

# The Devil's Devices

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[0:00] We're going to go to the Word of God now, to 2 Corinthians 2, verse 11, and I'll be projecting! I'll be projecting the large part of the verses here, so you'll be able to follow along! We're talking about the theme of the devil's devices, and in part 2 Corinthians 2, verse 11, it says we are not ignorant of his devices. We are not ignorant of his devices.

So, people of God this morning, you have an enemy. He's an enemy to you. He wants to trap, scheme, make devices, ways to trap and capture. And it's important, friends, today that we recognise him and his words. His name is the devil, or Satan. He's called the evil one. And the Bible talks about this one right from the first pages through to the end. Satan is real. It means adversary. He's the enemy to God, to us, to what is right and true. And when he rebelled, it tells how God cast him down from heaven. He was once in heaven. He had a role to play. He had a service to render. But he rebelled in pride. Now it says he walks up and down the earth, seeking whom he may devour. Now, friends, the Bible doesn't call the Christian life a tea party. Or a club for sissies and whips. It's a fight. It's a fight.

It's a battle. It's a wrestling. A struggle. And as a Christian, the Bible tells how our God has called us as the senior commanding officer, as the commander in chief, our Lord Jesus Christ. He's called you and me to be as good soldiers, good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

And part of that is recognising the enemy. I know as a youngster, I used to have an interest in planes and different kinds of aircraft and World War II aircraft. And I saw one old book that I came across had this book of different silhouettes of planes. And you had to look at the silhouette, as you can imagine if you're an anti-aircraft gunner looking in the dark skies, and you had to recognise the silhouette of what is an enemy plane and what is a friendly plane.

And we need to recognise, we need to not be ignorant of the enemy and of his devices, to recognise him what he is, what he's up to. Because the Bible says we should be sober, be vigilant, on the lookout. Because your adversary says, the enemy, the devil, he says a roaring lion, he's walking about, he's seeking whom he may devour, whom resist, steadfast in the faith.

[2:50] As a growing Christian, you're under attack. And Satan has many devices, he's all out against you. And he's cunning, he's crafting, his quiver is full of these many poisonous darts. And this battle, yes, this battle is going on, it's raging all around you, even on the inside of you, as a fight. There's this battle raging between the flesh and the spirit, between the darkness and the light, between truth and error. It's in your flesh, it's in your mind, it's in your emotions.

It's in your soul. It's in your soul. I know, just recently, Julie and I watched a little DVD, a Christian movie, and it's on YouTube, it's called The War Within. And it's quite an interesting one. I thought it was quite well put together. It talked about the mind, the emotion, the will, the various things, the heart. And it pictured them as actors in this presentation, this picturesque view of the battle that's raging on in the inside of us. We've got the conscience, we've got the mind, we've got the emotions, we've got the will, and they're all kind of machinating together as we face situations of life. Friends, it's a battle. It's a battle on for your soul.

And someone said this, some of Satan's weapons are lusts, riches, problems, persecutions, deceitfulness, separating you from God's people, material things, pleasures, cares, the worries of life, people, depression, hardships. It's manifold. You could put a lot of, when you're actually reckoning and think of it, I could put a big long list of the devil's devices if we had to kind of enumerate them. But the devil's devices in your life might be different from the devil's devices in my life. But the point is we should not be ignorant of the devil's devices. In other words, let's learn to detect them, to overcome them, to be a bit of a detective, to search the scriptures and see some of

the signs, the fingerprints, the kind of evidence that he lives, that is his trail of destruction, to recognize how Satan operates and what we can do about it, what we should be aware of, what we should be conscious of, because we should not be ignorant, not ignorant of the devil's devices. So, number one device, you could say, some of the things, some of the devices you could reckon on, some of his schemes and the characteristics of this enemy of our soul is, number one, he's a liar. He's a liar.

He came and he deceived Adam and Eve right at the start in the form of a serpent. He was a deceiver. And he wants to mislead you, to lead you away from God. You know, the devil would make a good used car salesman. He really would. He's very good at it. You know, let's give him credit where credit is due. He's a good liar. He's good about deceiving, about seducing, about tricking people. And he sends out seducing, deceiving spirits. And look, another good point about the devil, you could say it's good. And as the world would reckon good, the devil is actually religious. He's very religious. You know, we've had people when we've been going witnessing, and they say, oh, I'm a spiritual person. There's a lot of spiritual people out there, people. Spiritual people. And some people say, I'm spiritual. The devil loves that. He loves the people that says, I'm a spiritual person. In the sense that he's got his spirits. Yeah. You get that? And he loves for you to be so, so spiritual in that spiritual sense of the world spiritualism. The spiritism. The spirits that the devil would send because they are seducing spirits. The devil is loving too. He loves. He will give you loves. He will fill your life with loves of all kinds. The love of other things. Other things. He's constantly devising devices to distract you. He's a liar. He may for you to do all kinds of religious works under the illusion that religious works will save you. That's a lie. I know there's a friend of mine who brags on about helping in St. Vinny's and caring for a cemetery. And that's his religious works. He thinks that's getting in some kind of credit with God. No. The devil wants you to get occupied. He'll have you busy. He'll keep you very busy.

He'll get you busy with the wrong stuff. Preoccupied. He loves. He loves to get people working. He'll get you. He'll work your fingers. Get you working your fingers to the bone. The works of the flesh. [7:42] That's the devil's works. He'll keep you busy. You won't have time to think. You won't have time to pray. You won't have time for God. Too busy for God. Yeah. The works of the flesh will keep you busy.

But the Bible contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the spirit. Check that out in Galatians 5. The devil is spiritual, alright. He's spiritual. He's the spirit of error, of delusion. The devil is the father of lies. Satan, it says, can appear as an angel. Wow. Yeah, that's spiritual. Not just an angel, but an angel of light. Beautiful angel. When people think of angels, they think of beautiful looking creatures, don't they? And light sounds so bright and positive. That's Satan. He's a deceiver. He's a liar. It says this in 2 Corinthians 11. In part, verse 14, Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. He's a master of camouflage. He looks good. He sounds good. He's a smooth talker. He's a good creature. People love going to Satan's church, as it were, tuning in to Satan's stuff. People follow him. False religion is all around us, isn't it? False religion. You know, you see them as we go witnessing. We see some, they're very religious.

The Bible talks about false religion. False prophets. False Christ. False apostles. False Bibles. False signs and wonders. False religion. Look, the devil is very religious. We've got to discern between religion and what's actually God's truth. They can be different, very much.

And the devil is so religious, he's actually ecumenical. You know, anything goes. He'll just take any flavor and mix it all together. Multi-faith, even. You know, what's the difference? We're all parts lead to God. That's what the devil would have you believe. And the devil disguises himself. He can be religious. He can quote the Bible. Easily twisting and turning it to suit himself.

[10:06] And, friends, the devil sometimes comes to church. He actually comes to church. It says here it's no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness.

His ends shall be according to their works. So, it's saying here that Satan's servants can actually masquerade as servants of righteousness. They're actually doing some good works. The devil would have you busy as a do-gooder. It's another of these devices. And a so-called minister of righteousness can lead you to hell. Think of that. There's ministers of righteousness. You know, there's people that people look up to, people of history, people that are nuns and whatever they've been. You know, they've done good works, different things. But they don't know Jesus.

That's the greatest loss, isn't it? The devil loves it when people get a form of godliness, it says. But they deny the true power of God. So, friends, number one, the devil is your arch enemy.

He is a liar. And he uses all kinds of smoke screens. We've got to wise up. Don't be ignorant of his devices. See what he's really up to. He's trying to hide it. He's a liar. He's a liar. And secondly, he's a thief. He's a thief. Look what he did in Genesis at the beginning as he lied to Adam and Eve, as he stole from them the beauty of the garden, as he stole from them their fellowship with God, as he stole from them the most precious life that God had given to them. He's a thief.

And he wants to steal from you now, today, brother, sister. He wants to steal your joy. He wants to steal the joy of the Lord from you. He wants to steal the work of faith in your soul. He wants to steal your peace with God. He wants to steal your time. He loves that. He really does love that.

[12:01] Are you a faithful steward of the day, the hour, of the life that God has given to you? It's a good question. And I was reflecting on this lately because I know, Peter, at the back, you can identify with this, I think, that I've got a hot water service at home and it's powered by a gas bottle. It's a gas bottle. And when the gas bottle runs out, you switch it to the other gas bottle.

And so when I'm having a shower, I'm often thinking, is it going to run out today? You know, I've only got one, but for instance, in life, there's no second. You don't switch and have a bit more life. There's no reincarnation. You get one shot at life, all right? And sometimes we think we've got plenty of time. We've got plenty of opportunity. And the devil wants you to think you've got plenty of time. He loves to use one of his devices, his procrastination, which means putting things off. I'll get around to it. And whatever God is putting on your heart to do, do it now. Don't act like you've got plenty of time. We know that's not true.

You don't. I was figuring out, you know, even if by God's grace, maybe I live another 30 years, perhaps, you know, maybe 30 years. That's pretty, I don't think, maybe that's a bit, what's the word, optimistic, overly optimistic. So if I've got 30 years and I preach, maybe I preach twice every Sunday in the next 30 years till I die, that's only 1,500 odd sermons.

And you might be getting sick of me by then, but, you know, if I've got only 1,500 sermons, that's less than I've already preached. So I'm already over halfway. You know, I'm running out of time fast. You know, we all are friends, aren't we? We're all running out of time.

How much time have we got? There's no guarantee. No guarantee. How much more time have you got to fellowship? How many more times have you got that you can get together with God's people? Now, if you only come once a week, that's already, you're only doing half the opportunities that you could get. And I'm not, that's not to condemn people that can't get to the second service, but at least try to tune in if you can. Watch it online if you can't get here in person. Because friends, the opportunity to get your soul fed, there's limited opportunities.

[14:15] There's a limited amount of time we've got to fellowship. There's a limited amount of time we've got to evangelise. The devil would have you think, he would have you trick you into thinking that you have plenty of time. We're all going to have to give account for wasted hours. Let's be sensitive to the Lord, to the Holy Spirit, to spend time with him, to commit that time to hear the still, small voice of God instead of watching the idiot box.

The devil's a liar and he's a thing. And he's also a tempter. He's a tempter. The devil delights in giving you lots of tasty things and sending you lots of temptations. And if we rely on our own strength, it's going to fail. We're going to fail. We must trust in the armour of God and lean on him, our Lord. He will empower us. He'll get us stronger, strong enough to resist the devil. And he'll flee from us. It says of our Lord that he himself has suffered being tempted. He's able to succor, which means to aid, to help those who are tempted.

He said, this one, the one who was in the garden, as we heard put so well today, the one who was in the garden and suffered and took that cup and was able to endure the cross.

He's able to help you. He's able to help you. We hear of a man, Demas. He was a follower of Paul, but Satan tempted Demas with the pleasures of this well. Friends, the devil would give you lots of a smorgasbord of choices other than God's choice, other than feeding your soul. A whole lot of tasty things to occupy your life. It says of the last days that it's going to be perilous times.

Men are going to be lovers of their own selves. Lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Now notice it says here, it doesn't say that they won't love God, but they'll love pleasure more than God. Sometimes pleasure gets the first place when actually God's doing it. The devil would divert and distract you. He would give you interests and hobbies and sports and entertainment to fill your time with. He just wants you to get busy with other things, with other pleasures, pleasures, with distractions. And these are traps, friends. They can be snares. And the Lord Jesus can help you through this tough temptation to realise what they are. They're devices.

[16:43] They're the devil's devices. Do not be ignorant of the devil's devices. It says of our Lord that he's a high priest that cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Our Lord went through the human life, the realities, as Peter put to us, of the garden. And so let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace to find grace and help in time of need. Friends, replace the devil's devices with divine devices. A good divine device is prayer. And it's often neglected, isn't it?

How often we neglect the awesome power of prayer. When we should come boldly, it says, unto the throne. When we're tempted, turn to God in prayer. In earnest, believe in prayer. It's a way of escape for us.

The Bible tells how temptation is common to man. But God is faithful. He will not suffer you to be tempted above that. You are able, but will with the temptation make a way of escape that you may be able to endure it, bear it. So take the way of escape. The devil's a liar. He's a thief. He's a tempter. And he's a destroyer. He's a destroyer. He wants you to destroy things. He wants you to destroy you.

He wants you to destroy your spiritual life. He wants you to send you discouragements and condemnation and persecution. He wants to attack your very spiritual life. He wants to damage your home life.

He wants to attack your family. He wants to attack your relationships, your church. He wants to break up Christian homes. He hates that. He hates Christian homes. He wants to hinder your communion with God.

[18:30] He wants to divert godly people from prayer and God's word. The devil wants to get a control of the church to pervert it, to weaken it, to make it spiritually barren and rotten. You know, some of the the opposition to Christianity that people, when you witness to them, say is, oh, look at what those priests did. Or look at that church, what they've done. This, that, and the other. What a shame. What a reproach. When churches do the wrong thing, when preachers do the wrong thing. Friends, the devil loves that.

He's destructive. Friends, but a spiritual church is one that is sound. That's delivering God's truth. Here's what Ian Bowne said at A Man of God. He says that the chief business is to convert sinners to holiness, to perfect saints in holiness. The devil wants the church to be worldly.

And he loves that. He just loves some of these mega churches where the Bible's not really declared, where the truth isn't really exhorted to the people. Friends, and that's not to say we can't fail. There's no, there's no guarantee. We've all got to be willing to hear God and to be led by the Spirit of God. And pray for me that I don't get into error myself. It's human. We're human. And God helping us, we want to be a truthful church, a spiritual church, a godly, uplifting, blessed, vibrant, loving church. That's what we want to be. And the devil hates that. He wants to kill that kind of church. And Satan is cohorts. They're powerful. They want the souls of men. And they want to get a church off track. But God will limit their attacks. So we've seen, friends, some of the devil's devices. And now let's think about, let's look at some ways to fight back. Help is available to combat the devil's devices. God can bring deliverance. Here's some further thoughts as we think about that the grace of God, the grace of God. It says that some, some divine devices, if you like, I've got four of these, I think, there's some divine devices, things that we can do to fight back, to overcome the devil's devices. Number one is submit to God. Submit to God. Key number one, it says this in James 4, verses 7 through 8. Submit yourselves therefore unto God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners, and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. It's saying here, submit, surrender to God.

One of the devil's devices is to get you from submitting to God, to do the opposite, to rebel. But, friends, the divine device here is submit, surrender to God. A lot of Christians have a lot of trouble submitting to God. Submitting to God. Have that heart that you want God in your life, that you want God's will, that you want his best for your life. Submit to God. Prayerfully seek his will for your life. When we submit to God, it says we're going to be able to resist the devil.

[21:49] It's hand in hand. Do this, do that. Submit to God, resist the devil. They're two sides of the coin, aren't they? But some Christians would rather have their cherished sin. These pet things they will not let go of. Friends, let go and let God. It says every man is tempted when he's drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Temptation. To overcome it, submit to God. Let God's will be your will. Deny the flesh.

Deny the self, the sinful nature. That old rotten self needs to die. It's getting in the way. You know, it stinks. He's dead. But he likes to hang around sometimes, doesn't he? The old man, the dead man, as it were, they should be dead. He's crucified. And friends, death stinks. And we don't want that. We want life. See sin in the old self, sinful way as smelly, as objectionable, as hateful and repulsive. The old rotten self needs to die. And the life of the new man, the Christian, the new creature, that needs to be alive. The new nature, that Christ will come alive in us. And that happens as we submit to God. So we'll become more alive and living, spiritually alive as we feed on truth. And we'll starve that fleshly, sinful man and put him away. So number one, friends, submit to God. That's the key for that divine device, if you like. Submission to God. And number two is have faith. Trust in God. Trust in God.

Trust God with your life. Friends, Christ is praying for us. Think of that. Not only was he praying in the garden, not only was he praying at Gethsemane, it says now he's praying at the right hand of the throne of God. That's Romans 8.34. It says he's at the right hand of the Father. He's making, he maketh, present tense, intercession for us. So right now, think of it. Brother, sister here this morning, Jesus is praying for you. It says he maketh intercession for you. Jesus is praying for you. Wow, isn't that powerful? You've got more power than you realise, haven't you? To think of his prayer for you. And he has promised in his word to make us more than conquerors. Friends, God wants you to serve him with what you have. Give him what you have. He doesn't ask for more. Give him your time, your talents. He wants you to dedicate yourself to him. Replace the devil's distractions with godly things. What can you do? It's a choice, isn't it? What you do. Enough of the lip service. You know, God doesn't want you to say, blah, blah, I'm a Christian. Claim to be one. But when the heart isn't in it. It's a heart deep work. When you're saved, sure enough, there's a confession of your mouth.

You confess Jesus as Lord. But the second and really most important part is there's a believing in your heart. There's a believing in your heart. You believe. I believe Jesus is Lord.

I confess Jesus as Lord. It starts in the heart. That's where the transformation happens. God does the heart work. And the devil would like to hinder you from fellowshiping with God's people. He wants you to be anywhere else but right here. Now, thank God it's a long weekend. We used to have got low numbers on a long weekend, but you must be the spiritual ones here today. But thank God you've taken the time and the trouble to come and fellowship to come and hear the word. We thank God for you. It says, be not wise in thine own eyes.

[25:36] Fear the Lord and depart from evil. There's a humbleness there. There's a humbling there. To seek the Lord. To seek to please him. Out of a heart. A faithful heart. A heart of faith.

I challenge you. Friends, say, replace the devil's devices with divine devices. To have that heart, that love, that prayerfulness, that seeking after God, that faithfulness to assemble, to be where you can get the word, get your fear by the word of God. Where you can be a fruitful Christian. And see God's plan lived out that you bear fruit in your life.

It's got to take a mind shift. Be not wise in thine own eyes, it says. Don't be carnally minded, that's death, it says. But be spiritually minded, that's life and peace. So it's a mind shift, isn't it? Go from the carnal, the flesh, the world and sin, and go to the Spirit, the Holy Spirit. God's life, God's peace. Let your mind dwell on the things of God. So, friends, submit to God. Have faith, trust in God. And thirdly, love God. An old Puritan said this, let Christ be the object of your love. Let Christ be the object of your faith. Let Christ be the object of your desires. Let Christ be the object of your delight. Do you love the Lord? It's very important. It's really fundamental, isn't it? Our communion with God.

That's the divine devices. Do you love me, he says. Love God. Love him. Build that relationship, that sweet relationship with your Lord. Don't neglect communion with him.

Let it not be the devil's devices, the love of other things. Not the other things, but God.

[27:27] That's a divine device. Let your love for God be flourishing, growing, driving you, compelling you, constraining you, the love of Christ, the love of your Saviour. Draw closer to God. Think of this one, a familiar one. James exhorts us, draw nigh to God.

Draw near to God. Let him, and he then will draw nigh to you. For instance, one follows the other. Draw nigh to God, he will draw nigh to you. I've heard it said, you know, God seems so far, far away. Maybe it's because we're not drawing nigh to him. If you feel like God's far, far away, maybe you're the problem. That you're not drawing nigh to him. And he will draw nigh to you. Now be encouraged in that. I need that. We all need that. Don't be double-minded.

You know, make it. This is important. This is number one. Love God with your whole heart. And as we draw nigh to God, as we draw closer in love with our Lord, he will make us better able to fight the enemy, to grow strong, to be led by his Spirit. Here's another one we could think of as we submit to God, as we trust, as we love God. The Word of God. The Word of God is really very important. It says this, of the Word of God, whatsoever things were written aforetime, even the Old Testament, you know, right from the back, the start of the book, everything that was written before was written for our learning. And we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope. Now every chapter in the book is mine, isn't it? What does it say? Every chapter, every verse, every line. This is important.

There's comfort here. You know, if you say, preacher, I need some comfort. I need some encouragement. Here it is. Just take this. Read it. There's comfort here. There's exaltation. There's encouragement.

And it'll lift your heart more than any words of man. The Word of God. And the weakest Christians are those who follow their own feelings and stand off the truth of God's Holy Word. You know, the whisperer will whisper in your ear. He'll make you, he'll give you much other things to fill your mind with. And what is he? The devil is a liar. That's what he is.

[30:01] Do you want to listen to lies? Or do you want to listen to the Word of Truth? There's a choice, people. Lies or truth? Choose wisely. The devil is a liar. We need to replace his lies with God's truth. When the devil says, oh, you're no good, useless, blah, blah, you know, give it up. Actually, the Word of God says, he so loved me that he gave himself at the cross.

I'm special to God. He values me. He values you so much, so much more than you can put a value on your own self. He loves you so. The devil is a liar. He wants you to hear his lies, not God's truth. And the Word of God, it's alive, it's sharper than any two-edged sword.

It's powerful. So check the preacher out by the Word of God. Now, I exhort people. I know I've had some straight words with some people about certain TV preachers, you know. I guess I'm a TV preacher now too. I'm a YouTube preacher. You know, don't listen to everybody on YouTube. Don't listen to everybody on the TV. You know, check them out. It's got to line up. It's got to be right. This has got to be the measurement. Check the preacher. The Bible's the absolute ultimate and only final authority. When people get off track, it's because they're missing what the Word says. The truth. Moody said, in our prayers we talk to God. In our Bible study, God talks to us. And we have better to let God do most of the talking. So, you know, the more of this, the better. The more of the Word, the better. That's what we need. And friends, there's almost two kind of elements to this message today. We've been talking about the devil's devices. And just want to put it in a more practical level here and sort of ramp it up to a bit more of a practical, personal application level. Because this battle that's happening, that's taking place, it is happening on a very practical level. So here's another key that we have to put into action in our lives. And what the Bible says in part, Ephesians 4, 27 says this, neither give place to the devil. We've been talking about the devil's devices. We've seen his character, his malicious ways, his deceiving. And the devil's devices, they're manifold. And how we can counter them with God's truth and faith. And friends, how do we make this practical? How do we actually live this out? That's very important. The Bible says, don't let the devil get a foothold. It says, don't give any place to him. Don't give him any cause to cause you hurt, to you or your home. Now, to read this really, you need to take time to read the whole

context. And we're just going to touch on some of that context. But you might want to read this more in the context. As you read the whole chapter four at another time, Hups, and when you get home, or as I talk to you. So now the context here of this verse, there's a whole lot more about human relationships. Now, in case you didn't realise that no man is an island. You know, we've all got family, friends influencing, haven't we? We've all got human relationships, people around us. And really life's about getting on with others a lot of the time, isn't it? God wants our faith to be put into action, to be lived out. And the context of this verse here is how we do that in practical ways. So I've got some very, you know, I'm going to be very trendy and relevant here and use that word, cool. We're a cool church, I hope, you know. As in, we should keep cool. That's the spirit. This is my, it sounds very spiritual, doesn't it? Number one point is keep cool.

[33:54] Now, there's a lot of hotheads out there, isn't there? People just go blowing the steam, you know, it's coming out their ears, and people with their short views. And what does the Bible say?

In the context of neither give place to the devil, it says, be angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your wrath. Put away wrath and anger and clamour, evil speaking, malice.

So when you're getting on with other people, it's very important to keep cool. Don't let anger drive you. In life, we constantly have to manage our feelings to keep cool and deal with our anger. You know, I had a boss who virtually sacked me, and I had to keep my cool with her.

Just play it cool. That's quite nice to her. Even though inside I was raging mad. And she would dare to question or find some fault with me. But, for instance, a Christian characteristic is to keep cool.

All right? It is spiritual. Because we've got feelings to manage, to deal with anger. Now, one woman thought that she had dealt with her anger. She she had someone that she really disliked. But she reckoned she overcame it. This is what she said. She said, I'm so glad I've got religion. Before I got religion, I was so mad at my uncle that I swore I would never go to his funeral. But now I'd be glad to go to his funeral.

Now, some people are like that, aren't they? They get so angry, they just want someone dead. You know, anger can eat people up, can't it? Anger. Anger in itself is not sin, though. Think of it. If anger is sin, then God is one of the greatest sinners in the Bible.

[35:42] Because in the Old Testament, anger is mentioned 455 times, 375 times. It refers to God's anger. I know Peter referred to some about God's wrath. You know, God gets angry, and it's a rightful anger.

It's a righteous anger. It's right. There is a right kind of anger. It's like the Lord Jesus, when the disciples, some brought young children to him, that he should touch them, that he should minister to them, and his disciples repaid those that brought them.

But when Jesus saw it, what did he do? It says he was much displeased. He said unto them, Suffer, let the little children come unto me, and forbid them not, for such is the kingdom of God.

It says he was much displeased. It's a very strong word here of anger, basically. It's got the meaning, how dare they? To turn the children away from coming to me.

He says, you know, how dare they? You know, he was very upset. He was angry when the disciples, his people, turned the children away. Because he wanted the children to come unto him.

[36:47] So there is a rightful anger. You should get angry about some things. You know, I'll read the newspapers and I get angry, don't you? Read the news online, whatever. And you think, oh, that just makes me so angry.

It makes me so angry to see what the people that govern us, the people we're paying them to govern us, to make laws for us. And the things that are governors that are making law, it makes you angry, doesn't it?

And we see taxpayers' money funding all kinds of wicked things. It makes you angry. God gets angry. But we're talking, of course, anger can be that feeling of irritation, displeasure.

And we know there's the wrong kind of anger too. Anger is just one letter short of danger, D, danger, anger. And one of the fruits of the spirit is self-control. You know, let's use anger in a good way, in a constructive way.

For example, there's a group apparently called MADD, M-A-D-D, Mothers Against Drunk Drivers. They're mad. Those mothers want to see drunk driving stop to prevent further loss of life.

[37:53] What about us? We can get mad about some things, can't we? We can get angry about some things. And let that anger be channeled into

righteous indignation. Now, when you feel like cracking or exploding, if it's a good cause, that's okay.

But don't let your anger lead you to sin. Basically, be angry, but sin not. In other words, when you get on with other people, don't let anger prevail.

Don't give place to the devil. In other words, have self-control. Learn how to handle your feelings, your anger. You know, the flesh would maybe get really aggro and strike out and scream and yell and have a pity party or, you know, say hateful words.

But as a Christian, and it is, it's real. Friends, I get angry. I think it's common to man, isn't it? It's a lifelong battle with anger. The flesh, the spirit.

So, number one, keep cool. It's very important. Keep cool. It's not giving the devil a place. Because that's a device of the devil. One of the devil's devices is anger. Another thing, secondly, is keep sweet.

[39:03] You see, keep sweet. The second thing, keep sweet. It says there, let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking, so all of this angry stuff, be put away from you with all malice.

Malice is kind of ramping it up when you want to do someone in. And be kind, it says to one another. Tender hearts it. So, Paul urges us not to have an angry, bitter spirit. Friends, life can throw you some curveballs.

People can get very bitter. You might think of some memories in your life, things that have happened to you, that there's a bitterness there. It's just, it's unpalatable as you remember what happened, whatever it was.

And life can bring pain and bitterness. And sometimes we can feel like getting more than our fair share. We want to get even.

Keep sweet. The question is, how are your relationships? Are you sweet or sour? Keep sweet.

[40:03] Friends, sister, brother. Keep sweet. Be kind. Be tender hearted. Are you kind or cruel?

Before you explode and vent and hit back. It says, let all bitterness, blah, blah, be put away. Put it away.

Are you selfish or considerate? Verse 31 says, get rid of all bitterness. Let it go. It's pride. It's discouragement, isn't it? It's disappointment. Friends, we can all be bitter.

It festers. It spreads. It's like it's cancer. It's like a bitter root. It talks about a root of bitterness. It can be deeply rooted. Like some of these nasty weeds in my garden. I just can't get them out.

I'm digging and digging. And as that tap root goes right down, bitterness is like that. Isn't it? We can get bitter. Let it go. Get God's weed spray. That's the word.

[41:01] Just kill that thing. That roots and all. The bitterness. Don't hold on to it. Because bitterness brings anger and hate. And bitterness, it goes to malice. The desire to see someone suffer.

But you just want to give them back what they gave to you. That's not of God, is it? That's one of the devil's devices. What is God? What is the divine device?

Be kind and tenderhearted. How do you deal with hurt? Are you touching, critical, unforgiving?

That's the devil's devices. That's what it is. Don't do that.

Unforgiving. Do you find it hard to forgive? Ask yourself. Honestly, ask yourself. Do you hold grudges? That's not of God. It's one of the devil's devices.

Repent. Be tenderhearted. Rather than. Be sensitive to others' needs. Don't be like the old man. Be like the new man.

[42:02] Don't be like the flesh. Be like the spirit. Christ in you. Be sensitive to others' needs. Instead of just focusing on your own. Sure enough, they may not deserve you to love them.

To be kind. And tenderhearted. It doesn't say be kind, tenderhearted, if. There's no if there. No. There's no.

No cause there to get you out of it. Oh. I'll be kind to them if they're kind to me. I'll be kind if they ask me to forgive them. No. That's a lie. No. So keep cool.

Don't give the devil place. Don't give him place in the department of your spirit. In those inner chambers of your heart. Keep that sweetness. Keep that Christ-like spirit. It's going to go against the grain.

They don't deserve it. Doesn't matter. Doesn't. It doesn't matter. They don't deserve it. You don't deserve salvation. Be kind. Be tenderhearted.

[43:01] That sweetness of spirit. That Christ-likeness. So keep cool. Put off the anger, the wrath, the clamor, all that angry stuff. Keep sweet. Be kind. Tenderhearted. And thirdly, keep forgiving.

Keep forgiving. Forgive and keep on forgiving. How many times should I forgive them? It's almost like you want to put a limit on it. I'll forgive them. I'll forgive them maybe a second time, but no way a third time.

How many times did Jesus say forgive? Seventy times seven. You can't count it, can you? I can't. I'm not good at math, but that's a lot. You know, don't try to think, I'm just going to forgive them a little bit.

Or now and again, no. Forgive. Keep on forgiving. Keep on forgiving. Forgiving one another, even as Christ. Wow. As Christ forgave me, I've got to forgive. Yeah.

That's how much you should forgive. Do you hold a grudge against someone? Carry some kind of hurt? Carry that chip on your shoulder. Oh, I just love that chip. I just get it out and polish it and look at it every time.

[44:01] That chip on my shoulder. Oh, they did me wrong. They did me wrong. And there's an anger there. There's a chip there. Forgive. Get rid of the chip.

Off your shoulder. Don't keep holding on that age-old hurt. Will you forgive? Let it go. Forgive. There's power there. There's power. Truly, there's power in forgiveness.

But really, it's one of the biggest problems in churches, I'll put to you, and amongst Christians, that I've found unforgiveness. Unforgiveness. Now, they won't forgive me that bad sermon. That's why they don't come anymore.

No. No, there's something about the church. Something happened, and they don't forgive. There's something that holds some grudge. Something that they hold. They harbor. Some resentment. It's one of the devilish things. It's one of the devilish devices. Unforgiveness. Unforgiveness. And if we fail to forgive, we're disobeying God's commands. Love and forgive one another. Even as Christ.

[45:00] Even as God. For Christ's sake. Friends, forgiveness. It brings release. I urge you today, brother, sister, talking about the devil's devices, this is narrowing it right down now to the personal level.

If there's unforgiveness, deal with it. Honestly. Don't go to your grave with unforgiveness. Don't let the sun go down on your anger. Choose to forgive.

Don't harbor hurt feelings. Give it all to Jesus. And just, yeah, say, send a note. I forgive. Or do something to say, I'm going to close that chapter.

I'm going to turn that page. I'm going to leave that behind. I'm going to say, that's dumb. I don't hold anything against them anymore. Whether they care whether I do or don't. And it's about getting, doing it God's way.

What does God say? Matthew 5, 44. What does our Lord say? Pray for those who spitefully use you. Wow. I thought we'd just pray for the people that are nice. No.

[46:03] Pray for those who spitefully use you. Matthew 5, 44. Wow. That means I've got to pray for that one. That person. Yeah. Unforgiveness.

It can damage relationships. It can damage your whole body, soul, and spirit. And it's awful. It's ugly. Bitterness is awful. You know. I don't know whether you like sweet and sour food.

But bits of food is horrible. Isn't it? And food is bitter. You know. It's gone off or whatever. It's awful. You don't want to drink that bitterness. Let it go. Throw it away. Forgiveness.

On the other hand. It takes the bitterness away. It brings God's peace. It restores sadded relationships. Forgive. Even as God. For Christ's sake.

Has forgiven you. Let it go today. Make a decision today. If you are saying. Yeah. That's me. God help me to forgive.

[47:01] God help me to forgive. Forgiveness. It revives the spirit. Look at Joseph. He was sold into Egyptian slavery. These. His own kinfolk. His own brothers.

Threw him in this pit in the ground. And then they sold him. For some money. And he forgave his wicked brothers. Even before they asked him.

Genesis 50. Take a load of that. Joseph. Forgiveness. He knew what forgiveness was. It brought release. He didn't hold that. He loved his brothers. Paul says get rid of all malice.

All anger. All bitterness. All rage. And replace it with forgiveness. So friends. Just to recap. I know we've covered a little here today. Of the devices of the devil.

We should not be ignorant of his devices. We should be. In other words. Be aware. The devil's devices are happening all around us. All the time. Keep cool.

[47:58] Keep cool. Handle your feelings and anger. Keep cool. Keep calm. Do what Jesus would do. Keep sweet. Get rid of all that junk.

The bitterness. Have tender heartedness rather. And a sweet spirit. And keep on forgiving. Learn to forgive. Don't hold anything against anybody.

It's better. Put it out for the hard waste. Just put it out on the curb. And let it go. Let someone take it away. God will take it away. I'm just trying to think.

How you picture it. It's rubbish isn't it? That's what it is. There's no place in your heart for bitterness. Unforgiveness. In your spirit. Because what does the Bible say?

Neither give place to the devil. Neither give place to the devil. The devil's devices. They're manifold. Don't give in place. Don't make a space in your life.

[48:54] Your heart. Your will. Your consciousness. That you'll consciously say. No. I don't want the devil's devices. I want God's devices. I want God to be working. And ministering. And living out in my life.

Let's pray. Our God and King. We thank you for every soul here. We pray that each one might know. That soul peace. That peace deep down within. To know. Yes.

Jesus. Our Lord. You died. You rose. And your payment was made there at the cross. As I trust you. For my sin. I know your salvation.

Lord. For each one to have that heart. That knows. Yes. I'm saved. And Lord. That burden lifted. And help us Lord. As we live our lives.

To know. Yes. The devil is active. And his devices are all around. And we don't want to give any space. In our heart.

[49:53] We don't want to give him any place. In our life. Lord. Help us to recognize his works. And deny them. And Lord. To know you. To submit. To have faith.

To love you. To read your word. To be living. This truth out. In our shoe leather. Lord. That we can be truly. To your praise. We pray for anyone here present.

That you're doing a work in them. Lord. That they'll settle it today. Whatever it is. That unforgiveness. They'll settle it. That bitterness. They'll settle it. They'll make things right.

They'll make it right. With you. And with the one. They really love. The one. Maybe they don't love. If it's our enemy. The one. That doesn't deserve.

Anything. From us. We'll even love them. And even pray for them. Help us Lord. To have that kind of heart. Lord God. We know time is short. And we pray.

[50:50] Give our hearts. That wisdom. That will apply our hearts. To wisdom Lord. In Jesus name. Amen.