

Billy Graham Answers: What's the Devil's Most Successful Scheme?

The great deceiver is always on the hunt, ready to pounce when he spots confusion or hesitancy.

But what exactly is he looking for? How does he decide who to manipulate and the way to do it?

One concerned reader asked Billy Graham: "What is the devil's most successful trick? In other words, out of all the schemes he uses to try to lead us astray, which one works best? I'd like to know so I can be on guard."

The wise evangelist responded:

I'm thankful you want to be on guard against the devil's schemes—because the devil is real, and he will do everything he can to deceive us and turn us away from God. The Bible urges us to be alert to the devil's schemes, "in order that Satan might not outwit us" (2 Cor. 2:11, NIV).

The devil has many tricks up his sleeve (so to speak)—but surely one of his most successful is to make us believe he doesn't even exist. We may admit that evil is real—but then deny that behind it are demonic spiritual forces bent on our destruction and death. Or we may deny the devil's true nature by turning him into a harmless cartoon character with a red suit and pitchfork. But Jesus said, "He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him (John 8:44b, MEV).

Someone has said that the devil doesn't need to think up any new tricks—because the old ones still work! It's true: lust, pride, power, discouragement, doubt, money, escapism,

pleasure, hate, anger, jealousy, selfishness—the ways he attacks us are almost endless. If one temptation doesn't work, he'll try another—and he'll keep on trying.

But listen: The most important fact about Satan is that he is a defeated foe! By His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ conquered death and hell and Satan—and someday His victory will be complete. In the meantime, make sure of your commitment to Christ, and turn to Him every day for the strength you need.

So be on guard always and aware that Satan and his minions are just as alert. But do not fear, for victory is in the Lord.
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