

Use This Powerful, Preventative Measure to Claim Victory Over the Devil

We didn't realize we had holes in our walls. But, one night as we were watching TV, I saw a mouse dash across our living room floor and disappear.

Not thoroughly convinced at what I saw, I hoped it was just a shadow. But the next day I saw evidence in my pantry that it was, indeed, a mouse. I also discovered evidence in our laundry room; it was more than one mouse!

So, I quickly purchased several humane mouse traps and mouse deterrent sachets, putting them at various places where mice might be. And I began catching them. Every morning I checked the traps and took them further and further away from our house to release them. Somehow, they kept finding their way back in—I started recognizing the same ones over and over. Eventually I drove them to a vacant field quite a distance from home so they would not come back.

After a couple days of empty traps, I hoped the problem was solved. But as I rounded the corner to the laundry room one day, I saw a shocking sight—a snake! It was slithering into one of the traps looking for a meal. I could not handle this peril alone, so I yelled for my husband! He came with tools to remove the snake from the house—and thankfully it coiled up in the trap and got shut-up inside.

That night we tore our laundry room apart looking for access points. We found a few possibilities behind the washer and dryer, and plugged them up good.

So, what does that have to do with living your faith?

Watch Out for Home Invasion

As I was pondering this unwelcome incursion into our home, our natural defense against the things of the wild, the Holy Spirit reminded me that Satan is always looking for holes in our spiritual defenses that he can invade.

The apostle Peter instructed, “Be sober and watchful, because your adversary the devil walks around as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). Of course, most of us know this verse and would never willingly open the door for the devil, as a roaring lion, to stalk through the door of our lives. We rightfully flee from overt sins like murder, theft and adultery. Hopefully, we are wise enough to also avoid more socially acceptable, but just as destructive, sins like drunkenness, sexual immorality, lying, unwholesome talk and seething anger. Those are all things that can give the devil a foothold in our lives.

Access Points

Paul explains this to the Ephesian church, saying:

Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice (Eph. 4:25-31, NIV).

As we know, the devil “comes only to steal and kill and destroy” (John 10:10), so giving him a foothold will allow various kinds of destruction and loss in our lives. First and foremost, he will attempt to destroy the fellowship we have with our heavenly Father. But he goes far beyond that, wanting to destroy our health and relationships, steal our joy and finances, kill our God-given visions and dreams—and in every way possible, wreak havoc in our lives.

Genesis 3:1a warns about Satan, depicted here as a serpent, “Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God has made.” And in Genesis 4:7, God explains that when we do not do what is right, “sin is crouching at [our] door.” You see, the devil is always looking for a way inside.

The Little Holes

But it is not only the big, overt sins that open the way for Satan to creep in and begin a campaign of destruction. He will take any opportunity. So, we must also be alert to the little things that open us up for pesky issues, like the mice in our house, that if not dealt with, is an avenue for the serpent to slither in and cause bigger problems.

Rodents in the Bible laid waste to impregnable cities and, some historians say, were used to rout an entire army. They overran the Philistine strongholds in Ashdod, Ekron and Gath (1 Sam. 6:5), and some believe the angel of the Lord used mice in the camp of Sennacherib’s army to spread a plague that killed them all (2 Kings 19). Suffice it to say, no one wants mice infesting their home, so every crack and hole must be shored up.

Sins of Omission

The apostle Paul highlights several things we should be doing: speaking truthfully, doing something useful with our time, sharing with those in need and building others up. Those are active ways to show love for others, not doing so constitutes

a sin of omission, which is still sin. Proverbs 3:27 instructs us, “Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to act.” Not doing so on a consistent basis, can leave a crack for Satan to exploit.

The Sin of Bitterness

Ephesians 4 also tells us to rid ourselves of all bitterness, which begins as a seed but can quickly overtake our thoughts, attitudes, actions and motivations. It can take root if we dwell on the ways life does not go the way we think it should—such as when someone else receives a privilege, benefit or promotion we think we or a loved one deserve. Even when the results of an event are not righteous or fair, we can not harbor bitterness. But we can pray. In fact, these are the very situations that cause our prayer life to deepen about things we may not otherwise pray. We must put our faith and trust in the Lord to do His work and set things right in His time and in His way.

Do Not Grieve the Holy Spirit

Paul also admonishes us to not grieve the Holy Spirit. This can be a difficult concept to understand. A footnote in The Passion Translation of the Bible explains the Aramaic text interprets this phrase as, “do not limit His scope.” How many of us put limits on Holy Spirit’s work in and through us? Our doubt or unbelief, our pride and our disobedience can all hamper His work. Let’s look at a few things Scripture says about the work of Holy Spirit.

Scriptures to Consider

Acts 1:8 (TPT) reads, “But I promise you this—the Holy Spirit will come upon you, and you will be seized with power. You will be my messengers to Jerusalem, throughout Judea, the distant provinces – even the remotest places on earth!” Do we willingly share our faith with others when prompted? If not, we are limiting the Holy Spirit’s work.

Romans 5:5b (NIV) reminds us, “God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” Do we carry God’s love for others, a love that compels action? If not, we are limiting His work through us.

Romans 15:13 says, “May the hope of God fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Do we allow God’s hope to rise up in us, even when things look grim? If not, we are limiting His work in us.

Second Timothy 1:13-14 instructs, “What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you—guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us.” Do we value, ponder and incorporate Biblical teaching in our lives so it produces 30, 60 and 100-fold? If not, well, you know.

Hebrews 2:4 tells us, “God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.” Do we embrace, enjoy and use the gifts He has given, which are for our benefit and for the sake of the gospel? If not, we are limiting His work.

For the rest of this article, visit . {eo}

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