

IDENTIFYING THE REAL ENEMY

Sylvester Onyemalechi

Christians talk about their enemies and pray wicked prayers for the destruction of their enemies. Everywhere you turn in the church today, you hear people cursing and calling down fire on their enemies, even Christians and congregations that were not in the habit of praying “dangerous” prayers before have now joined in. But, who is the real enemy? Is it the person who takes advantage of the weaknesses and sins in the believer, or the believer who breaks the hedge of God around him through sinful thoughts, habits and character, and opens the door of his life to the enemies seeking opportunity to oppress, frustrate and torment the believer? If the door is not opened to the enemy, he will never triumph over the believer. If the believer does not live carelessly, the devil will not have an entrance into his life.

The real enemy is not the one who takes advantage of an open door, but the evil character and habits that open the door and cause the hedge to be broken, and attract the devil and his agents to prevail over the believer. The wife, who is disrespectful to the husband, abusive and nagging, dirty and lazy and fights the husband at every opposing view, will turn around and blame an enemy outside for her marital failure rather than looking inwards and dealing with the evil within her. The unmarried lady who turn down every proposition for marriage when she was younger because she wants to have more fun with men including married men not minding who she hurts or marriage broken; cursed by many angry, bitter and frustrated house wives whose husbands she distracted from their marriage, turns around now that she is older and no one is showing interest in marrying her to blame an enemy, praying that God will kill the enemy preventing her from getting married. Who do you think is the enemy in this case? The answer is with you. The young man who refuses to work hard at his studies or skill acquisition training, will turn around later to blame an enemy for not passing his exams or having enough patronage since he cannot do anything well. As it is with the three examples given, so it is in many other areas of man’s life. The list is endless. Never forget that what a man sows that he reaps.

We create problems for ourselves, and turn around and blame the devil or an enemy out there. I do realize that we get tempted by the devil, but we are the ones who submit to him, so we will stand before God to give account of our lives. We are responsible for our desires and actions. Stop shifting blame and responsibilities to the enemy. Check your life and resist the devil and he will flee from you. You have power in Christ Jesus to resist temptation and walk uprightly and in integrity. Do it.

The devil will always be the devil and no one else – he will do evil and harm to people as much as he can. His servants and followers will live and act like him – do wickedly. We can’t stop the devil from being evil and doing evil. We can’t stop the wicked and ungodly from doing wickedness and unholy things. The Bible said their weapons against us will

not prosper. The scripture never said they will not forge evil weapons against us. But it did say they will not prevail. What we should be concerned about as believers is not the devil and his evil agents, but what makes them to prevail over us. What makes the promise of protection against their evil attacks from not coming to pass fully in our lives should be our concern. That in my mind is the real enemy. If the enemy within is dead, the enemy without cannot get in and prevail. What paves the way for the enemy to prevail or get at us should be our concern.

Isa 54:17

17 no weapon forged against you will prevail, and you will refute every tongue that accuses you. This is the heritage of the servants of the LORD, and this is their vindication from me," declares the LORD.

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The enemy outside is not the major problem we have. If the doors of our lives are closed to evil, the enemy will never prevail over us. If you don't trust the Lord with all your heart and walk with Him in faithfulness and holiness, the enemy within will keep opening the door for the enemy without to come in. The enemy within is SELF and THE EVIL HABITS AND CHARACTER living in each man. You have to focus on that enemy and fight it with everything you have got. When you win this enemy and shot him down, then you have locked the door of your life and the enemy without can never win over you no matter how much he tries.

When you pray that all your enemies will die, I am sure your mind does not go to the enemy within. It is focused on the outside enemy who is behind all the pains and frustrations of your life. I believe we should direct our entire arsenal on the enemy within. For when we are free and have won control over our thoughts, emotions and will and brought them under full control of the new nature and Holy Spirit living within us, then we have rendered the enemy without powerless and ineffective in our lives and affairs. God will always keep His word and protect us to the maximum as we walk with Him in total obedience and submission; and you will not have to worry over your enemies or who is attacking you or what they are planning as is the preoccupation of many Christians today.

Understanding the hedge

A hedge is a thicket of thorn-bushes or other shrubs or small trees planted round a field or farm to fence it, or in rows, to separate the parts of a garden.

To hedge is to surround for defense; to fortify. The hedge of God around the believer is for defense against the wicked imaginations of the devil and his cohorts.

Satan accused God of not allowing him to test and afflict Job, and that is the reason why Job is faithful to God. The hedge of God restricted the devil in the life of Job. In the same

way, the hedge of God will restrict your enemies in your life. But, when the hedge is broken or removed, the enemy will have a free access to your life.

Job 1:9-12

9 "Does Job fear God for nothing?" Satan replied. 10 "Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. 11 But stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face." 12 The LORD said to Satan, "Very well, then, everything he has is in your hands, but on the man himself do not lay a finger." Then Satan went out from the presence of the LORD.

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God in response to Satan's argument lowered the defense (hedge), and granted him access to Job, but placed a restriction on him – he was not to touch Job's life only his possessions. And it was so. God is watching and protecting you and no enemy will win over you until the hedge is broken or removed completely. God is defending you, so do not give too much attention to the enemies outside but be concerned about the things that lower, break or remove the hedge.

When the hedge is taken away, the enemy will have full access to your life and trample upon you. The hedge is broken or removed when God is angry with you or to prove your love, loyalty and faithfulness as in Job's case. Continuous sin and acts of disloyalty make God to lower or remove the hedge. When the hedge is broken or removed, rain (blessing) is withheld, and hardship experienced.

Isa 5:5-7

5 Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed; I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled. 6 I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briers and thorns will grow there. I will command the clouds not to rain on it." 7 The vineyard of the LORD Almighty is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah are the garden of his delight. And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

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Three major things happen when the hedge is broken or removed:

1. Destruction takes place – losses, ruin, death and destruction happens in the life of the one who broke the hedge.
2. Oppression takes place – His life, business, marriage, health, career, etc get oppressed.
3. Rain is withheld – Rain which is symbolic blessing is withheld, as a result, life becomes hard, suffocating and fruitless.

It is very clear that God will not allow the enemy to prevail over you as long as your life is pleasing to Him. Your greatest responsibility is to strive to please God with your life continually and you will be protected for the glory of God. Sinful life breaks the hedge of God around you and your family. When the hedge is broken, a serpent (devil) will bite.

Eccl 10:8

8 He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.

KJV

The devil cannot break the hedge of God around you; only you can, through your own sinful acts, thereby provoking God's anger and displeasure. Those after you will never succeed until the hedge is lowered or removed. Your concern should be living the life that will keep the hedge around you up and working perfectly. Don't give your time to worrying about those against you or what they are planning now. Just live for God in truth and in spirit and you will remain safe. Holiness protects. The life of complete faith in God and in His word makes a man safe and secure.

Conclusion

Kill the enemy within you that wants to break down God's defense in your life and open the door for the enemy without to gain entrance into your life. Let the Word of God have its free course in your life – let it change you completely. Do not restrict God in your life; let Him touch every area of your life. The weakness you refuse or fail to conquer today will open your life up for destruction.

Kill the enemy called self. Let the new nature take over. The Lord Jesus advised us to learn of him for He is lowly (humble) in heart, for then we shall find rest for our souls.

Matt 11:28-30

28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

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Submit to the word of God and let it change you completely. Feed on it daily and pattern your life to what it teaches and you will strengthen and keep the hedge.