

Satan And The Home

The first attack Satan made was against the home. He invaded Eden and led the first husband and wife into disobedience and judgment. Satan is still attacking the home. This does not mean that all wrecked homes are the fault of Satan, for often the flesh has a lot to do with the problems. If a Christian married out of God's will, the enemy can have a field day in that home. If either or both partners are too immature for the demands of marriage, Satan can find openings for subtle (and not so subtle) attacks. If the married couple does not obey the Bible and leave father and mother, but instead permits the parents to interfere, then Satan has an easy time attacking that marriage.

But there are some specific areas of attack mention in the Bible, and these must be noted by Christians who are married.

Satan teaches doctrines that forbid marriage.

But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron, men who forbid marriage...1 Timothy 4:1-3

Our lord makes it clear in Matthew 19:12 that not everyone is supposed to get married. Some people are hindered from marriage because of birth, perhaps some physical problem. Others cannot marry because of the responsibilities men have placed upon them; and still others must remain single in order to serve God better. (Paul was apparently in the last category.)

Singleness is a Christian option; but for most people, marriage is the will of God. However, Satan's approach is to convince the person that marriage is sinful. He wants us to believe that the single state is more spiritual than the married state, and this idea, of course, is false. The whole cult and this idea, of course, is false. The whole cult of celibacy and virginity is based on this doctrine. To be sure, there are those people whom God has called to a life of celibacy; it is a gift from God (1 Corinthians 7:7). But you must be sure this is the will of God and not a deception from Satan. Any teaching that claims greater spiritual virtues and blessings for the celibate than for the married is of the devil and not from God.

Satan seeks to reverse the headship in the home.

Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created and then Eve. 1 Timothy 2:11-13

Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church. He Himself being the Savior of the body. Ephesians 5:22, 23

Headship is not dictatorship. Headship is leadership in love. Christ is the Head of the Church in a living, loving relationship; and so the husband ought to be the head of the wife in a living, loving relationship. Please note that the subjection of the woman is not subjugation. Man and woman are made out of the same basic material, and they are one in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3:28). Satan almost destroyed the first home by separating Eve from her husband at a time when she needed his spiritual leadership. Eve operated independently from her husband, and then led him into sin.

This is not to suggest that husbands are more spiritual than their wives. They ought to be, since they are the spiritual leaders in the home; but often they are not. But wise is that dedicated Christian woman who encourages her husband in the things of the Lord and helps him be a better spiritual leader in the home.

He wants to lead husbands and wives into moral impurity. I read somewhere that 50 percent of the married couples admit that one partner or the other has been unfaithful. Usually these affairs have been passing experiences, not repeated; but they have had in them the seeds of all kinds of problems in the home.

This is why Paul wrote, *Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman. But because of immoralities let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband. The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

1 Corinthians 7:1-5

Several principles emerge from this important paragraph: **First**, sex in marriage is not sinful, and there must be a mutual understanding that governs the intimate life of the Christian couple. We are not supposed to "use" each other selfishly.

Second, abstinence is permitted for spiritual reasons; but do not put yourself into a place of temptation. Satan is so subtle that he can tempt a Christian man who is praying! Marriage is one help to self-control in the area of sex.

It has been my experience as a minister that the husband and wife who are considerate of one another, and who fulfill their marriage dues, will not be interested in any other man or woman. Satan knows when husbands and wives are robbing

each other, and he arranges for extramarital opportunities to gratify the normal desires of the body. Husbands and wives who use sex as a weapon to fight with instead of a tool to build with are asking Satan to wreck their home.

Put on the whole armor of God -- Ephesians 6:10ff

1. Exhortation to be strengthened. 6:10-13.
 - a. Strengthened in the Lord. 6:10.
 - b. Strengthened by putting on the armor. 6:11, 13.
 - c. Strengthening necessary because our enemies are spiritual. 6:12.

 2. The armor described. 6:14-17.
 - a. Girdle of truth. 6:14a.
 - b. Breastplate of righteousness. 6:14b.
 - c. Feet shod with preparation. 6:15.
 - d. Shield of faith. 6:16.
 - e. Helmet of salvation. 6:17a.
 - f. Sword of the Spirit. 6:17b.

 3. Exhortation to prayer. 6:18-20.
 - a. At all seasons for all saints. 6:18.
 - b. For Paul. 6:19-20.
 - (1) That he might speak the right words. 6:19a.
 - (2) That he might speak with boldness. 6:19b-20.
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Sunday, May 5, 10:30 a.m. Word of Encouragement

“From Legalism to Gratitude” 1 John 4:19

(1 John 4:19) We love because he first loved us.

This is one of the most important messages I could ever present! It gets to the very heart and soul of who we are! Please listen closely with your heart and mind. We're about to go to a most important place.

We begin with the tale of two fathers: the first on a little league baseball field. It's a hot day and very dusty...a lot of sons around us with great emotions. (describe scene where one son—the best player on the team -- strikes out at the key point of the game...his dad is leaning on the fence behind the back stop: response of his father: **you're pathetic!**)

How could anyone treat their son like that? Can you imagine what it would be like living in that house?

The 2nd father? His son made a series of bad decisions and ended up in the worst possible place morally a son could end up. He came to the realization that he wasn't even worthy of being the son of this father.

His father's response? Luke 15:20: *"So he got up and went to his father. "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. {21} "The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' {22} "But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. {23} Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. {24} For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate." {32} "But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."*

Two fathers. Two very different responses! Two different kind of relationships! Both fathers may have had broken hearts, but they handled it differently!

Which one best describes the relationship you have with your heavenly Father! We know one is made up...the 2nd father is the inspired description of our God!

This is a lesson entitled "From Legalism to Gratitude." Father #1 is the Christian legalist, while Father #2 is Christian gratitude. Legalism is not about keeping rules; we all have truths, standards, teachings that put before us right and wrong.

Legalism **IS** about our motivation for keeping those rules! It's a **twisted** system that implies that it is **difficult to gain God's love**. That we are always in a position of needing to earn the love of God.

*It's a response to love withheld. It ends best with what **I** do, **my** power, **my** achievements.*

And it produces fear! Inside it causes us to be "scared to death" because **we never know how we stand with God.**

It ultimately crushes the spirit. Our religious beliefs aren't a blessing. Eventually we begin to realize that we're trying to earn the love of a Father who cannot/will not be pleased!

This legalistic attitude is 180 degrees opposite to the development of faith and maturity in the Bible. It's completely against the teachings of both Paul and John:

(Rom 8:1 NIV) "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,"

(1 John 5:13 NIV) "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

When God gave the 10 commandments to the children of Israel, before He began, He makes clear that He wants their response to be based on a relationship with Him:

(Exodus 20:1-3 NIV) And God spoke all these words: {2} "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. {3} "You shall have no other gods before me.

Listen to the words given to Israel as they are about the possess the promised land:

(Joshua 24:1-3 NIV) Then Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders, leaders, judges and officials of Israel, and they presented themselves before God. {2} Joshua said to all the people, "This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the River and worshiped other gods. {3} But I took your father Abraham from the land beyond the River and led him throughout Canaan and gave him many descendants. I gave him Isaac,

(Joshua 24:13-15 NIV) So I gave you a land on which you did not toil and cities you did not build; and you live in them and eat from vineyards and olive groves that you did not plant.' {14} "Now fear the LORD and serve him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshiped beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. {15} But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

(Gal 2:15-16 NIV) ""We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' {16} know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified."

(Gal 2:21 NIV) "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

(Rom 8:15-17 NIV) "For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." {16} The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. {17} Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."

Our life as Christians is NOT about earning love from a God who won't give it!! No Way! The greatest expression of God's love is in the death of His Son. "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8, NASB).

The sending of Christ into the world, and His death on the cross, were not prompted by man's love for God. They were prompted by His love for man. The world's attitude toward God is anything but love!

It is important that Christians progress in their understanding of love. To love one another simply out of a sense of duty is good, but to love out of appreciation (rather than obligation) is even better.

GRATITUDE	LEGALISM
Love lavished; we are "sons" "daughters"	Love withheld
What God has done	What I do
Confidence (certain of eternity)	Fear (judgment)
Security	Insecurity
Fill our spirit	Crushes our spirit
Bless our lives	Curse our life

After Peter's denials

(Luke 22:61 NIV) "The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times.""

Story of two husbands and the list. One never said "thank you" or "I love you." Always had a list of things he expected her to do each day. He died...she married someone who said/showed deep love. Found "the list" many years later and broke down in tears...realized she was doing everything on "the list" for the second husband in the midst of a very different atmosphere!