

Satan's Greatest Lie That Leads to Your Greatest Defeat

If you follow many of my articles, you probably recognize that my perspective on spiritual warfare largely centers around knowing who you are and what you have in Christ. I call this "identity-based warfare."

This concept was shaped by a word from God, in which He told me: "Spiritual warfare isn't about fighting a devil that's defeated, but about standing in the victory of the one who defeated him." In other words, your victory over Satan's attacks isn't all about methods and models, but standing in confidence of what God's Word says you have because of the finished work of Christ.

The Foundation of Who You Are

The foundation of your new identity in Christ is illustrated in 2 Cor. 5:17: "Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things have passed away. Look, all things have become new." How this happens is explained just four verses later: "God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (v. 21). These two verses describe a spiritual metamorphosis that's incomprehensible. There are no ifs, ands or buts about it; as a Christian, you are brand new and made right.

Satan's Greatest Lie

Of course, we know the devil seeks to oppose whatever God declares. And therefore, it stands to reason his greatest strategy against Christians is to erode their confidence in the foundation of their identity. Primarily, he does this through accusation. To convince you that you aren't new, he brings back haunting reminders of the past. To incite questions about your status before God, he shames you with

your sins, struggles and weaknesses. Then, he whispers what is possibly his greatest lie: "You're just the same ol' sinner."

The deception comes in that what he says seems true. Certainly, we all continue to sin after we're saved. But herein lies Satan's strategy. He cleverly seeks to get you to equate your identity with your actions. Instead of simply admitting, "I sinned" and moving on, he wants you to confess this as who you are: "I'm just a sinner (saved by grace)."

The Danger of Confessing a Lie

Perhaps you've said this before. I know I have. In fact, I've even heard some of the most respected men and women of the faith say something similar. I know people mean well; it sounds humble and unassuming. But you must understand that to acknowledge something like this is to swallow Satan's greatest lie, which can produce a life of defeat.

As I expound upon in my book, *Silence Satan*, the devil knows you only rise to the level of whom you believe you are. That is, if you continue to believe you're a sinner well after the Lord declared you a new person, you're almost certain to remain enslaved to a lifestyle from which Jesus died to set you free. And although nobody means this, ultimately, it says to Jesus: "Your blood, wounds and death weren't enough. I have to pay for my sin with negative talk and self-pity."

Beliefs Influence Actions

Be sure not to misconstrue this message as license for sin. This is far from that. You can't purposefully live like the world while arrogantly holding to an identity you obviously don't respect. But at the same time, know that identity isn't determined by actions. Instead, actions are determined by identity. This is why scientists teach that your beliefs about yourself trickle down to influence your actions, which eventually shape your habits, character and destiny.

My message to you is this: Stop perpetuating the devil's greatest lie with your own mouth. You're not a mere "sinner saved by grace." You are the righteousness of God in Christ. When you start to agree with God's Word about your genuine identity in Christ, you'll begin to rise to the level of who you believe you are. And consequently, many of the "spiritual warfare" issues you face will diminish. {eoa}

Kyle Winkler equips people to live in victory. His mobile app, *Shut Up, Devil!*, is the No. 1 spiritual warfare app; and his recent book, *Silence Satan*, has helped thousands shut down the enemy's attacks, threats, lies and accusations. Kyle holds a Master of Divinity in biblical studies from Regent University. Get daily encouragement from Kyle on Facebook and Twitter.