see a day when you were lost and remember the confusion or the deception or even just the fact that you didn't care whatever the case would be wherever you were in certain moments of your life before you were saved and when the eyes are opened and when the gospel is plain and when you not just receive it but understand the difference the light and the darkness and where you were you could make your own you could describe the deception yourself of what you thought of what you believed and why you believed that you could look at the trail in your life of where the God of this world was blinding you and using that person or that father or that like religious father I mean that priest or even your very parents or other deceived people who use religion you name it now look at this Ephesians 4 and verse number 18 describing you when you did not have Christ it says having the understanding darkened being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their heart so that's a lost person no understanding ignorant blind they're deceived but look back at chapter 1 of something that God does what God will do in his child in the one that believes on Christ chapter 1 verse 18 says the eyes of your understanding being enlightened that ye may know what is the hope of his calling no more ignorance anymore you've had your eyes opened by the power of God by the spirit of God but men are deceived and Satan uses deception it's a powerful powerful tool he doesn't lay a hand on anybody

I don't see him do it unless he has permission unless there's something but for the most case as you could just consider across the board he doesn't lay a hand on anybody he just messes with their mind he just disguises the truth and Christians are deceived just as much as the lost are today they're deceived about the word of God they're deceived about the book about the truth and the purity of the words of God they're deceived about doctrine how much false doctrine is out there and just permeated even the body of Christ they're deceived about worship about pure holy righteous clean worship he's very active and I think this is the one I could probably spend a good amount of time here and just go through passages and pull this out more but I feel like it's pretty obvious and so what is his methods here the method of our adversary is deception and so you can just sit here this morning and be like yeah yeah okay I get it you know he's a liar he's a he's a the wiles of the devil he's a a trickster a deceiver

I get it but but does it just balance off you or do you ever consider wait a minute am I prone to being deceived so you know what when you make it personal most of you myself included think no not me I mean them them and all of you but me what am I deceived about what does he work you think he's just leaving me alone you think he's leaving you alone because you're saved maybe you should start thinking and say no wait a minute where is it that he's coming at me I'm not gonna see him coming if he's as good as he is you're not even thinking about it you're thinking about other people and where they're deceived and where they messed up and now you need to think about where is he coming at me because he's coming at you if you want to please God if you have a heart that wants his word and wants to grow and be sanctified and bring him glory he's coming at you and you're not gonna see him coming unless you're in this book and the words of God are illuminating your mind enlightening you to the truth to the revelation of him and of his devices and of his tactics and of his methods and you might want to just take some time in your own life and heart with the Lord and I don't want you to just get consumed with this thought of him getting you and coming after you but it wouldn't hurt you to evaluate your life and to ask the Lord

[34 : 26] God is there anything in me is am I deceived am I believing something that's not true am I following am I thinking I'm okay in a way that I'm not okay you might be surprised I don't want you to be surprised but he's pretty good if somebody in this planet if a man had six thousand years experience and power and wisdom and was not restricted you think he'd be pretty he'd have it figured out huh you think he'd be pretty successful and if he doesn't want to be caught or detected he knows how to do that too and this book is all you have that's going to shed light on who he is and where he's at and what he's up to this thing is more important than you believe all right his methods number one is deception we'll probably just wrap it up there there's a few other I'll just throw these out to you there's maybe more coming but right now what I have is temptation there's provocation perversion and the biggest one is imitation that one's going to go for a while there's a lot of evidence in this book of him being an imitator and that's a just kind of another avenue of deception but we'll get to that in Lord will in two weeks next week

I'm going to have a guest speaker here with you so we'll stop there his methods number one deception let's take a break and we'll come back to the top of the hour you