



The Devil Made Me Do It

Message Notes, April 29, 2018

This week's hashtag topic is #TheDevilMadeMeDoIt, inspired by a phrase often employed by the comedian Flip Wilson.

Although it's convenient and sometimes humorous to say the devil made me do it, it is an outright lie. The devil does not make us do anything. We are born with sin – you can see this by watching a 2-year old. We don't have to be taught to be mean to steal or to lie.

"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

The devil is real!

He hates the things of God; Jesus, love, people, the truth ...

The devil hates you!

The devil wants you to blame things on him, rather than facing them, because it stunts our growth.

What about being possessed by the devil? Based on Greek translation, this idea is more likely to have meant oppressed, which is different from the devil controlling us directly.

However, we are so weak that the devil doesn't need to possess us, he only needs to suggest something to us and we are lead astray. Eve chose to take the fruit, after the devil lied to her about it, and what God had said about it.

Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death" (James 1:12-15).

Our desire makes us do it – instead of blaming the devil, we need to:

- Own up to it
- Realize how Satan works
- Realize how we can overcome Satan through what God has already provided

Blaming the devil does not help; look at Adam and Eve, who blamed the devil but were kicked out of the garden any way.

The devil works through the power of suggestion, the power of deception and the power of agreement.

"He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).



The devil does not suggest to you the truth! He will not tell you that you are a redeemed child of God, that Jesus loves you, that Jesus paid the price for your sins.

When we believe the lies and suggestions and agree with the devil, we form a pact that leads us away from God and allows us to be less than God intended for us to be. Consider, for example, phrases such as: "Go get what you deserve"... "She's better than your wife" ... "You don't have to pay those taxes" ... "I'm never going to be good enough" ... "I'll never love again" ... We make these agreements with the devil without even knowing we are making them. They give the devil a foothold and only have power when we agree to them. The power is not from the devil.

The devil has the power of accusation. See Luke 4: While Jesus is fasting, the devil comes to tempt him at his weakest point and accuses Jesus of being hungry, of not having any power, of being too safe and comfortable. Interestingly, these are all things that we struggle with today.

- Hunger: We don't understand the power in the physical discipline of fasting. When we fast, we focus on Jesus because he is the only thing that will sustain us.
- Power: We need to make a commitment to not bow down to anything except God.
- Comfort: We convince ourselves that we need money, things, etc. Satan tells us that God wants our money, but the truth is that God doesn't need our money.

Jesus responded by speaking directly from the Bible. He didn't play games with the devil; he didn't agree with him; he simply spoke from God's word.

#TheDevilsALiar. This is the good news. Blessed is the person who remains steadfast under trial

Realize 3 things:

1. Who has the power: The Holy Spirit – Jesus said he will send us the counselor.
2. Obedience: Here am I, send me; here is all that I am, Lord.
3. Realize your agreements and release them.

Challenge: Ask the Holy Spirit to take every area of your life. Renounce the agreements that you have made. Allow the Holy Spirit to work in your life and make you whole. Look into the wholeness ministry provided by the church.

We're going to love you and there's nothing you can do about it!

Discussion Questions

1. What lies have you heard from the devil?
2. Have you become aware of some agreements you may have made with the devil? How have you broken those agreements?
3. What about fasting? Have you tried it? How did it go? Discuss fasting as a group, consider using the following resource, maybe fast for one meal and discuss at an upcoming session:
<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/fasting-for-beginners>
4. The word is powerful for answering the devil's lies. Tell about a time when you did this. How are you strengthening the ability to speak to the devil from the Bible?