

## My Goal If I was the Devil

2 Cor 2:11 in order that no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.

### I would diminish the time that Christians spent in heaven.

If I was the devil, my primary goal would be to make sure people who are going to heaven do not make it to heaven. If I was the devil, I would already be aware that I had my shot with God in heaven, but out of pride chose to self-exalt myself above Him. *Rev 12:7-8 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war, and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.* It was because of this pride that the devil fell into condemnation. (1 Tim 3:6). If I was the devil, my purpose goal would be to keep the people of God from being with God in heaven and not to be part of that glorious event.

- Rev 21:2 And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband.
- John 14:2-3 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. 3 "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, {there} you may be also.
- Heb 12:22-24 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven..."

With that in mind, there would be a number of steps to make this a reality in the end. If I was the devil and my goal would be to remove your future from heaven, then this would be my scheme. These are the five steps that I would choose to meet the ultimate goal of separating Christians from God.

### A) I would diminish the time that Christians spent in the Bible.

In order to take heaven out of reach, as the devil I would have to attack it from an intellectual perspective. I would try to do is by diminishing the "thinking" time that Christians were spending with their Bible. If I was the devil, I would not appreciate the Bereans of Acts 17:11, who "*searched the scriptures daily*", for they would be "*wise unto salvation*" to do so (2 Tim 3:15) for their efforts. It is this lack of information from the Bible that people will lose their way like in the days of Josiah, when they had not a copy of God's word in the hands of the people (2 Chron 34 :14-15). If I was the devil, I know that whenever the word of God is neglected, the people perish and whenever the word is promoted the people thrive.

- Hosea 4:6 "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...."
- Prov 10:21 "...fools die for lack of understanding."
- Ps 119:105 Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path.

- Ps 119:38 Establish Thy word to Thy servant, as that which produces reverence for Thee.

If I were the devil,...

- I would take time away from studying the Bible with periodicals and comic books to read.
- I would give them a few free gift subscriptions to guideposts and other time-consuming literary works that feel like the Bible, but are not the Bible.
- I would try to put enough interesting television on the air to compete against an open Bible at the bed stand at night.
- I would try to make it so that by the end of the day, time would be out and the scriptures would be no more deeply imbedded in their hearts than when they got out of bed that morning.

If I was the devil, I would not want you in heaven and not reading the Bible would be the first step in that process.

### B) I would diminish the time that Christians spent in fellowship.

If I was the devil, another big step that I would have for the church would be to diminish the time that Christians spend in fellowship with one another. As the devil, I would know there is always strength among the people of God when there is camaraderie.

- Prov 27:17 Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.
- Heb 10:25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging {one} another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.
- James 5:16 “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed...”
- Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms {and} hymns {and} spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

If I was the devil, I would distract Christians from investing time in other Christians, then their goal of heaven could be put at risk. If there is strength in Christian companionship, then there must be weakness in lack of it.

If I was the devil, ...

- I would try to involve our youth with the youth group of the world before the youth group of the church.
- I would try to find some way to stop the church softball team from fellowshiping spending time together in the summer on a ball diamond.
- I would do all that I could to help you sleep in on Sunday morning instead of coming to meet with people who love and care about you.
- I would try to give you every excuse for not being in a small home-group Bible study, whether it would be a busy schedule, a bad day or a simply lazy spirit.

- I would do all that I could do to make it to where you would not even have the time to visit a sick brother or sister in Christ when in the hospital or on their deathbed.

If I was the devil, I do not want you to be in heaven on that Great Day and not having the time to fellowship with the church family would be an intricate part of the plan.

### C) I would diminish the time that Christians spent in repentance.

If I was the devil, I would try to diminish the time the Christians must spend in their repentance to God. I would already know that there is an initial repentance when we come into the kingdom. (*Acts 2:38 "Repent, and let each of you be baptized..."*) Even more, I would know that there is a continued repentance that we are to have in our walk with Jesus.

- 2 Pet 3:9 "...not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."
- 2 Cor 7:10 For the sorrow that is according to {the will of} God produces a repentance without regret, {leading} to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death.
- 1 Jn 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If I was the devil, I would try to diminish the time that the Christians spent in their lives grieving over their personal sins. If I was the devil,...

- I would try to allow your conscience rest at night without ever addressing the sin that occurred throughout the day. I want you to have a seared conscience because that conscience only brings shame before God.
- I would try to eliminate the time that could be spent in tears and sorrow over those things that Christians struggle with day in and day out, but they must struggle with it.
- I would not allow time in the day to have a broken and contrite heart, to be on your knees, crying out to God, working out your salvation with fear and trembling.

If I was the devil, I do not want you in heaven with God and if I could make it that just one person did not take the time to be repentant to God, then let it be so.

### D) I would diminish the time that Christians spent in prayer.

Where would the Christian be without their prayer? I shudder to think that way as a Christian, but salivate at its prospects if I was the devil. If I was the devil, I would have the goal to diminish the time that Christians spent in prayer, knowing that prayer always draws us closer to God. Christians are to be prayer warriors!

- 1Thes 5:17 pray without ceasing;
- Col 4:2 Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with {an attitude of} thanksgiving;
- Phil 4:6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

If I were the devil, I would want you to be prayer wimps.

- I would convince you that it is okay to just wait until the last waning moments of the day to float up a couple of lines before dozing off.
- I would try to have you talk more about prayer rather than actually going to to your Father in prayer.
- I would make prayer meaningless to you, thinking that God does not hear you or that your prayer mad no difference in the end.

If I was the devil, I do not want you in heaven and limiting your prayer life would be crucial to bring it about.

### E) I would diminish the time that Christians spent in evangelizing.

If I was the devil, I would try to do as much as I could to take away precious months, weeks, days, hours and minutes from sharing the gospel of Christ to others. I would know, as the devil, that the gospel is a message of destruction of my plans because it frees men from my grip. *Heb 2:14-15 “...that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; 15 and might deliver those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.”*

As the devil, I would want men’s eyes blinded to this gospel and would do everything I could to stop you from sharing it. I would not want you to be excited about it at all and your eyes to be off of the goal.

- 2 Tim 4:2 “preach the word; be ready in season {and} out of season...”
- 1 Cor 9:16 “...for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel.”
- Rom 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation...”

If I was the devil,...

- I would convince the congregation that only a select few can share the gospel message with others outside the church.
- I would try to involve the Christians in sin so that they would not be effective when they would preach the gospel.
- I would try to have you miss all the opportunities to learn more about the gospel and not invite your friends to some of the small group home Bible studies.
- I would do my best to make sure the Christians were so busy with everything else in the church that their neighbors, relatives and friends outside the church family would never have the opportunity to hear the gospel.

If I was the devil, I do not want you in heaven. If I could just convince you to take a neutral position on sharing the gospel with others, then I just might keep you out of heaven someday.

If I as the devil, my #1 goal above all other goals would be to remove you from being able to be with God for an eternity in heaven. Without eternal life in Him, you would have nothing to look forward to. How would I try to make that possible?

Do not be ignorant of the schemes of the devil. Know them, fear them and change them.

- A. I would diminish the time that Christians spent in the Bible.
- B. I would diminish the time that Christians spent in the Fellowship.
- C. I would diminish the time that Christians spent in Repentance.
- D. I would diminish the time that Christians spent in Prayer.
- E. I would diminish the time that Christians spent in Evangelizing.