

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST

SPREADING THE SOUL-SAVING MESSAGE OF JESUS

GREAT BIBLE LESSONS “How to Make the Devil Mad”

Introduction by narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. Spreading the soul-saving message of Jesus. And now, Ben Bailey.

Have you stopped lately to think about all the havoc that the devil has wreaked on humanity? Go all the way back to the beginning of time in Genesis 3. Adam and Eve were in the Garden of Eden where everything was wonderful. It was a beautiful place. Everything they needed had been provided for them. They were happy, and they were safe. Then the serpent arrived, and sin entered into their lives because the devil tempted Eve to sin. Later, Adam gave in to sin as well, and as a result, both of them were removed from the Garden. Death comes to all men because all men sin, but look at what the devil did in bringing in temptation and sin. Look at Job, who was a blameless man. He was upright, he feared God, and he shunned evil. He was a godly man living a godly life, yet he was sorely tempted by Satan. Think about Job’s calamity. Look at what the Bible says concerning Satan in Job 1:7. The Lord said to Satan, ‘From where do you come?’ So Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.’” Satan is presented as being out actively hunting for souls. He was looking for people whom he could destroy. He brought great calamity to Job by removing his possessions, causing his children to die, and infecting him with a dreaded disease. Job’s wife even suggested that he “curse God and die.” All of this was the result of Satan.

Think about Satan’s work against Israel. In 1 Chronicles 21:1 we are told that Satan “stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel.” David sinned for carrying out an unauthorized census, and there were serious repercussions to his sin. But who was the one who tempted David to sin? It was Satan. Think about Matthew 4 and the temptation of the Savior. Jesus had been going about doing good, and was living the life that God intended for Him to live. He was helping people by teaching them the Gospel, so Satan tempted Him via the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Satan suggested that if Jesus was hungry, then He should turn stones into bread. Satan suggested that Jesus should throw Himself off the temple because God would take care of Him. Satan even said that he would give Christ everything He could see if He would simply worship him. Look at what Satan did to Jesus.

Look at what Satan did to Judas, who was not always evil. He had great potential—just like the rest of the disciples. Yet Judas also had a great enemy. In Luke 22:3 we learn that “Satan entered the heart of Judas.” We learn more about that in John 13:2 where we read that Satan caused Judas to want to betray Christ. The betrayal of Jesus, which ultimately led to His crucifixion, came about by Judas, but Satan was the one who brought it to fruition. Christians in the first century were hindered from doing the work of God by Satan, and Christians today likewise are hindered. Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 2:18, “We wanted to come to you—even I, Paul, time and again—but Satan hindered us.” Who stops Christians at times from spreading the Gospel? It is Satan. Today, he enters people’s hearts through pride, foolishness, and other ways to stop the work of God. Be sure that you understand that right now Satan is trying to wreak havoc in your life. In 1 Peter 5:8 Satan is described

as “a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” You can be guaranteed today that Satan is doing something to try to cause you to be lost. In Revelation 12:9 Satan is seen as “the great dragon—the serpent of old” who is always tempting God’s people to do wrong.

In light of all that Satan has done, we as God’s people should feel a righteous indignation against the devil. Psalm 4:4 says, “Be angry, and do not sin.” If the devil has wreaked havoc in your life, or in the lives of some of your friends or family members, you need to know that you can turn the tables on the devil. Proverbs 25:22 says that we can “heap coals of fire” upon our enemy’s head. Today, let me welcome you to our study of how to make the devil mad. I would like to offer to you some things that you can do that will make the devil mad.

For example, one thing that you can do to make the devil mad is to be more faithful than you have ever been before. If you really want to incite the devil and cause him to be angered by your lifestyle, then be more faithful to God than you have ever been. Revelation 2:10 illustrates how first-century Christians (who were suffering terribly at the hands of Satan through the Roman government) had remained faithful.

“Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days [representing an indefinite amount of time]. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

The one thing that Satan wanted those Christians to do when they were put into prison was to get discouraged and give up. But the Lord told them not to do that. Instead, He wanted them to be more faithful than ever. If you really want to turn the tables on the devil, you need to “be faithful unto death.” In 2 Corinthians 5:14-15 we read, “For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.” We must live for Jesus. And when we do, we can be sure that the devil will not be happy. Paul said in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Paul wrote, “Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.” Each of us has a decision to make. We must choose to serve God (Josh. 24:15). You could make no greater choice in all the world than to decide that you will live for Jesus each and every day. The one thing that Satan hates is fidelity and dedication to God and His cause. The Bible says that we are to “love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength” (Mk. 12:30). The devil wants to chip away at our love for God, but if we keep our inner fire burning strong, we can be sure that we will win.

Let me suggest some ways that can help you be more faithful to God, and that can help you grow and mature as a Christian. I would suggest that you need to be more faithful in attending worship. Hebrews 10:25 says that we are not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together. There are many Christians who attend on holidays, on Sunday morning only, or merely when they feel like it. But the Bible says that we are not to forsake the assembling of the saints. The Bible never advocates “Sunday-morning-only” or “religious-holiday” types of Christianity. There is nothing in the Bible that even comes close to that. The Bible says instead, “Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you” (Mt. 6:33). What Satan really likes is people who wake up late, are tired because they stayed up too late on Saturday night, and who have to drag themselves out of bed (which they do about once a month to attend worship services). That is

what Satan likes. He wants people to be too consumed by this world to worship God. Christians, however, ought to have the attitude of Psalm 84:10—"A day in Your courts is better than a thousand." The emphasis is, "A day in God's service is better than a thousand days anywhere else." As the psalmist put it later in that same verse, "I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness." Can you imagine that? Merely being a greeter in the house of God is better than living luxuriously in wickedness. We need to be faithful in attending worship services of the saints.

We also need to be more faithful in following the example of Jesus. In Acts 4 we learn of how untrained and uneducated fishermen had just rebuked the religious leaders of the day. Those leaders wanted to know how those men could do such things, and by what power or authority they were doing them. In Acts 4:11-12 we read, "This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone. Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Then, in verse 13 the text says, "When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus." First-century Christians made the devil really angry because they were faithful followers of Christ. In Revelation 14 we see a picture of "the redeemed of the ages." The cry comes out, "Who are these people?" Verse 4 says, "These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes." Today, we are to walk in the footsteps of Jesus (1 Pet. 2:21). We are to imitate great men of old (such as Paul) as they imitated Christ.

But another way by which we can be more faithful is by exhorting and encouraging other people. We can do so much good by offering a kind word or by making a phone call. We are told in Hebrews 10:24-25, "Exhort one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." If you really want to make the devil mad, then encourage others.

If you want to make the devil angry, here's another way to do it. Give more than you've ever given before. The devil hates people who love the cause of Christ enough to give sacrificially of themselves, their time, their money, and their energy. Look at what Jesus said in Luke 6:38—"Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." We are not talking about a "health-and-wealth" type of social Gospel which suggests that if you give \$100, then God will give you \$1,000. That is not what we are suggesting. The rewards that God gives may be future, eternal rewards that we will receive in Heaven. But one thing that helps the cause of Christ is people who are willing to give sacrificially. The devil hates it when we give generously. He does not want us to give as the Bible tells us to. Yet the Bible teaches that our giving ought to be something that is regular. In 1 Corinthians 16 we learn about this. Giving ought not to be sparse or something that we do "every once in a while." Rather, giving is to be done "on the first day of every week" (vs. 1-2). When Christians meet for worship on the first day of every week, they are to set aside funds for the work of the church. Now is the time for giving, which also must be "as we have been prospered" (1 Cor. 16:2). Look at the wealth that we possess, and the overflow of goods that God has given us. We have nice cars, nice homes, more clothes than we could ever wear, and pantries full of food. Look at all that we have. Out of that abundance, we must give to God. During the time of Haggai, the people had a problem. They were living in luxury. They were going to the hilltops to build their own paneled houses. Yet Haggai said in Haggai 1:6-7 that they were basically putting money into a bag with holes in the bottom of it. Why? It was because they were not giving to God first. So many people have time, energy, and finances that are not used properly because they do not put God first. In 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 we are told not to give

sparingly, but bountifully, because God loves a cheerful giver. Are we happy to give back to God? In view of all that God has given us, are we happy to give to the cause of Christ? When we talk about giving financially, it is important in our relationship to God. But please understand that today we are not begging for your money. We are talking about how individual Christians must give in the local congregations that they attend. That is how giving is presented in the New Testament. There are a lot of people who go on television and radio to ask people to send in money. But that is not what we are talking about. We are talking about how the Scriptures command each Christian to give back to the Lord in the local congregation of which he or she is a member. Giving starts by giving oneself. If you want to know the key to being a good giver, turn to 2 Corinthians 8:5, which sums up what giving is all about. We are told that the Christians in Macedonia “first gave themselves to the Lord.” How do good givers come about? People first have to give themselves to the Lord. When you give yourself to the Lord, then it is not difficult to be a good giver financially. Think about the wonderful benefits of giving to God. Imagine the joy and blessing that it is to our lives when we do that. There are some words of Jesus that are not found in the four Gospel accounts, but instead are found in Acts 20:35, where Paul said, “Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” If you really want to make the devil mad, then be a good giver. If you want to send the Gospel around the world, and if you want to see people saved (which the devil certainly does not want!), then be a good giver to the cause of Christ.

If you want to anger the devil, I also would suggest that you need to be more evangelistic than you’ve ever been before. During the first century, the devil tried diligently to stop evangelism. He did not want Christians taking the Gospel to others. Thus, he caused persecution, false teachers, and discouragement through the Roman government. Yet Christians were still ardent in their evangelistic efforts. To defeat the devil and help us overcome sin, we need to spread the Gospel around the world. How the devil would love us to ignore Mark 16:15-16. Jesus said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” The devil would like us to believe that we can stay home, watch our favorite television shows, and “let someone else worry about spreading the Gospel.” The devil wants people to think that they do not have the talent or ability to spread the Gospel, and that they therefore cannot do it. But each of us has been given the command to take the Gospel to the whole world. Look at the principle in Acts 5. Talk about people whose hearts were in evangelism—here they are. Christ’s disciples had been beaten for preaching the Gospel, and had been told not to go out to preach the Gospel any more. Yet verse 42 records, “Daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.” The disciples were told to hush, or they would be beaten. Yet while the blood on their backs was still wet, and while the Jewish leaders’ warning was still ringing in their ears, they went to the temple and house to house to teach people about Christ. Oh, if we only had the zeal and desire to carry out evangelism like those people had. Acts 8:4 records, “Those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word.” We need to follow the command of Jesus, Who said in Matthew 28:19—“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations.” We are told in 1 Peter 2:9 that we are to “proclaim the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.” In Colossians 1:28 Paul wrote, “Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” Look at the good that comes from evangelism. In the first century, the critics of Christians said that they had “turned the world upside down” (Acts 17:6). But what they really did was turn the world right-side up by getting people back in line with the will of God. Paul, Barnabas, Luke, and others would go into a city, and people would burn their books of magic (Acts 19) or they would tear down idols and give hon-

or to God. That is the last thing the devil wants! If you really want to do some good for the cause of Christ, and if you want to make the devil mad, then be more evangelistic. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 4:13, "I have believed; therefore I speak." Can we say that today? Do we really believe that the Gospel saves, and that Jesus came to seek a lost and dying world? In Luke 19:10 we are told that "the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost." Do we really believe that we ought to be doing the same thing?

Another way you can make the devil mad is by being more ardent in prayer than you've ever been before. A person of prayer will be the kind of person whom the devil wants to attack. The devil does not want us to be men and women of prayer. It often has been said that "prayer moves the Hand that moves the world." How true that is. James 5:16 says, "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much." Prayer has the power to overcome the problems we face. In 1 Thessalonians 5:17 Christians are told to "pray without ceasing." What a wonderful principle. Oh, how we need to be people who are devoted to lives of prayer. Oftentimes, however, the devil interferes with our prayer life. For example 1 Peter 3:7-12 teaches that is a husband does not deal properly with his wife, and if the home environment is not what it should be, even our prayers are hindered. Satan can hinder our prayers by affecting our relationship with our spouse or our family members. Satan can hinder our prayers by tempting us to try to hide our sins. In Psalm 66:18 the psalmist said, "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear." Proverbs 28:9 teaches us that "one who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination." So, yes, Satan does try to hinder our prayer life. We need to realize that a righteous person who is trying to do good and not live in sin has a powerful tool against the devil—prayer! Look at what Jesus said in Luke 18:1—"Men always ought to pray and not lose heart." When you get discouraged, and when Satan is bringing things into your life that are causing you trouble, pain, and suffering, what should you do? Jesus' response to that question was that "men always ought to pray and not lose heart." Jesus provides the perfect example of this. When Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane, He knew that He was about to die. In Matthew 26:39, Jesus prayed, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." Jesus knew that He was going to have to go to the cross. He came to Earth for that purpose. But having the ability to make His requests known to God, and knowing that God heard Him, was a great source of strength. It should be the same for Christians today. In Matthew 21:22 we read, "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive." We must pray according to the will of God, of course, as 1 John 5:13-16 teaches us. But if we are a people of prayer, think about all the things we can do for God in this world.

If you want to make the devil mad, you need to obey the Gospel now. If you are not a child of God, the best thing you could do to make the devil mad, and to incite him against you, would be to obey now what you know now. The Bible teaches us that today is the day of salvation. In James 4:14 we read, "For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away." We are not promised that we are going to live forever. In fact, we are promised that life is short. In Job 14:1 Job said, "Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble." Proverbs 27:1 says, "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth." In light of the fact that our lives are short, and in light of the fact that the Lord might return at any time, we need to put the emphasis on the word "now." In 2 Corinthians 6:1-2 we read,

"We then, as workers together with Him, also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. For He says, 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

As he quotes from the Old Testament, Paul says that “at an acceptable time,” God had heard His people. But **now** is the day of salvation. It is obedience to the Gospel that saves people from sin. It is obedience to the Gospel that releases people from Satan’s stranglehold on them. In James 1:21 we are told, “Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls.” Romans 1:16 tells us that the Gospel is “the power of God to salvation.” It has the power to free us from Satan and sin. In John 8:32 Jesus said, “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” From what will we be free? We will be free from the death grip that Satan has on us through sin. So, I ask you today: Are you a child of God? Have you ever obeyed the Gospel? Are you sure that you have done what God has told you in the Scriptures to do? Here is what the Bible says a person must do to be saved.

A person must first hear the Word of God. Romans 10:17 says, “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” A person must recognize that the Bible is the only standard in religion today. It is the only guide that can save us. Then a person must believe that Jesus is the Son of God. In John 8:24 Jesus said, “If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.” Once a person believes that Jesus is God’s Son and the Messiah, then he must be willing to repent. The hardest part in the plan of salvation is changing our lives. In Luke 13:3 Jesus said, “Unless you repent you will all likewise perish.” If a person wants to be saved, he must turn from a life of sin and turn to God. In 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 Paul encouraged the people in Thessalonica to “turn from idols to serve the true and living God.” That is what repentance is. It is a turning **from** sin **to** God—and showing by our works that we have truly changed. Then a person must be willing to confess that Jesus is God’s Son. In Romans 10:10 we are told, “With the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” We must say, as the Ethiopian nobleman did in Acts 8, that we believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Then a person must be baptized in water for the remission of his sins. This is the point at which many people stop. In fact, this is the point at which Satan **wants** people to stop. But if you want to be saved, you must be baptized in water. How do we know that? In Acts 2 when the first Gospel sermon was preached, the Jews who had been complicit in the death of Christ cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” (Acts 2:37). They were told, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins” (vs. 38). Jesus said in Mark 16:16, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” In Acts 22:16 Saul was told, “Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.” I plead with you today, if you have never obeyed the Gospel, you can heap coals of fire on the devil’s head by obeying the will of God. You can begin doing right by doing the will of God. I encourage you today to do everything you can to live a righteous life because by doing so, you will make the devil mad.

Narrator accompanied by a cappella singing:

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STUDY QUESTIONS FOR “HOW TO MAKE THE DEVIL MAD”

1. In 1 Chronicles 21:1, what did Satan do that caused God to be displeased with David?
2. In Matthew 4, what did Satan do to Christ?
3. In Luke 22:3, what does the Bible say that Satan did to Judas Iscariot?
4. According to John 13:2, what did Satan tempt Judas to do?
5. According to Paul's statement in 1 Thessalonians 2:18, what effect had Satan had on Paul's work?
6. Psalm 4:4 tells us one thing that we **can** do, and another that we **cannot**. What are those two things?
7. What does 1 Peter 2:21 admonish us to do that will make Satan mad?
8. What does Mark 12:30 admonish us to do that will make Satan mad?
9. What does Hebrews 10:25 admonish us to do that will make Satan mad?
10. What does Matthew 6:33 admonish us to do that will make Satan mad?
11. What does Luke 6:38 admonish us to do that will make Satan mad?
12. What does Matthew 28:19 admonish us to do that will make Satan mad?
13. What did Jesus say in Luke 18:1 that we should do, although it will make Satan mad?
14. What attitude is expressed in the closing words of Matthew 26:39 that, if we exhibit in our lives today, will make Satan mad?
15. What principle is contained in Acts 5:42 that Satan does not want us to put into practice in our lives?
16. What principle is contained in 2 Corinthians 8:5 that Satan does not want us to put into practice in our lives?
17. According to Acts 17:6, what had Christ's disciples done that caused the Jewish leaders of His day to become angry?
18. What was God's point when He told Haggai that the Israelites were making money, but that they were putting it into a bag with holes in the bottom of it (Hag. 1:6-7)?
19. What does James 4:14 tell us about how much time we have in which to defeat Satan?
20. What principle is contained in Colossians 1:28 that, if put into practice in our lives, will make Satan mad?