

Christians deceived by and held captive by the Devil

To the Christian who thinks this doesn't apply to him; do you know these basic Bible facts?

(1.) All those people who are not yet converted to Christ are under the power of Satan:

Acts 26:18 ...**To turn them (Jew and Gentile) from...the power of Satan to God...**

1 Jo 3:10 **By this it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God...ESV**

(2.) The whole world, other than righteous Christians, is deceived and controlled by Satan:

Rev 12:9 ...**The Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world...**

1 Jo 5:19 ...**The rest of the world around us is under Satan's power and control. TLB**

(3.) Christians who oppose the truth of God's word unwittingly become the Devil's captives:

2 Tim 2:25-26 ...**Those who oppose the truth. Perhaps...they will...escape from the Devil's trap. For they have been held captive by him... NLT**

Eph 6:12 **For we (Christians) are...fighting against...the evil rulers of the unseen world, those mighty satanic beings and great evil princes of darkness who rule this world; and against huge numbers of wicked spirits... TLB**

Do we believe the Bible? God's word is truth. If we don't believe the Bible then we oppose the truth. This is the truth; every family member, relative or friend that is unconverted to Christ is currently living under the power, to one degree or another, of the Devil. Likewise every Christian who opposes the truth – God Himself is Truth – and therefore who is opposing God, has fallen back under the wicked influence of Satan or one of his demons.

How is it possible for Satan to take born again Christians into some kind of captivity?

(a) They listen to the devil's voice and choose to believe what he tells them – just like Eve:

John 10:5 (Jesus) **Yet they (My sheep) will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know (as in, listen to) the voice of strangers".**

(b) They remain willfully ignorant of Satan's devices and so cannot defend themselves:

2 Cor 2:11 **To keep Satan from getting the advantage over us (Christians); for we are not ignorant of his wiles and intentions. AMP**

(c) They will not equip themselves with the essential spiritual armor that God has provided:

Eph 6:11 **Put on God's whole armor that you may be able successfully to stand up against all the strategies and the deceits of the devil. AMP**

If you ask most Christians "what does the voice of strangers mean?" or "what exactly are the devices, wiles or strategies of the devil?" they will in all likelihood be found clueless. Is it any wonder that many born again Christians do not currently walk with God, and are not led by His Spirit? Instead, they live according to their human nature, being held there the unwitting captives of the devil, as confused Christians who cannot now bear any fruit.

What are the wiles and devices of Satan, what is the voice of strangers? – THOUGHTS!

The battle between God and Satan for the dominating influence in your and my life takes place entirely in the realm of our thought life. Those thoughts that we listen to, choose to believe and act on in word or deed; we serve the one from whom those thoughts came:

- 2 Cor 2:11 **Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices** (the Greek word here is elsewhere rendered as thought or mind).
- 2 Cor 4:4 **Satan, the god of this evil world, has blinded the minds** (the thoughts) **of those who don't believe** (either at all or not actively at present)... NLT
- Eph 4:27 **Neither give place to the devil** (how, by taking his thoughts). KJV
- James 4:7 **Submit yourselves therefore to God** (first, then). **Resist the devil...** KJV
- 1 Pe 5:8-9 **Be sober, be vigilant; (in your thought life) because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour** (by his thoughts). **Resist him, steadfast in the faith...** (And how do we resist him?)
- 2 Cor 10:4-5 **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal** (not natural) **but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds** (thought patterns that have had a strong hold on me), **casting down arguments** (or reasoning thoughts) **and every high thing** (every doubting thought) **that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,**

All spiritual warfare is thought warfare. Every Christian is engaged in it whether they know it or not. To not know it guarantees defeat. Our enemy is stronger in thought warfare than we are. Natural human abilities like a quick intellect or a strong will are useless. Only God's weapons can prevail. Before elaborating on them what thoughts does the devil use?

In the daily battle for dominance in our lives, what kinds of thoughts does Satan often use?

Rom 6:16 **Don't you realize that whatever** (thought) **you choose to obey** (the spirit that gave that thought to you) **becomes your master...** NLT

2 Cor 11:3 **But now I am fearful, lest that even as the serpent beguiled Eve by his cunning, so your minds may be corrupted and seduced from wholehearted and sincere and pure devotion to Christ** (with what thoughts)

PRIDE – These are thoughts that are independent from God; that put my will above His. Pride originated with Lucifer when he was lifted up with pride, and he is the author of it. It shows up when a Christian is pre-occupied with himself or his immediate family and is indifferent to the spiritual welfare of other people.

DISOBEDIENCE – All thoughts of disobedience to God are unrighteousness and Satan is the god of unrighteousness. He is now at work in the children of disobedience. All sin is disobedience to God, sin therefore is always the devil's domain.

UNFORGIVENESS – Satan knows that any Christian who won't forgive others as God has forgiven him, is handed over to the tormentors. Tormentors are wicked spirits. So Satan will try to feed us offense thoughts, including thoughts of past wrongs

we've suffered but have already forgiven – to entice us to get offended again.

FEAR - Fear, worry or care thoughts come from a spirit; and that spirit isn't from God. Irritation, frustration or anger signal I've taken care thoughts about something; If I don't learn how to cast these care thoughts on God I'll become depressed.

IDOLATRY – These are thoughts that idolize, value or love something or someone in my life more than I value or love God. Often it is a secret thought image that I have of myself that rules many of my decisions – And just who fed me those image thoughts? Usually behind every idol, including thought idols, is a familiar spirit.

Eph 5:5 **For this you know, that no...idolater** (who is submitted to something other than God), **has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.**

ENVY - These thoughts want what another has or to be who they are, often with ill will towards them. It is called covetousness in the Bible and is another form of idolatry. Where envy and strife are there is every Satanic work in operation.

LYING - If, as the Bible says, Satan is the father of lies, from whom then does every thought come that urges me to lie, pretend, exaggerate or distort the truth? Lies include false doctrines that offer my flesh excuses to do what it wants.

How can I prevent or ward off thought attacks by the devil, that have captured me before?

PRAY - Every day be sure to pray this part of the Lord's prayer: "My Father, lead me today by your Spirit, not into temptation but deliver me from the wicked one."

FIGHT - Decide to fight – but not with human weapons, such as intellect and will power which are quite useless; instead, learn how to use God's almighty weapons:

SHUT THE DOOR – Is there any un-forgiveness or any other un-confessed and un-forsaken sin that is giving Satan a legitimate hold on you? Remedy that now!

SAY "THE LORD REBUKE YOU SATAN" – Believe and then invoke these scriptures:

Jude 9 **...In contending with the devil...said, "The Lord rebuke you!"**

Mal 3:11 (God) **"And I will rebuke the devourer (Satan) for your sakes"...**

CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD – Believe in your heart this verse and then invoke it:

Rom 10:13 **For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."**

TRUST IN GOD - To remind you or take you to His word that will capture Satan's thought:

John 14:26 (Jesus)...**The Holy Spirit...will...bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.** John 16:13 **...He will guide you into all truth...**

If you cannot seem to become permanently free of certain thoughts, DO NOT GIVE UP; Find a Christian who has been freed, to feed you and teach you the truth, to disciple you. Change your word environment – hit every service, play Bible teaching CD's constantly.

Eph 6:16 **Above all, taking the shield of faith** (faith comes by hearing and hearing and hearing, with the heart, God's words of truth) **with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts** (all the deceiving thoughts) **of the wicked one.**