

## Tactics of the Enemy – Deceived, who me? Pt 8 Feb 3

**Intro:** Stefan Duerksen – Lead Pastor of Southland Church

**Hi to those online!** Glad you joined us today! May the Lord bless you and keep you and shine his face upon you!

### Announcements or Celebrations:

- **Feb 8<sup>th</sup>** – Parent Prayer Night – Thursday, 7:00-8:30PM
  - Parents of MS & HS kids – you are invited!
  - You are invited to fast Thursday.
- **Church wide Prayer Requests! Heart of Prayer** (Ps 27:4): Every generation to find Jesus & learn to bring their needs to Him in prayer

### RECAP: Soil & Seed = Fruit!

- Soil: hurts & wounds → seed: deception → Fruit: sin & his ultimate goal → that we would FALL AWAY FROM THE FAITH.
- Then... I got caught in the “weeds” of the soil of our heart... the enemies preferred soil for planting LIES! And we spent almost 2 months working towards being a PEOPLE OF GOD KNOWN FOR BEING UNOFFENDABLE – Not dismissing our hurts, but openly embracing them and choosing to forgive and LOVE those who have hurt us.

**Today, we will continue looking at the enemies’ tactics to DECIEVE US and how we can STAND FIRM IN OUR FAITH.**

### A. Deceived, who me?

**PICTURE:** Stefan: I am a hunter – not a fisher – But... I have always desired to fish... but haven’t quite figured it out... but from what I’m told... you need to KNOW where to go... what LURES to use for the type of fish you are trying to catch... AND then there is TECHNIQUE on how to cast, and move your lure through the water...

- Why so much work? Though fish may not be as smart as us... **they won’t just willingly jump into our coolers... NOPE! Or into our boat! NOPE!**
- Your STRATEGY to catch fish needs to include what type of fish you are trying to catch, where they congregate, what lure works best on them and then simulating food that they are used to. Even how your reel in your line can make a difference!

**1 Corinthians 10:11-13** Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come. **Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.**

**WE ERR IF WE HAVE OVER CONFIDENCE IN OUR OWN INTELLIGENCE AND STRENGTH TO RESIST HIM.** He works COVERTLY. And has been deceiving people into sin since the beginning of mans existence.

**Ephesians 6:11-13** Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities,

against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.

**The enemy seeks to deceive and keep us from KNOWING GOD & fulfilling HIS MISSION on the earth!**

**John 10:10** The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

**John 8:44** ... When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

The most effective lies are the ones that are closest to the truth! If he would start by telling us that we were an elephant – we would laugh!

If these lies remain unchallenged with TRUTH – they will begin to influence our behaviours.

## **B. What you believe determines how you behave**

**Then enemy knows this! And so his main strategy to steal, kill and destroy is to DECIEVE us!**

- **When I believe that I am worthless**, I hold back in relationships and life, because I feel I have nothing to offer the world.
- **When I believe that I am better than everyone else**, I act superior and put myself ahead of others.
- **When I believe that money buys happiness**, I will think about money ALL the time and try and get more of it!
- **When I think pornography will allow me to feel connected** and soothe my anxious heart, I will view pornography.
- **If I believe God is real and good**, I will align my life to His values and seek to please him
- **If I truly believe that Jesus is Lord**, I will give him my “yes” and follow him to the best of my ability
- **If I believe that the only thing in life that matters is being happy**, I will do whatever it takes to ensure that I am happy.
- **If I believe that God is not good will ask me to do things I can't do**, I will be paralyzed in my walk with him.
- And so on... what we believe MATTERS.

**Dr. Abigail Brenner writes**, *“your beliefs create and dictate what your attitudes are. Your attitudes create and dictate how you respond – in other words, they dictate your feelings. And your feelings largely determine how you behave.”*

Many of our belief systems are adopted in the early stages of life: *“Research has demonstrated that most emotional conditioning and habitual behaviors were set in place, in fact, programmed, very early in life by parents, peers, teachers, and the like. Basic core beliefs, behaviors and attitudes held by these*

*significant others are often simply accepted as fact and become truth. Children do not develop the capacity for critical conscious scrutiny until much later in life.”*

Thanks be to God – we can be TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF OUR MINDS at any point in our lives!

**Romans 12:2** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Hebrews 5:14** But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

- Momma Bear apologetics – HIGHLY RECOMMEND – teach our kids to chew and spit method – e.g. steak – you chew the yummy goodness and then spit out the gristle.

We must learn to discern good from evil. Truth over lies.

### **C. Five main categories he tries to deceive us: Identity – Belonging – Purpose – Origin – God**

#### **1. Identity: who am I?**

- How we answer this question influences almost every area of our lives! What is my worth?
- He wants you to overestimate or underestimate your abilities! E.g. you think you are too smart to be deceived! FALSE.

#### **2. Belonging: present – where I belong**

- who are you? Where do I belong? Who are my people? what are our values? How do I fit?

#### **3. Purpose: future – why I am here**

- How do I relate with the world around me? What am I supposed to do? Where should I put my focus? Why am I here?

#### **4. Origin/History: Past – where did I come from?**

- How did I come to be? Who is my family? What is our history?

#### **5. God: who is God? How do I relate to him?**

- **Ecclesiastes 3:11** He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end....
- **Romans 1:19-20** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.

How we answer these questions form the foundation of who we are and how we interact with the world and influence all of our behaviors.

**The devil knows this and uses it to his advantage constantly!**

**For example:** Bobby is a young boy who is ignored growing up... not because his parents don't love him – no! they do! They are just busy.

- Mom is working and often too tired. Dad is also working and struggles secretly with a pornography addiction...
  - Bobby learns to shut off his emotions... he often feels rejected and alone
  - he internalizes his feelings... and begins to believe deep down inside that he has no value.
  - he begins to try really hard at school and sports! And when he succeeds? Suddenly his parents take notice! He begins to realize that he is only as good as his ability to perform and WIN in life...
  - Though having moments of SUCCESS – most of life feels like a FAILURE as he can't be the BEST at everything he does!
  - To cope with this constant sense of shame he begins viewing pornography... When he views it... though feeling guilty. He feels ALIVE.
  - Bobby joins a church and youth group... there he discovers God! And he loves God! But there is a block... Everyone tells him God loves him as he is... but he cannot receive this love. He feels that his many failures and his sin will keep God from truly ever loving him or accepting him.
  - Because deep down he is convinced that he is only as lovable as his ability to perform.
  - He spends most of his time trying to earn love from God and people... most of his time trying to FEEL LOVED – rather than being FREED TO TRULY LOVE OTHERS
  - Every time he feels he is starting to be GOOD ENOUGH... he fails again in his addiction and the cycle repeats.
1. **Identity:** I am only as good as my ability to perform. My feelings don't matter. I don't matter.
  2. **Belonging:** I only belong with people when I perform right. Acceptance is based on what you DO, not who you are.
  3. **Purpose:** Work to gain acceptance. I can't rest or enjoy things that I like.
  4. **Origin:** How did I come to be? Never got this far.
  5. **God:** God only loves me when I DO the right things.

This is ONE example of MANY I could give... these lies... may seem small?

- How he relates to God. To his spouse when married. How he parents. How he behaves.
- They also impact Bobby's ability to live out the Great Command and Commission effectively!
- Bobby's brokenness leaves him constantly looking inside himself for an answer. He spends most of his life avoiding pain and trying to feel good and trying to earn acceptance.
- Bobby may function at a high level in many areas of life. But Bobby is never fully free to LOVE GOD & LOVE PEOPLE. He remains stuck.
- Bobby needs to be RENEWED IN THE MIND – SET FREE – so he can really learn to fulfill his purpose!

**John 8:31-32** So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

**Galatians 5:1, 13** For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.... For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

## D. Learning to discern good from evil – truth from lies

SEE PASTOR RAYS LIST FROM LAST WEEK – add to that the following...

1. **KNOW the Truth: Learn about God AND learn to know God**
  - a. If you can't answer the questions with TRUTH. You will be open to deception.
  - b. Scripture answers ALL the core questions that we have!
  - c. **Remember:** the pharisees searched the Scriptures and missed out! They failed to realize the Scriptures weren't eternal life themselves, they pointed to Jesus! who is the source of LIFE.
  
2. **Obey the truth: Submit to Jesus as only Savior AND functional Lord.**
  - a. **John 7:17** if anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether this teaching is from God, or whether I am speaking on my own authority.
  - b. **Protection from deception! This is what a "true heart" looks like. It is humble, open to correction, and obedient - seeking God's will above their own.**
  
3. **Live by the Spirit: Pray to God AND hear from God**
  - a. **1 Corinthians 2:6-11** Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him"— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.
  - b. **John 14:26** But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

**Those who quench the Spirit through worldly living, unbelief, sin, or by refusal to come to him, leave themselves open to deception. You cannot understand TRUTH apart from the Spirit of Truth.**

**MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!**

[Care@mysouthland.com](mailto:Care@mysouthland.com)

### SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2023

Cruise ship → → → → → Battleship

1. **Life on Mission** (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus
2. **Next Gen** (Ps 78:7-8): Encounters with Jesus, strong mental health, boldness & belonging
3. **Persecuted Church** (Lk 21:13): Faith, fortitude & wisdom "to not waste the opportunity to share the Gospel"

4. **Heart of Prayer** (Ps 27:4): Every generation to find Jesus & learn to bring their needs to Him in prayer
5. **Church Renewal**: Directors for India and other new countries & many global disciple makers