

The Journey of Faith

Avoiding Satan's Snares

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, April 29th

God has remarkable plans and dreams for us! (Jer. 29:11; Ps. 16:11) He intersects each life with the invitation to come and follow him. (Mt. 11:28-30) Satan seeks to frustrate God's plans by erecting "barriers to belief" in an attempt to keep us from a genuine relationship with God.

➤ Intellectual barriers that keep us from recognizing & responding to the truth.

(John 8:32; Col. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:20; 2 Tim 3:7)

➤ Moral Barriers. (Ro. 1:25)

➤ Religious Barriers. Mt. 7:13,14; 23:13

After navigating around these barriers, Lee Strobel ran into another subtle barrier to belief:

"I believe, isn't that enough?" Thankfully his wife shared with him the truth of Jn. 1:12

Believing + Receiving = Becoming!

After "receiving" Christ, Lee prayed: *"God, I don't know what comes next. I don't know what it all means, I just know I want whatever is next. So let's do that!"*

Do we have that attitude?

Satan doesn't "give up" once we get through the "strait gate"! He continues to construct barriers to try to keep us from making progress toward God's goals for our lives!

Our choices end up either helping or hindering him in this process! 1 Cor 10:20-23 reminds us that our choices can actually put us in *"fellowship with devils."* (Koinōnos': partnership!) and thereby: *"provoke the Lord to jealousy"* Vs 22

Hebrews 12:1-2 compares God's path (will) to a cross country race! Paul uses a similar analogy in 2 Tim. 4:7,8 and 1 Cor 9:24-27)

1. Satan seeks to hinder us from completing this race. (sabotage)

2 Cor 2:11 *"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."*

A. Some of his devices are overt and obviously "sin". *"Sin which so easily besets us"*

1) "Sin" Hamartia comes from harmatano: To miss the mark and not claim the prize.

2) Besets: Euperis'tatos: to snare us, keeping us from progress Toward the "Mark" (Phil. 3:14)

B. Many will be "covert" and quite confusing.

1) Heb. 12:1 describes these as "weights". ὄγκος (onkos) A Burden or hindrance

2) One of Satan's most effective weapons of destruction is simple distraction!

2. One of Satan's most effective distractions is DOUBT!

A. Doubt diminishes our faith! Ro. 14:23

B. Faith is the "Fuel" to fight Satan! (1 Jn. 5:4)

1) None of us have all the answers! God never answered Job's questions! (Job. 23:1-4)

And He may never answer all of yours! Deut 29:29 *"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us... , that we may do all the words of this law."*

What are we doing with what He has revealed?

Remember Lee Strobel's Prayer? *"God, I don't know what I'm doing but I cannot ignore the evidence. I don't know everything, I never will know everything, but I know enough, and I believe it, I believe you!"*

Example: Charles Templeton was an evangelist with Billy Graham in the 40's and 50's.

He got sidetracked with unanswered "questions" that plagued and poisoned him. He denied Christ and wrote "*Farewell to God: My reasons for rejecting the Christian Faith.*" During an interview with Lee Strobel, when asked about what he thought of Jesus he said:

"He was the greatest human being who has ever lived. He was a moral genius. He was intrinsically the wisest person I've ever encountered in my readings. Everything good and decent I know, everything pure I know, I learned from Jesus. In my view, he is the most important human being who has ever existed." As tears flooded Templeton's eyes, he said,
"And if I may put it this way—I miss him!"

Application: How do we overcome the distraction of Doubt?

1. **Recognize Satan's Snares!** 2 Cor 2:11 *"lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices"* (no'ēma) disposition and purpose
1 Peter 5:8 *"Be sober, be vigilant For your adversary... walketh about seeking whom he may devour"*
2. **Resist Satan's Suggestions!** 1 Pt. 5:9 *"whom resist stedfast in the faith"*
James 4:7,8 *"Submit yourselves to God. Resist the Devil and he will flee from you, draw nigh unto God and he will draw nigh unto you..."*
3. **Respond obediently to God!**
Instead of "hiding" from God, Hurry to him with your doubts! 1 Peter 5:7
"Casting all your care upon Him (Merimna: distractions!) for he careth for you."
Pr. 3:5,6 *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths."*



Charles Haddon Spurgeon

God is too good to be unkind and He is too wise to be mistaken. And when we cannot trace His hand, we must trust His heart. When you are so weak that you cannot do much more than cry, you coin diamonds with both your eyes. The sweetest prayers God ever hears are the groans and sighs of those who have no hope in anything but his love.

Job 13:15; 23:10