

David—The Target: Your Will

1 Chronicles 21:1-2, 7-8, 14-19

Eve—Target: The Mind

Weapon: Lies

Purpose: To make you ignorant of God's will

Defense: The Word of God

Satan's first attack was on Eve's thinking, not her actions.

He twisted God's Word, planting doubt and deception to make God's blessing seem to be restrictive.

"God gave Adam the Garden of Eden rent-free! What more could you ask for? You guessed it—one more tree! For the record, there are twenty-three thousand varieties of trees in the world. Thousands of them are fruit trees- orange, almond, cherry, mango, coconut, cashew, and olive, to name a few. The apple tree alone comes in more than one hundred varieties! My point? Adam could have eaten different fruit from a different tree every day for at least three years! Did he really need one more?"¹

This deceptive conversation led her to take away, add to, and change God's Word, making truth negotiable.

The believer's mind is where God reveals His will and where Satan seeks to confuse and corrupt it, making the mind a battlefield.

Victory comes by renewing the mind with Scripture and holding fast to the mind of Christ.

Job—Target: The Body

Weapon: Suffering

Purpose: To make you impatient with God's will

Defense: The imparted grace of God

In the ultimate cosmic showdown between God's servant and the destroyer, Satan attacked Job's body to shake his loyalty to God.

Job's integrity was tested through loss, pain, and misunderstanding.

¹ Mark Batterson, *Play the Man: Becoming the Man God Created You to Be* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2017), 94-95.

Satan's goal was to create the perfect recipe of disasters to make Job impatient with God so he'd curse God and quit.

True integrity holds firm even when the body breaks.

Impatience is a mark of immaturity and unbelief; it leads to costly mistakes.

Job's defense was God's grace, trusting his sufficiency when explanations failed.

Wiersbe opens his study of David with a question that doesn't seem all that thought-provoking, until you stop and consider it.

"What was David's great sin?"²

Most of us would quickly jump on answering this one in Sunday school by saying: ADULTERY and then MURDER!

Wiersbe does not diminish the depravity of these sins.

He points to a sin David committed that had even greater consequences, resulting in 70,000 people losing their lives.

[Read 1 Chronicles 21:1-2, 7-8, 14-19]

"Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to count the people of Israel." **1 Chronicles 21:1**

"This command was also evil in God's sight, so he afflicted Israel. David said to God, 'I have sinned greatly because I have done this thing. Now, please take away your servant's guilt, for I've been very foolish.'" **1 Chronicles 21:7-8**

I. Satan's Target—Your Will.

Satan bypassed the mind and the body and targeted David's will.

David was successful in war with many victories.

The census was not bad in and of itself; however, the motive behind the counting was rotten.

"David's own motivation—that was evil and, as Joab dared point out to the king, contributed to 'bring guilt on Israel.'

² Warren Wiersbe, *The Strategy of Satan: How to Detect & Defeat Him* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, INC., 1979), 49.

David seems to have ordered this because he was placing his trust in 'multiplied troops' rather than in the promises of God."³

The will in the life of most believers is underestimated.

Many have excelled cognitively in meeting the expectations of religion but have failed to live a Spirit-willed life.

"The Christian life is basically a matter of the will. We are to love the Lord with all our heart (the emotions), and our mind (the intellect), and our strength (the will)."⁴

"You were saved by saying 'I will!'"

As you responded to God's gracious call, and you grow and serve God by saying 'Thy will!'"⁵

"On Halloween night in 1900, a ten-year-old boy named Ike wanted to go trick-or-treating with his older brothers.

When his parents told him he was too young, Ike flew into an uncontrollable rage.

He ran out the front door and punched an apple tree until his knuckles were raw and red from blood.

Ike's father lashed him with a hickory stick and sent him to his room.

He was still sobbing in his pillow an hour later when his mother walked into his room and sat down in a rocking chair next to his bed.

Ida Eisenhower was the oracle of the family, repeating maxims like, 'God deals the cards, and we play them.'

In this instance, she cited Proverbs 16:32: He that conquerth his soul is greater than he that taketh a city."⁶

If we do not submit our will to God, our will turns inward—driven by pride, fueled by selfishness, and expressed in sin.

³ Payne, J. Barton. 1988. "1, 2 Chronicles." In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job*, edited by Frank E. Gaebelin, 4:407. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House.

⁴ Warren Wiersbe, *The Strategy of Satan*, 52.

⁵ Ibid., 52.

⁶ Mark Batterson, *Play the Man*, 108.

II. Satan's Weapon—Pride.

The weapon Satan uses to tempt your will is your pride.

Riding high on his victories, David's heart swelled with pride, and that's when Satan stepped in to exploit it.

Wiersbe says, "To some degree pride enters into all of Satan's temptations."⁷

"Pride is a weapon that Satan wields with great skill.

This explains why Peter writes,

'God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time.' **1 Peter 5:5-6**⁸

Satan's desire is not simply that you sin, but that you exalt yourself instead of allowing God to exalt you.

In doing so, we commit two evils: we yield our will to pride and embrace a cheap substitute for true exaltation.

David brought death to Israel with the potential of much more had it not been for God's mercy, just because he was a proud man.

Satan is not satisfied with just destroying a believer with pride, but pride is a great weapon he uses to destroy the church from within.

III. Satan's Purpose—To Make You Independent of God's Will.

It's man's unbroken freedom of will that makes it possible for him to turn from God's will.

And it's against that will that Satan launches his attack, seeking to make man independent of God.

"For though they knew God, they did not glorify him as God or show gratitude. Instead, their thinking became worthless, and their senseless hearts were darkened. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served what has been created instead of the Creator, who is praised forever. Amen." **Romans 1:21, 25**

The same freedom of will that makes love and obedience unto God possible also makes disobedience possible by turning our worship towards ourselves instead of God.

⁷ Warren Wiersbe, *The Strategy of Satan*, 54.

⁸ Ibid., 55.

When we act independently, “I’ve got this” or “I’ll do it my way,” we’re aligning with the very attitude that caused Satan’s own fall.

Isaiah 14:13–14, describing Lucifer’s pride, he said:

“I will ascend to the heavens”

“I will set up my throne above the stars of God”

“I will make myself like the Most High.”

Five times in those two verses, Satan asserts his own will over God’s.

He wasn’t content to serve under God’s authority; he wanted to rule beside or even above Him.

That self-exalting independence, “I don’t need God, I’ll be my own authority.”

“This subtle sin of pride keeps feeding itself and getting stronger... David was not guilty of ‘the lust of the eyes’, or ‘the lust of the flesh’, but was guilty of ‘the pride of life’... Pride is when we try to use God to accomplish our own selfish purposes. God becomes our heavenly slave and we tell him what he must do!”⁹

“For everything in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and **the pride in one’s possessions** — is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God remains forever.” **1 John 2:16-17**

IV. Your Defense—The Indwelling Spirit of God.

“Only God the Holy Spirit, working in you, can control your will and enable you to please God.”¹⁰

“Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present **your bodies** as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of **your mind**, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.” **Romans 12:1-2**

It’s important to note that when we give God our bodies—where Satan seeks to inflict suffering—our minds—where he works to keep us ignorant—and our wills—where he tempts us to act independently of God—we close every avenue of his attack.

The Holy Spirit will work out the will of God in our lives, and he “will be able to work in you and give you victory.”¹¹

⁹ Ibid., 59.

¹⁰ Ibid., 61.

¹¹ Ibid., 65-66.