

THE BIG IDEA: Exposing the enemy allows us to see the battle more clearly.The Take-Off

In week 1, I told you that I wanted you to realize that we're in a war. I told you that you may find yourself having moments when you realize that the battle is raging all around you.

Last week, we all agreed that God's was answering that prayer, and that most of us felt like Peter who had stepped out of a boat and into a storm.

And now, in week 3, I want you to be aware of your enemy. I want for all of us what Paul wanted for the church in Corinth: to be aware of our enemy's tactics.

2 Corinthians 2:11

We don't want to go crazy talking about the enemy, and we also don't want to go silent and never talk about him. When it comes to Satan, most people tend to live unaware or too aware. But God just wants us to be aware, because we when we aren't, bad things can happen.

[Man killed by plane while running on the beach in SC; runner falls to death stepping off overpass in Minneapolis]

Like Paul said to the Corinthians, we don't want any believer to be unaware of the devil's schemes, and so today we want to expose his mission and his tactics.

Exposing the enemy allows us to see the battle more clearly. [BIG IDEA]

One more quick story to help all of us exhale, and then we'll dive in.

[Story about the woman being baptized and pulling the drape down as a man was changing]

We're going to expose the enemy this morning, but the temptation is to feel like we've all been exposed because there will be moments during the message that you're going to realize that you've fallen prey to his tactics.

So, as we start to look at Satan's plans and strategies, know this: There is no shame in the light of grace, and as we shine the light on Satan, God's grace will be enough for you.

Exposing the enemy allows us to know who we're fighting and how we're to fight.

1. Satan has a mission statement

- a. If you're in corporate America, you've heard of mission statements, and you probably hate them
- b. Why? Because they often do everything BUT explain the mission of the company! Take GM's for example...
- c. [IMAGE - GM Mission Statement]
- d. It's long, hard to understand, hard to remember and doesn't even mention cars (which is what they make)!
- e. But mission statements can be good, especially if they're done well.
 - IKEA: to make everyday life better for our customers
 - airbnb: belong anywhere
 - The Gathering: We live near God in order to be sent to those far from Him.
- f. Guess what? Your enemy has a mission statement, it's a good one, and it's found in **John 10:10**
- g. He's come to do 3 things: steal, kill, and destroy

2. Satan has a plan that we need to expose

- a. Remember that man who "got exposed" during the baptism and froze? This is the part that may feel both empowering and daunting simultaneously, because as we expose the plan Satan has for fulfilling his mission, many of us are going to realize how foolish we've been in falling for them.
- b. Take heart: if it was as easy as simply pointing out his mission and plan, then Jesus exposing him in **John 10:10** almost 2,000 years ago would have done the trick.
- c. But the truth is that - even though Satan may only have 3 "plays" - he's really good at them and has an endless number of variations on them!
- d. Obviously, there is way more in this area than I can cover in one day, or even want to cover in one day.
- e. We want to spend our time studying the real, not the fake, and so I'm going to help you see the three tactics that he uses to accomplish the three goals in his mission statement.
- f. Here's the first: he steals by using **DECEPTION**
 - This is not a shock, right?
 - All thieves use deception to get by us. They come at night, through trickery, deceit
 - **Genesis 3:4-5** / The deception of a partial truth, which is a full lie
 - **2 Cor. 11:3** / Deception is his weapon so that he can steal the simplicity of the gospel

- g. What's the second tactic? He kills through **DOUBT**
 - **Genesis 3:1** / "Did God really say?" / Doubt God's word
 - **Matthew 4:3** / Even with Jesus..."IF you are the Son of God" / Doubt our identity
 - **James 1:6-7** / Doubt God's answer
- h. Satan steals through deception, kills through doubt, and he destroys through **DISTRACTION**
 - Satan is patient, and he is even willing for you and me to have "good" things if they can distract us and keep us from seeing the godly things
 - If he could keep you just a little distracted over your entire lifetime, it's possible that he could ensure that you end up way off at the end
 - Distraction destroys destiny
 - **Hebrews 12:1-2** / Throw off, see the King, run the race

3. 3 Questions that can help us recognize his plan in our lives

- a. Here's how we're going to end this week
- b. I want to give you 3 practical questions that you'll hear in your soul whenever the enemy's tactics are at work in you
- c. When Satan steals through deception, you'll find yourself asking, "**What's happening?**"
 - Sometimes it's a lack of peace, a hitch in your spirit
 - Something just seems off, like a noise in your home at night
 - Investigate it! Pay attention to it, and ask God to reveal where the enemy is trying to deceive you.
- d. When Satan kills through doubt, you'll find yourself asking, "**What if?**"
 - Fear of the unknown
 - Doubts about the future
 - Doubt will keep you looking for safety, and that will kill the "new thing" that Jesus wants to do in you
 - Turn the "What if?" around on the enemy... "What if God comes through?"
- e. Finally, when Satan destroys through distraction, you'll find yourself asking, "**What's that?**"
 - Sometimes it's sin, like in **Hebrews 12**
 - Sometimes it's good things, like in **Haggai** when the children of God ignored the temple because they were distracted with their own homes
 - Homes are good, but not better than the God who provides them
 - The blessing is never better than the Blessor, and so don't allow the gift to distract you from the Giver

The Landing

Steal, kill, destroy - a short, powerful mission statement

A reminder that our enemy is real, and yet the last half of that verse says that Jesus came to give us life to the full. That's one of HIS mission statements, and it means that even though you may - like me - have fallen for one or all of these enemy tactics, our Warrior King is able to pick you up and restore you.

Last week we talked about Peter getting out of the boat, stepping into a battle and seeing his King.

But he fell for the tactic of distraction, and sank.

When he called for help, **Matthew 14:31** says that Jesus responded IMMEDIATELY.

I want to give you the opportunity to do the same, and to allow the strong arm of Jesus to reach out to you NOW.

Let's pray.