

The Enemy

Scripture: 1 Peter 5:8 NIV
Ephesians 6:12 NIV

Introduction

One of our greatest failures as Christians is our failure to recognize who our enemy really is. When conflict arises, we focus on individuals, groups of people, and sometimes entire congregations to be the recipients of our animosity. These scriptures describe who the enemy really is. If we can properly identify the enemy, and fight him, then we will be at peace with each other.

I. His identity

1 Peter 5:8a NIV Your enemy the devil....

Ephesians 6:12 NIV For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

- A. Realize that people are not the enemy
 - 1. The real enemy is the evil spiritual satanic force
 - 2. People may be motivated by that satanic force
- B. Discern the spirit motivating the person
- C. Direct your efforts into spiritual warfare

II. His purpose

1 Peter 5:8 NIV Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for some to devour.

John 10:10 NIV The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy....

- A. To prevent you from walking in fellowship with God
- B. To prevent you from achieving your full potential
- C. To destroy you

III. His method

John 8:44 NIV You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your

father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

A. Accusing men before God

Revelation 12:10b NIV For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before God day and night, has been hurled down

B. Presenting temptation to men

Matthew 4:2-3 NIV After fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread."

C. Masking the consequences of sin

Genesis 3:4-5 NIV "You will not surely die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

D. Blinding our spiritual eyes

John 12:40 NIV He has blinded their eyes and deadened their hearts, so they can neither see with their eyes, nor understand with their hearts, nor turn -- and I would heal them.

E. Setting us adrift

Hebrews 2:1, 3:12 NIV We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.