

Does the Devil Make Mistakes?

Gratitude for God's forgiveness will "send you back" to help others.

Do you know that the devil makes mistakes—and big ones at that? The diabolical efforts of this enemy of our souls to steal, kill and destroy can at times seem overwhelming. But his efforts can at the same time create a phenomenon that works to our advantage.

The name I've given this phenomenon is the "Boomerang Factor." The Australian boomerang, which may be used as a weapon, is designed to soar or curve in flight and return to the thrower.

The Boomerang Factor occurs when God's forgiveness couples in us with a deep gratitude to Jesus for wiping away our spiritual stench and stain. The resulting phenomenon is that people who were once lost in sin rebound with a grateful zealotry to spread the same gospel that changed them. Our gratitude empowers us, and like a boomerang we come full circle, returning to the kingdom of darkness to do damage to it by spreading the good news of God's love and forgiveness to others still trapped there.

Have you ever listened to young people exuberantly share their personal stories of coming to Christ? So often I've heard young men and women from ministries such as Victory Outreach, Teen Challenge and Master's Commission testify about the positive difference in their lives after receiving Christ.

One evening I was participating in an inner-city pastors conference held at Angelus Temple and the Dream Center in Los Angeles. One by one, teenagers told what Jesus had delivered them from and how they now wanted to reach others with the gospel.

At times they were almost shouting their testimonies (so much

for a laid-back, latte-filled, seeker-sensitive service!). They expressed a remarkable passion not only to know Christ, but also to make Him known.

Listening to them, Jesus' statement about the woman who lived in sin came back to me: "Her many sins have been forgiven—for she loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little" (Luke 7:47, NIV). In other words, a person who has been forgiven much loves much.

That's why God's forgiveness of our sins is one half of the power that makes the Boomerang Factor weigh in heavily against the kingdom of darkness. The Pharisees recoiled at the thought of interacting with this woman. They never would have considered allowing her to wash and anoint their feet with her tears, hair and expensive oil, as Jesus had. But she had received forgiveness for her sins and was deeply grateful.

Just like her—and those young men and women I listened to in Los Angeles—I too am grateful to God for forgiving and delivering me. Aren't you ever so grateful to the Lord for taking you out of whatever He has rescued you from and bringing you to where you are today?

Whether we were drug-addicted, tattooed, smelled like a sewer and drove a motorcycle or are sophisticated, squeaky-clean, smell like Chanel No. 5 and drive a luxury car, each of us ought to consider himself or herself the chief of sinners who is in desperate need of God's forgiveness. Sin—regardless of its level of social repugnance—grieves God and was the reason Jesus gave His life for you and me.

That's why our gratitude for being forgiven is the other half of the power that makes the Boomerang Factor weigh in heavily against the kingdom of darkness. Gratitude for God's forgiveness will propel you to greater action—and "send you back" to help others.

Unfortunately, when we take our Christianity for granted, we

lose our sense of gratitude to Jesus. When this happens, it's usually accompanied by a diminished desire to reach out to others.

Can you imagine how awesome it would be if this Sunday in your church or fellowship there were a host of young, just-saved believers exuberantly declaring their devotion to Jesus and their burning desire to reach others? Their attitude might just spread.

Pause right now and tell God how thankful you are for the new life He has given you. Live today with an attitude of gratitude, and while you are at it, try to spread it around. People might get saved. It would be the Boomerang Factor at work.

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