



March 12, 2010

Dear Friends:

POOR DEVIL

Back in the day, we all had a laugh or two as Geraldine, Flip Wilson's funny, self righteous, character was quick to divert the blame for her slips into sin by swiftly proclaiming, "The Devil made me do it!"

I think some of us have met a few Geraldine's, either in person or in the mirror.

The sad underscore is that Geraldine's, self deceived, cathartic confession only acted as a temporary unburdening without actually realizing the recurring lapses would, when remaining unaddressed, get easier to submit to. Actually, Flip's comic depiction vividly validates Paul's Ephesians 4:27 warning ... "Give no place to the devil".

This challenge necessitates a change of thinking, a change in speaking, a change in habits, a change in relationships and a change in our response and the everyday application of God's Word. And it takes work.

I Peter 5:8 warns us to be on guard because we have an enemy, an adversary who is on a roaring prowl. This adversary comes from Hell with the assignment to steal, kill and destroy. Jesus called this fool, "The Thief". This thief is on a frantic timeline, he is quite busy because he knows his time is short.

Certainly, we should all be alert for this devil, but in another thought, his work is often made easier by other humans, who become his instruments of havoc by falling lock-step, perhaps unwittingly, in with his wretched agenda.

These dear ones, sometimes masquerading as wise and holy, readily clothe themselves in the prideful rags of gossip, elitism, self-deception, purposeful misinformation and hate ...all wrapped up in pristine, self-righteous packages. Although actions such as these may appear one way, they really only exist and operate to steal from you, to kill you and to ultimately destroy you. Don't let it happen!

Although the attack can come from within and without, wherever it comes from, the Word tells us to keep sober, alert and clothed in God's Armor. Then, we can remain standing after facing those tough challenges. The problem is that we are

sometimes a bit slow on the uptake in recognizing the real source of the assault. We need God's fresh touch, Holy Spirit discernment and Divine protection to survive this battle. After all, Lucifer is a defeated foe; he's going down and I don't plan to go down with him.

Actually, a lot of this would be easier if the devil would just cooperate and wear the red suit with the coordinating horns and pitchfork ensemble. This would certainly make it easier to spot him and we could quickly run the other way. The truth is, he already has so much help here on earth, he rarely needs to take the outfit out of the closet.

Michael

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