

The Four Voices: How to Think Like a Christian

Satan: The Great Opportunist

Rough Transcript

Brett Clemmer

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Well, hey guys. It's great to see you. Welcome back to the Man in the Mirror Bible study. We're in our series on **The Four Voices**. And the premise of this series is this. **The four voices in my head are the world, the flesh, the devil, and the holy spirit. My job is to figure out which one, which voice am I hearing, and then make the adjustment.**

So today we're talking about **The Voice of the Devil**. Now we've talked about **The Voice of the World**, we've talked about **The Voice of the Flesh**. Pat, introduce the voice of the devil last week. And this week, what I want to talk about is how Satan is a great opportunist. **Satan is a Great Opportunist**. That's our title for our talk today. And if you don't have the handout, you might want to pause the video and go ahead and download it.

IT'S A CONSPIRACY!

But in the handout in the first circle, I want you to write, "It's a conspiracy." It's a conspiracy. Now, what do I mean by that? Well, what I mean by that is that the world, the flesh and the devil are actually conspiring against us, conspiring against our relationship with God. What does that look like? Well, let's talk about the devil. First of all, the devil is a thief. In John 10:10 it says he comes to steal, kill and destroy. And Peter said that he's like a prowling lion just looking for an opportunity. And so Satan is smart. He's an angel, right? He's a fallen angel. So he's smart. And he's going to take advantage of the world and the flesh, and then add his own voice into that to conspire, to do everything they can to drive a wedge between us and God.

So what does that look like? Well, we can see the way that the world and the flesh conspire. If you just turn to first John chapter two, first John chapter two, you see this in verse 15, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life is not from the Father, but it's from the world, and the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." So you can see in verse 16 that the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life are part of what is in the world. So the world and the flesh are already conspiring against us. And then Satan being smart, he is going to conspire with the world and the flesh to pull us away from.

So what do I mean by that? Let me get you an example. So I get to travel once in a while working for Man in the Mirror. And so I go through airports. And I think the airport bookstore is a great example of a place where the world, the flesh, and the devil conspire. So in every bookstore that I go in and that you've gone, in an airport, there's usually a rack of magazines, and often the pornographic magazines are in the book back sort of a little bit out of the way, maybe a little bit up high. They're kind of hidden. Some of them are covered in plastic. And in whenever I go into an airport bookstore, sometimes I'll notice that there's a man or a couple guys sort of in the back. You can tell by their body language they

don't really want anybody to know what they're doing, but they often have a pornographic magazine and they're paging through it, and they're going to even put it back.

So how does this show us the world, the flesh and the devil conspiring? First of all, the world tells us that porn is no big deal. That is it's not a big deal to look at pictures of naked women, that it's okay to objectify those women. It's just a magazine. It's just not that big a deal. And then my flesh as a man, I'm attracted to pictures of naked women. I'm attracted to the female form. I like to look at it. And so the world and the flesh then are conspiring to create something that will be attractive to me, that in my heart I know is not good for me, but I'm still attracted to it. And so that's when the devil steps in, because the devil steps in, in his little, his quiet voice, he whispers in my ear, "You're in an airport, 1000 miles away from home. Nobody knows you, nobody will see you. Nobody will have any idea that you looked at this magazine, and you can store those pictures in your mind. You can store them those pictures in your heart, and then you'll have them. So just go ahead and look, nobody will ever know what you've done."

And so that's the one world of flesh and the devil conspiring. It's a conspiracy. So, it's a conspiracy in that first circle. And remember that it's not WMD, it's not the weapons of mass destruction. It's WFD. It's the world, the flesh, and the devil, which together are a weapon of destruction in a man's life, in a Christian man's life.

THE SILKY SMOOTH VOICE

So what does this look like in the Bible? Well in your second circle, the silky smooth voice. And you'll see in the circles on the slide where I wrote, "The ssssilky ssssmooth voice," like a snake. Because that's our introduction to Satan, is as a serpent in the garden. So if you have your Bible, turn to Genesis chapter three, and let's look at the way that Satan interacts with Adam and Eve in the garden. So Genesis chapter three, verse one. "Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman," now I want to stop right here. I want you to skip down to verse six for me, because I want to read something to you in verse six. And I want you to remember it as we read back through the first five verses. That when Eve took the fruit and ate it, and the end of the verse says, "And she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate." So Adam was with Eve the whole time. So the serpent talked to Eve, but Adam was there. Adam didn't do what he was supposed to do, and Satan was able to do tempt Adam and Eve. But he went at Adam really through Eve. Which is probably a whole nother talk another time.

So just thinking that, that this is really Adam and Eve, let's look at the end verse one. He said to the woman, "Did God actually say you shall not eat of any tree in the garden? And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees garden," but God said, "You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden. Neither shall you touch it, lest you die." But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. And she also gave some to her husband who was with her and he ate it, and then the eyes of both were opened."

So we can see the way that Satan's silky smooth voice influences Eve to sin against God. Too disobey this direct command that God had given to Adam and Eve. And so the first thing that we see is that Satan is crafty, right? It says it outright. The serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field. So we need to remember that Satan is crafty. He's deceptive. He's going to look for a little weaknesses in your armor. And then the next thing we see is what he says to Eve. He says, "Did God actually say ..." And so did God actually say, "You shall not eat of any tree of the garden"? And so what he's really doing is he's sowing doubt. Did he really say that? So he's sowing doubt.

Now it could be, "Did he really say that? He really said that to you?" It could be doubt in God's character, doubt in God's goodness. Or did he actually say that? Are you sure you understood that correctly? So it could be doubt in your own self and your own understanding. And so this is how Satan's craftiness takes root in the way that the voice of the devil is in our head. Are you sure that that's what you heard, or really? That's really what God wants from you?

And then you next see, in verse four, he says, "You will not surely die." So now Satan is calling God a liar. And so that's another way that Satan will deceive you. The voice of Satan will be silky smooth. God didn't really mean that. That's not really true. God's not really telling you the truth. Maybe ... God exaggerates things like a dad would to keep you out of trouble, but it's not really true. And so Satan undermines God's sovereignty. Undermines God's omnipotence and omniscience. Really undermines God's goodness. And he does it again in verse five. "For God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be open and you will be God, knowing good and evil." So here Satan's actually sort of impugning God's character. You're not really going to die from this, God just doesn't want you to enjoy yourself. God just doesn't want you to have something. And so Satan is beginning to build a picture of God the father in Eve's mind, not as a benevolent good father who only wants the best for his children, but as a fallible, sort of cranky God who doesn't want you to be like him. He wants to control you and keep you less than you could be. And this is the exact opposite of what God wants for us. And we'll see that later on here.

And so what is the effect then on Adam? Because we said Adam was with her. Well, think about what Satan does as he's deceiving Eve and deceiving Adam, he's basically stealing Adam's manhood. By deceiving Eve, and by Adam not stepping into that, Adam's not fulfilling his role as the provider and the protector for his wife. And he's redefining Adam's role in this deception. He's saying to Adam, "We'll let Eve handle this. You don't need to step into this. You can just stand there and watch, Adam. You just wait while Eve works this out." And guys, that's not supposed to be our role. We're not supposed to dominate and push our wives aside in situations like this, but we're also not to stand behind them and let them face it alone. And so this is the voice even in Adam's ear, stealing his manhood, stealing his role, diminishing his position in this marriage as one who just listens and doesn't act.

And so what does this look like? What does this look like for us? Are there times when we just sort of sit back and let things happen in our families and the voice in our head says, "It'll be okay. They'll figure it out." Well guys, that's the voice of Satan saying that to you that it'll be all right. And the ramifications for when we don't step into this role, the ramifications when we let Satan deceive us and pull us into sin, the ramifications are terrible.

Look what happens in Genesis three. "Then the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord, among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" And the man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree and I ate." And then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me and I ate."

And so you see the ramifications of this deception are that Adam covers up. They make fig leaves, and so they cover up and then they hide. They're fearful. It says, "I heard you in the garden. I was afraid because I was naked." And then he blames God. He says, "Well that woman that you gave me gave me the fruit and I ate it." And then Eve does the same thing. She blames the serpent. She says, "Well that serpent, deceived me." Now who made the serpent? So what is she doing? She's blaming God just the same way that Adam is blaming God. And this is exactly, guys, what Satan is trying to get us to do. He's

trying to drive a wedge between us and God. He's trying to convince us that God's character is not pure. That God is not good. That God is not all powerful and all knowing. He's trying to separate us from God's love. That's what Satan does. Why? To make us miserable, to make our lives not be the way that God wants them to be. And so he's working in there to deceive us.

And see this in our everyday lives too. I talked about pornography in the airport bookstore. I think pornography is probably one of the biggest two or three issues that men in the church are struggling with today. And I think Satan deceives us in the same way. It's no big deal. It's everywhere. Don't worry about it. Did God really say that that wasn't good for you? Did he really say that? If you look at it, you're not going to die. Seriously, it's no big deal. Don't worry about it. You'll enjoy it. In fact, looking at those pictures or those videos, or acting sexual behaviors out in other ways that are not the way that God designed us for, those are actually going to make you feel good and your life is going to be better because you got to look at those pictures. You're going to experience more pleasure. You're going to have more control in your life. You're going to know more than you know now, if you will just step into this sexual sin, it's actually going to make your life better.

So guys, as Christian men, if I were to say to you, "Should you look at pornography?" You would say, "Well no, of course I shouldn't look at pornography." And in your mind and in your heart and in your soul, you know that pornography is not good for you. And yet, we are still tempted. How is it that we could know body, mind, and soul, that something's not good for us, and yet still be attracted to it? Guys, that's the voice of Satan whispering in your ear. The silky smooth voice of Satan saying, "It's no big deal. You'll be happier. Your life will be better. I know you think it's bad, but just trust me. It's going to be okay."

And when we give into that voice, versus listening to God's voice, that's bad for our lives. Because what comes after we sin like that? Well maybe we hide. We hide what we're looking at. We feel shame for what we're looking at. We cover it up. We might even blame somebody else. Like, "Well so and so made me do it, or so and so sent me a website or so and so showed me something on their phone." But what we don't ever do, that we have to do if we're going to heal, is take responsibility and go to the Father and talk to Him and confess to Him and repent and strengthen our relationship with God. The less we listen to the voice of Satan, the less we listen to the voice of the deceiver, and the more we listened to the voice of God, the less we believe the devil when he says that God doesn't really love you. God doesn't really want the best for you.

And the more we listen to the voice of the Father saying, "You are my son. You are my cherished son. I love you. I want what's best for you." The more we listened to that voice, the easier it will be to resist the devil as well as the desires of our flesh will be less enticing. There'll be less pressure from it. And then even the voice of the world telling us that it's okay. Our eyes will be open, we'll have wisdom to see, no that's not okay. It's bad for the people that are involved in it. And it's bad for me and for my heart in viewing that. It actually hurts me. And that's exactly what Satan wants. He wants to hurt you because he knows he can't win. We know that once the Father claims us, nothing can pry away from the Father. Satan knows this, and so he's just going to make you as miserable as possible in the meantime.

VICTORY IS CERTAIN

So in the third circle then, let's go ahead and write, "Victory is certain. Victory is certain." And let me tell you how victory is certain. It's certain because of this Big Idea. So here's the Big Idea. **Whenever Satan tempts, tricks, or convinces me, I will run back to God's truth, power, and love.** Now notice I didn't say, "If Satan tempts tricks or convinces me," because guys, Satan is going to tempt you, Satan is going to trick you, and sometimes Satan is even going to convince you. But when that happens, don't run away and hide. Don't sew fig leaves together to put a barrier between you and God. Don't blame somebody else. Instead, step into God's presence. Repent from your sins, recognize his truth for you of what's good for you. His power to save you, and his love that calls you his son.

So are you really his son? Yeah. Victory is certain because we are already the sons of God. In Genesis three, 14 and 15, let's look at this. This is the curse. Now we talk about the curse on the woman and the curse on the man. But there's a curse on the serpent too. There's a curse on the devil. In verse 14, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field. On your belly you shall go and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel." In some translation it says, "He shall crush your head." Now, what is this? This is actually the prophecy of Jesus coming.

So Jesus is the offspring of Eve. All the way ... That's why we the genealogies to show that Jesus descended and was fully human. He's also fully God. And so that's why he was able to defeat Satan, and Satan would bruise his heel too. Jesus would be crucified. Jesus would die. But because Jesus is God, he rose again from the dead, defeating death, defeating sin, and we're going to have eternal life with them forever. Victory is certain.

And so the other way that victory is certain is that the power of God, the very power that rose Jesus from the dead. Look at Romans eight. The very power that rose Jesus from the dead is alive in us. Romans 8:11 says this. "If the spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies, through his spirit who dwells in us." And we're going to hear about the voice of the spirit in the next couple of weeks, but victory is certain because the very power that raised Jesus from the dead is alive in our hearts. You've won the victory. And what's the result of that? Well stay in Romans eight and go look at the end of the chapter.

In verses ... Not at the end of the chapter, but farther down in the chapter. Verses 16 and 17. "The spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are what?" Children of God. And if children then heirs. Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. So yeah, we're going to suffer guys, but we are heirs. We are sons of God. We are co-heirs with Christ. Jesus is our brother in a spiritual sense. And so we've already won the victory. Victory is certain. And so let's go back to our Big Idea that; **Whenever Satan tempts, tricks, or convinces me, I will run back to God's truth, power and love.** I will remember that I am the most loved son of the most high God. And you need to remember that too. Whenever Satan tempts, tricks, or convinces you, run back to God's truth, power, and love, and He will help you see the lies of the enemy. He will help you cast aside that silky smooth voice of Satan, and understand the truth. That he loves you. Let me pray.

Father, thank you so much that the power of the Holy Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead is alive in our hearts Lord, so that we can discern. We can see when the voice of Satan is lying to us, is trying deceive us or to trick us. And Lord, would you give us wisdom. Would you help us Lord to have the strength to push that voice aside, even when it's being backed up by our flesh and by the messages of the world, Lord. Would you help us to stand in the power of your spirit, so that we can walk according to that power, we can live according to your truth, Lord, and we can know that we are so loved by you, our Father. In Jesus name, we pray. Amen.