

The Predator!

Tim Dubberly, October 17, 2004

Text: I Peter 5:6-11

Introduction:

Have you ever felt as though you were being stalked, and that you were under constant attack? Your adversary, the devil, walks about looking for the hurting and helpless to devour and completely consume.

Imagine a ship being sunk in the deepest part of the ocean, over 13,000 feet, lying on the bottom. There that ship and crew would face extreme pressure, unbelievable darkness, and total desperation. This is the condition that satan is trying to get you in so that you cannot function, have faith, or have hope.

Peter warned, through the Holy Spirit, that the devil was walking about seeking victims to devour. He gave us a command and a warning, and depending upon which one you accept will reflect your outcome.

The devil is a predator, and today, his abilities are greater because the church on this earth is weaker. He is responsible for the #1 problem in the church today, and that is pornography. And the number one instrument is the internet. The ability to go into the world and see whatever you want in the privacy of your own home.

■ The father of a small boy would occasionally sneak into a neighbor's orchard and pluck some of the choicest fruit. He always made sure, however, that "the coast was clear." One day with his son tagging along, after carefully looking in every direction and seeing no one, he crept through the fence. He was just about ready to help himself when the youngster startled him by crying out, "Dad! Dad! You didn't look UP! You forgot to see if God is watching." When temptation besets you and you're inclined to yield because no one else seems to be around, remember, if you're a Christian, your "Master is always in!"

--James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988), p. 477.

People used to go out and buy a magazine and bring it home, but now porn will hunt you wherever you are! Here are a few (areas) that satan tries to destroy us!

I. He tries to prod you through pressure (6-8).

A. Many people cave in because of peer pressure.

- Everybody else is doing it is the catch phrase of our children.
- We feel compelled to try something we should not because those we look up to are trying it.
- We feel as if we must prove something.

B. There is also the pressure of a sinful nature.

- Salvation brings the need for sanctification- the removal of the sin nature.
- However, this removal does not stop the enemy from trying to destroy you through temptation.
- He knows the nature of mankind and will use that against us.

■ Like the eagle that sat down on the frozen ground to feed upon its prey, and when it would have arisen, found its great wings so frozen to the ice that it could never rise again but perished beside its costly pleasure; like the ship that sailed so close to the current that it was not possible to stem the awful tide that drove it over the abyss--so Christian men and women are trifling with forbidden things until they have neither heart nor strength to rise to their heavenly calling.

--James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988), p. 447.

C. Also, the sin of the nature of man.

- Our adversary knows that men are moved by sight and women are moved by thought and emotions.
- However, the porn world is now attracting 34% of women today, imagine how many men.
- Peter cries out for us to be sober- abstain, be discrete- watch.

II. Our adversary will also try to destroy us through darkness (8b).

A. Darkness refers to the distance you are from God.

- The devil draws people away through their lusts.
- The bible tells us of the things of the world, the lust of flesh, eyes, and pride of life, that they are not of the father.
- These temptations will lead a soul into destruction, for the world of sin and its prey will pass away.

B. Porn is an insidious type of darkness.

- Last year it became a 12 billion dollar industry, with 3 billion coming from child pornography.
- We live in a world of cyber sinners who spend hours traveling through different porn sights just to fill their lustful hunger.
- The devil has flooded the television, magazines, and other vehicles such as DVDs, VCR cassettes to promote his destruction.

C. Darkness is the absence of light.

- Jesus called the church to abide in the light as He is in the light and we would have fellowship with one another.
- Have you ever noticed these adult XXX video stores, they are always run down and nasty reflecting the junk that is inside on its shelves.
- Peter cried out for us to be vigilant- to keep awake, for Paul even cried for us to awake out of sleep.

■ In 1838, after a strong emancipation movement among blacks, slavery was abolished in Jamaica, to take effect on August 1. On the evening of the last day in July a large company of former slaves gathered on the beach for a solemn, yet joyous, occasion. A large mahogany coffin had been constructed and placed on the sand next to an accommodating hole in the beach. All evening the soon-to-be-emancipated slaves placed, with some ceremony, symbols of their enslavement.

There were chains, leg-irons, whips, padlocks, and other similar symbols of slavery. A few minutes before midnight came the box was lowered into the hole in the beach. Pushing sand into the hole to cover the coffin, all joined their voices with one accord to sing: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow, praise him all creatures here below, praise him above ye heavenly host, praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost." They were free from their slavery. How much they were like Christians, who, through Christ's death are free from their slavery to sin. And how like them are Christians, who in heaven shall be free from the very reminder and presence of sin.

--James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988) pp. 225-226.

III. He tries to tear us apart through total desperation (8-11).

A. Sin is a sickness that will lead to spiritual death.

- Porn will keep you sick in your spirit.
- Depression will attack you and soon you will feel dirty and worthless.
- Many will not turn to God out of shame and they will hide away living out their fantasies in seclusion.

B. The devil is a roaring lion that seeks victims.

- The devil is looking for those who are weak: he has lead the porn industry to buy sights to attract you, and your children, such as: Kids4christ.com and Adultprayer.com.
- The ones who have stopped praying and praising.
- The ones who have stopped looking to God and have started looking for fulfillment in the world.

C. Your desperation can be turned into deliverance.

- Peter cries out for us to resist him, the devil, steadfast in the faith.
- He wants us to realize we are in a war for our minds and the minds of our families.
- He is responsible for the fall of ethics, integrity, and morality in this world, but you can defeat him.

■ Bruce Larson tells the true story of a Catholic priest living in the Philippines, a much-loved man of God who once carried a secret burden of long-past sin buried deep in his heart. He had committed that sin once, many years before, during his time in seminary. No one else knew of this sin. He had repented of it and he had suffered years of remorse for it, but he still had no peace, no inner joy, no sense of God's forgiveness.

There was a woman in this priest's parish who deeply loved God, and who claimed to have visions in which she spoke with Christ, and He with her. The priest, however, was skeptical of her claims, so to test her visions he said to her, "You say you actually speak directly with Christ in your visions. Let me ask you a favor. The next time you have one of these visions, I want you to ask Him what sin your priest committed while he was in seminary."

The woman agreed and went home. When she returned to the church a few days later, the priest said, "Well, did Christ visit you in your dreams?"

She replied, "Yes, He did."

"And did you ask Him what sin I committed in seminary?"

"Yes, I asked Him."

"Well, what did He say?"

"He said, 'I don't remember.'"

This is what God wants you to know about the forgiveness He freely offers you. When your sins are forgiven, they are forgotten. The past--with its sins, hurts brokenness, and self-recrimination--is gone, dead, crucified, remembered no more. What God forgives, He forgets.

--James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988) p. 216.

Conclusion:

Peter warned the church so that they would resist, not retreat. He wanted them to resist the devil, which means more than telling the devil to leave you alone. God wants us to stand in the face of satan and tell him he is a devil, and refuse to watch or become part of anything that has even the appearance of evil.

I am not advocating that we stop watching television, reading magazines, watching videos or DVDs, or even stop using the internet. What I am saying is that we need to take the steps to prevent the enemy from attacking our families so easily. There is new soft ware for your computers, there are protection devices for your television, but the greatest protection is for you and your family to have an intimate relationship with Christ. We need to remember that He set us free and we are free from the demands of satan.

■ In God's Smuggler, Brother Andrew tells in the first couple of chapters the story of his early life--one section of which dealt with his hell-for-leather days in the Dutch army in Indonesia. While serving in that area, fighting against Sukarno in the late 1940s he bought a young ape, a gibbon, who took to him, and Andy treated him as a pet in the barracks. He hadn't had the gibbon for many weeks before he noticed that when he touched it in some areas around the waist it seemed to hurt him. So he examined the gibbon more closely and found a raised welt that went around his waist. He carefully laid the animal down on his bed and pulled back the matted hair from this welt until he could see what was causing the problem. He discovered that evidently when the gibbon had been a baby someone had tied a piece of wire around his middle and had never taken it off. As the monkey grew larger the wire became embedded in his flesh. Obviously, it must have caused him a great deal of discomfort. So that evening Andrew began the operation, taking his razor and shaving off all the monkey's hair in a three-inch-wide swath around his middle. While the other boys in the barracks looked on, he cut ever so gently into the tender flesh until he exposed the wire. The gibbon lay there with the most amazing patience. Even when he obviously was hurting him the gibbon looked up with eyes that seemed to say, "I understand," until at long last he was able to get down to the wire, cut it, and pull it away. Instantly, as soon as the operation was over, the gibbon jumped up, did a cartwheel, danced around his shoulders, and pulled Andy's hair in joyful glee to the delight of all the boys in the barracks. "After that, my gibbon and I were inseparable. I think I identified with him as strongly as he with me. I think I saw in the wire that had bound him a kind of parallel to the chain of guilt still so tight around myself--and in his release, the thing I too longed for."

--James S. Hewett, Illustrations Unlimited (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc, 1988) p. 68.

These "areas" are where the devil wants to take you out of the picture and steal, kill, and destroy you. However, if you will listen and resist the devil, the act of resisting standing against; you will win this battle over the number one problem in the church world today.

My challenge to you today is:
Repent and ask God to restore you through sanctification.
Ask God today to heal you mind, body, soul, and spirit.
Ask God to help you resist the enemy as he throws everything he can at you.
Seek God's strength today to overcome your adversary, the devil.
Ask God to help you help others to overcome this problem of lust.