

The Most important Question!

Scripture: II Corinthians 11:14; “satan masquerades as an angel of light”.
Genesis 3:1-11

“I know some good games we could play,” said the cat.
“I know some new tricks,” Said the cat in the hat.
“A lot of good tricks I will show them to you.
Your mother will not mind at all if I do.”
Then Sally and I Did not know what to say.
Our Mother was out of the house for the day.
But our fish said, No! No! Make that cat go away!
Tell that cat in the hat you do not want to play.
He should not be here. He should not be about.
He should not be here when your mother is out.”

At first I thought that this book was a good story to teach children not to give in on peer pressure, but as I read through it I was a little disappointed as the cat and his friends moved in on the kids and finally almost destroyed their house, and especially when the cat came back and cleaned everything up and put everything back before their mother returned. That was until I read the last question in the book. Dr Seuss once again nailed good theology in this book “The Cat in the Hat,” so let’s take a few minutes to look at his theology.

- I. Satan’s ways are very deceitful. (Jesus called him the father of lies.)
 - A. He loves to make sin look good. (He candy coats it.)
 1. His approach in the story was to say it will be fun’
 2. Don’t you deserve fun on a rainy day?
 3. No harm, your Mother won’t mind.
 - B. Satan’s approach to Adam and Eve was the same.
 1. Your missing out.
 2. God doesn’t want you to be smart like him.
 3. Following his instructions will not be fun.
 - C. He loves to drown out the voice of reason.
 1. The only voice to speak out was the gold fish.
 2. This probably symbolizes our conscience.
 3. When were tempted we hear it calling out but pay little attention to it.
 4. Many people don’t listen to their inner or outer self.
 - a. What did mom and dad say when we were growing up.
 - b. What did we learn in church.
 - c. What have we learned from our or other peoples experience.

5. Satan just calls out a little louder, they won't mind, enjoy it.
6. They are just old fashioned, they don't want you to have fun.
7. It won't harm you, everybody else does it.
8. This speech was broadcast by legendary ABC Radio commentator Paul Harvey on April 3, 1965: 48 years ago!

If I were the Devil . . . I mean, if I were the Prince of Darkness, I would of course, want to engulf the whole earth in darkness. I would have a third of its real estate and four-fifths of its population, but I would not be happy until I had seized the ripest apple on the tree, so I should set about however necessary to take over the United States. I would begin with a campaign of whispers. With the wisdom of a serpent, I would whisper to you as I whispered to Eve: "Do as you please." "Do as you please." To the young, I would whisper, "The Bible is a myth." I would convince them that man created God instead of the other way around. I would confide that what is bad is good, and what is good is "square". In the ears of the young marrieds, I would whisper that work is debasing, that cocktail parties are good for you. I would caution them not to be extreme in religion, in patriotism, in moral conduct. And the old, I would teach to pray. I would teach them to say after me: "Our Father, which art in Washington" . . .

If I were the devil, I'd educate authors in how to make lurid literature exciting so that anything else would appear dull and uninteresting. I'd threaten T.V. with dirtier movies and vice versa. And then, if I were the devil, I'd get organized. I'd infiltrate unions and urge more loafing and less work, because idle hands usually work for me. I'd peddle narcotics to whom I could. I'd sell alcohol to ladies and gentlemen of distinction. And I'd tranquilize the rest with pills. If I were the devil, I would encourage schools to refine young intellects but neglect to discipline emotions . . . let those run wild. I would designate an atheist to front for me before the highest courts in the land and I would get preachers to say "she's right." With flattery and promises of power, I could get the courts to rule what I construe as against God and in favor of pornography, and thus, I would evict God from the courthouse, and then from the school house, and then from the houses of Congress and then, in His own churches I would substitute psychology for religion, and I would deify science because that way men would become smart enough to create super weapons but not wise enough to control them.

If I were Satan, I'd make the symbol of Easter an egg, and the symbol of Christmas, a bottle. If I were the devil, I would take from those who have and I would give to those who wanted, until I had killed the incentive of the ambitious. And then, my police state would force everybody back to work. Then, I could separate families, putting children in uniform, women in coal mines, and objectors in slave camps. In other words, if I were Satan, I'd just keep on doing what he's doing.

Paul Harvey, Good Day.

- D. The results can be and are a complete diaster.
 1. In the story the whole house is torn up.

2. And then it got worse.
3. So he brought in thing #1 and thing #2,
- E. For Adam and Eve and all of humanity it was total destruction.
 1. Life as God intended was destroyed.
 2. They were cast out of the Garden.
 3. Their innocence and holiness was gone.
- F. Then came the cover-up.
 1. The cat came back to clean up his mess.
 2. He called it a trick, some people still fall for his tricks.
 3. He does everything possible to make sin and it's effects look good.
 4. Adam and Eve tried hiding from God, but he found them.
 5. The greatest thing they had going for them was they knew they had done wrong.
 6. Satan wants us to feel like we haven't done anything to be forgiven for.
 7. He loves to sear our conscious. And he has done a good job.
 8. A number of years ago there was a country song that said "If loving you is wrong, I don't want to be right."
 9. Life today, thanks to satan is all about self gratification.
 10. And he doesn't wait around.
 11. For years scientists were puzzled about apples that had worms in them but had no breaks in the surface of the apple! How did they get inside when there did not appear any outward signs of entrance? What they discovered was that a certain worm lays its eggs right on the apple blossom in Spring, and as the apple develops it encases the egg right from the beginning. Later when the apple nears its complete maturing process so does the insect egg, it hatches and eats its way out from the inside!

II. Which brings us to the real message of the book.

- A. I was sort of disappointed as I reread this book this past week
 1. Of course I was reading it from a completely different perspective than I did years ago.
 2. It's emphasis was how to have fun and some of them was hard to pass up.
 3. And it also showed how weak we can be and if we don't speak up it's just as bad for us as well.
 4. Satan is hard to ignore, but James tells us in the Bible "Resist the devil and he will flee from you.
 5. You can't compromise with satan. It's like compromising with a bear in the woods.
 6. A hunter raised his rifle and took careful aim at a large bear. As the hunter was about to pull the trigger the bear spoke in a soft soothing voice, "Isn't it better to talk than to shoot? What do you want? Let's negotiate the matter." Lowering his rifle, the

hunter replied, "I want a fur coat." "Good," said the bear, "that is a negotiable question. I only want a full stomach, so let us negotiate a compromise."

7. They sat down to negotiate and after a time the bear walked away alone. The negotiations had been successful. The bear had a full stomach, and the hunter had his fur coat!
 8. Satan says to you, "Let us negotiate." But there are some things that cannot be negotiable. We cannot compromise the church with the world. Christ and His church deserve our very best and utmost loyalty.
 9. The one I like best is the two men who encounter a bear and started to run away the bear in pursuit. One of the men stopped to tie his shoe lace the other said what are you doing, it wont help you we can't outrun a bear. He said I don't need to out run the bear I just need to out run you.
 10. With friends like that.
 11. But unless your like the man in this story you should run away from satan and temptation as fast as you can.
 12. A few minutes before the services started, the church people were sitting in their pews and talking. Suddenly, Satan appeared at the front of the church. Everyone started screaming and running for the front entrance, trampling each other in a frantic effort to get away from the evil one. Soon everyone had exited the church except for one elderly gentleman who sat calmly in his pew without moving, unconcerned to the fact that the devil was in his presence. So Satan walked up to the old man and said, "Don't you know who I am?" The man replied, "Yep, your Satan." "Aren't you afraid of me?" Satan asked. "No, sure ain't" said the man. "Don't you realize what I can do to you?" asked Satan. "I know what you can do to me," replied the old man. "And you're still not afraid?" asked Satan. "Nope." A little perturbed, Satan asked, "Well, why aren't you afraid of me?" The man calmly replied, "Well, I've been married to your sister for over 48 years."
- B. As I reflected back on the story I realized that Sally and her brother had never really participated.
1. The cat had came in uninvited and had run rough shod over them, they had been bystanders.
 2. The boy even stopped the things #1 and #2 from doing more damage.
 3. But their main motivation would have been that their mom was coming home shortly. They of course would get the blame. They would be the one's punished.
- C. That's the way it happened in the garden as well. Satan didn't stay around to take the blame, he had slithered away.
1. Eve didn't invite him or ask him for advice, he just showed up.

2. So Adam blamed Eve and Eve tried to blame the snake, but each were responsible for their own part.
 3. When God comes around we don't have a leg to stand on, of course neither did the snake.
- D. But then when I thought about the book, especially the last couple of pages I believe I saw what Dr. Seuss was getting at.
1. It says "Then our mother came in and she said to us two,
"Did you have any fun? Tell me what did you do,
And Sally and I did not know what to say.
Should we tell her the things that went on that day?
Should we tell her about it? Now what should we do?
Well..... what would you do if your Mother asked you?"
- E. Well the Bible has the answer: I 1 John 1:8-2:2; 8-10 If we claim that we're free of sin, we're only fooling ourselves. A claim like that is errant nonsense. On the other hand, if we admit our sins—make a clean breast of them—he won't let us down; he'll be true to himself. He'll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing. If we claim that we've never sinned, we out-and-out contradict God—make a liar out of him. A claim like that only shows off our ignorance of God. 2 1-2 I write this, dear children, to guide you out of sin. But if anyone does sin, we have a Priest-Friend in the presence of the Father: Jesus Christ, righteous Jesus. When he served as a sacrifice for our sins, he solved the sin problem for good—not only ours, but the whole world's.
- F. Martin Luther had a dream in which he stood on the day of judgment before God Himself -- and Satan was there to accuse him. When Satan opened his books full of accusations, he pointed to transgression after transgression of which Luther was guilty. As the proceedings went on, Luther's heart sank in despair. Then he remembered the cross of Jesus -- and turning upon Satan, he said, "There is one entry which you have not made in your books, Satan." "What is that?" retorted the Devil. And Luther answered, "It is this -- that Christ died for my sins."