

SATANOLOGY (31)

(Target #4) - Satan aims an attack against believers .

Dr. Chafer wrote: “Satan has no controversy or warfare with his own, unregenerate people, but there is abundant Scripture to prove that he makes unceasing effort to mar the life and service of the Christian. The motive for this effort is all sufficient: they have partaken “of the divine nature” (II Pet. 1:4), and afford, therefore, a possible opportunity for Satan to thrust his fiery darts at the divine Person who indwells them. Thus the believer becomes a **medium of connection between the divine Person and the Satanic order**...the prince of the Satanic system is seeking an opportunity for a thrust through the believer at the Person of God” (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, pp. 101-102).

One primary objective of Satan, as he tries to infiltrate the N.T. believer, is to “devour” him (I Peter 5:8). That word “devour” was one used of an animal swallowing or drinking down its prey (Reinecker, *A Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, Vol. 2, p. 420). So Satan’s goal is to hunt down a believer so that he can gulp them up and devour them.

If we track satanic work in the New Testament, we may conclude that there are at least thirteen ways that Satan will try to devour a believer:

Way #1 - Satan will try to devour a believer through ignorance . II Tim. 2:24-26

Here is perhaps the key to the entire devouring process—ignorance of God’s Word. Paul taught that this was a major tactic of Satan used to ensnare and trap believers.

Way #2 - Satan will try to devour a believer through pride . I Tim. 3:6

This has a special application to those who are put into a leadership position too soon in one’s Christian life.

Way #3 - Satan will try to devour a believer through hypocrisy . I Tim. 3:7

As much as is possible, it is imperative that a believer, especially a leader, do everything he can do to maintain a good, blameless testimony before the lost world. If a believer earns the true reputation of being a cheat, a drunk, an immoral person, or a social misfit or if a believer is not a man or woman of his or her word, or if one pursues sin, that believer is subject to a satanic attack against his character which identifies him as a hypocrite.

It is possible, as a believer, to have your character verbally attacked because you are a faithful believer. In this case, one does honor God (I Pet. 4:13-14, 16). It is also possible, as a believer, to have your character verbally attacked because one is unfaithful. In this case, it is a disgrace to God (I Pet. 4:15).

Satan is quick to try to devour a believer through verbal attacks of hypocrisy. We must do what we can to not give him extra ammunition.

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Way #4 - Satan will try to devour a believer through various hindrances. I Thess. 2:17-18

Satan is continually trying to discourage the faithful believer to the point where he quits or gives up. This particular tactic seems to come in moments when the believer has a great desire and is eager to do the will of God, specifically in ministry. Paul was eager to do God's will and Satan was eager to hinder him from doing God's will.

Way #5 - Satan will try to devour a believer through immorality. I Cor. 7:5

The temptation to sexual unfaithfulness is a major warfare tactic aimed straight at believers. There is nothing that brings Satan greater joy than to watch a believing husband or wife or a believing single person to get involved in some form of sexual immorality outside of the marriage relationship. Satan has devoured many a believer through immorality and it is one of his major tactics.

We are living in a time when immorality is promoted at an unprecedented level. It is critical that husbands and wives fulfill their physical roles in the marriage relationship so Satan cannot tempt (I Cor. 7:3-5).

Way #6 - Satan will try to devour a believer through suffering. I Pet. 4:12-14

We have already seen the suffering that Satan brought upon Job and we may be certain that he does the same type of thing at times to the N.T. believer. Satan will bring various hardships and suffering to the believer in an attempt to get the believer to turn away from a commitment to God and His Word.

Way #7 - Satan will try to devour a believer through lusts. I Pet. 2:11

Since the world is dominated by Satan, it stands to reason that he will devise a system that is very lustful, which is capable of luring believers into evil. The Apostle John makes it clear that Satan has devised lusts that appeal to the flesh and the eyes (I John 2:16).

When a believer yields to some fleshly lusts, he walks into a satanic war zone that is designed to take the believer down and devour him. According to the Apostle Peter, the best way to avoid being trapped is by abstaining from the fleshly lusts that could take the believer down.

We have been commanded by God to "abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul." If one yields to the fleshly lusts, one puts himself into enemy territory and unless one deals with things immediately there is the possibility that one may be pulled down and never get out of the territory.

Satan has devoured many believers through lustful things. These believers never experience close fellowship with God, they never experience the delivering power of God and they are never used by God to accomplish much of anything. They are held captive by Satan in a system of lust.

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Way #8 - Satan will attempt to devour a believer through accusations. Rev. 12:10

Satan loves to accuse a believer of any sin. Since all believers have sinned, he has a good arsenal at his disposal. Satan particularly tried to get the believer to remember his or her past sins in an attempt to discourage him/her into thinking that he is worth nothing to God and that he/she cannot accomplish anything for God. Oft times Satan will use people to make these accusations by reminding believers of past sins or failures which are already under the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ. When those attacks come, the believer needs to realize the sins are gone. This type of theological resistance will eventually prompt Satan to flee.

Way #9 - Satan will attempt to devour a believer through laziness. I Tim. 5:13-15

When it comes to this theme of laziness, Satan tries to devour believers by prompting the man to refuse to go out of the home to work and by prompting the woman to not stay in her home to work. Undoubtedly, in today's society Satan is winning in many instances.

Satan loves to devour believers and he can specifically do this by luring a woman to be "idle" and instead of staying in her home, caring for her house and family, she goes from place to place visiting with people and spreading all kinds of gossip. This kind of action is the pure work of Satan. In our modern day, there are women who do not take good care of their homes and families and spend their time on the telephone, in front of a television or on the internet.

This principle of laziness, however, is not only applied to women, but also may be applied to men. If a man refuses to go out and work and provide for his family, he is worse than an unbeliever (I Tim. 5:8).

Way #10 - Satan will attempt to devour a believer through gossip. I Tim. 5:13-15

Gossip is a terrible satanic attack. The word "gossip" means loose talker. A gossip is one who will babble out any information loosely without even investigating or knowing the facts. A prime target for attack in this area is women, but also it can be men. One who is given to gossip is right where Satan wants him/her to be.

Way #11 - Satan will attempt to devour a believer through murder. Rev. 2:13

There is no question that Satan desires to murder a believer, either physically or verbally. He may single out one specific target in this attack, but he is after all who are faithful. People that Satan uses in this area are typically not people of prayer (James 4:1-3).