

that will get by. Failing that, if you should actually sense an obligation or, worse, a joyful desire to do “any” good works, then he will lure you to feel responsible to do them “all.” And nothing is more useful to him than for you to feel that your works are making you righteous before God.

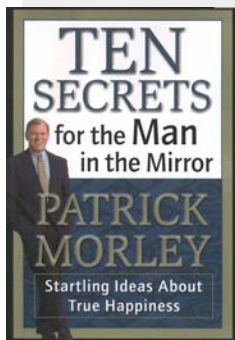
#### APPLICATION

1. What areas mentioned in these two articles do you need to pay attention to? Where is the devil attacking you? How can you better recognize and resist those attacks?

#### **Read What the Buzz is About!!**

Patrick Morley's new book, *Ten Secrets for the Man in the Mirror* is here! Discover for yourself what men all over America are learning about what true happiness is and where we can find it.

Hardcover Book #2100800 \$13



Business leader, author, and speaker, Patrick Morley helps men to think more deeply about their lives, to be reconciled with Christ, and to be equipped for a larger impact on the world.

©2000. Patrick M. Morley. All rights reserved. This may be reproduced with proper attribution for non-commercial purposes.

**Would you like three sample monthly issues of this complimentary newsletter or information about our dynamic, church based men's events and follow-up? Call us at 1-800-929-2536.**

*A Look in the Mirror™* is distributed at no charge to our ministry partners. Additional copies are 25¢ each, with bulk pricing for large orders.

**MAN**  
— IN THE —  
**MIRROR**

180 Wilshire Blvd.  
Casselberry, FL 32707  
Catalog Orders: 1-800-929-2536 ext. 2  
For more info: (407) 331-0095 Fax: (407) 331-7839  
[www.maninthemirror.org](http://www.maninthemirror.org)

## Understanding The Devil

Patrick Morley

If Jesus is real and tells the truth, then the devil is real and tells lies.

Here are two short articles about the devil from two very different angles. Since first reading *The Screwtape Letters* 20 years ago, I have played with two imaginary devils of my own. They're introduced in "The Memo." Let me know if you want to hear more about them.

The second article, "The Devil's Two Strategies," asks us to consider how an actual devil may work.

#### THE MEMO

*(Note to reader: I would not be surprised if Satan, like Jesus, sends out his disciples two by two. Sloth and disease—Slugbug and Ickgerm—were so sent. What follows is an imaginary castigation for poor performance and a few devilish instructions.)*

From: Lord Satan

To: Slugbug and Ickgerm

My dear malevolent minions,

Your recent report reflects a discouraging increase in desertions to the Enemy at your assigned post, Main Street First Church.

Do you not remember my email that fuel supplies down here are in desperately short supply?

I know you want to make a name for yourselves—that's one of the things I most admire about you two—but you are approaching it altogether wrong.

You are looking for flamboyant, sensational deceptions at the expense of more dependable lies which have down through the ages beguiled men to abandon, *argh*, the truth. Do you recall nothing from your odious hours of study at the Academy of Demonology?

Your assignment was to upset the rhythm of their lives...to keep them on a spiritual roller coaster. Even if one of your charges makes a foray into the

enemy's camp, all is not lost. After the initial euphoria of their desertion to the enemy wears off, you can woo most mortals to a quick return to their old habit patterns. They do, after all, have mortgages to pay, kids to be gotten off to school, and the inevitable exhaustion of responsibilities. These temporal concerns alone are usually enough to distract the bipeds from searching any further. Be sure to use these distractions to your maximum advantage at every opportunity.

Yes, Slugbug and Ickgerm, you must at all costs keep them overly busy. This diversion leads them to not see a connection between what the preacher says on Sunday morning and how they live come Monday morning.

You must encourage them to keep everything in its proper compartment. *Spiritual* life is what happens when they drive onto the church property, and *real* life is what happens everywhere else. This is done easily enough, for at the early stages of their desertion they are like a clan of stupid hillbillies consumed with selfish ambitions, envy, and vainglory.

Feed their greed; you will keep them in need. If you should let them awaken to the sentiment that they ought to seek the Enemy's will in "all of life," you will find yourself smack in the middle of a raging spiritual battle. Incidentally, if you can lead them to an outright rejection of the Enemy's will at this point you will have reached a crowning achievement, bringing you laurels of empty praise at the Annual Demon's Banquet.

Of course, you do remember that the Enemy will not slumber through all this, nor is he unaware of our schemes. He will lure them with promised blessings but, fortunately, only at the cost of self-denial, which they are wont to do.

Slugbug and Ickgerm, at all costs keep them overly busy.

Do by all means keep them overly preoccupied with worldly affairs. If the bipeds should ever actually find time to delve into the Enemy Manual, well then, I'm afraid you may lose them for good. And so, contemptible worms, keep these bipeds "content" – in the shallow sense of having more things than their neighbor – by all means necessary. Do not ever let them even have a hint of discontent with the superficial state of their souls. For out of this humility they may very well find their spiritual stride.

And that, of course, would mean your downfall, as well.

As always, I remain,

deceitfully yours,

Lord Satan

## THE DEVIL'S TWO STRATEGIES

The first activity of the devil is to persuade you that he doesn't *actually* exist. Even better if you don't believe in him but say you do. Failing that, he hopes you will find him to be a funny clown and, therefore, harmless. Or, that he has power you cannot resist.

This should come as no surprise, for the devil has two strategies for every situation. One is to keep you away from a thing and, if he cannot, the other is to ruin you with too little or too much of it.

Take prayer for daily bread. The first enticement is to keep you away from praying for today at all. The devil would rather have you pray (or grovel) about tomorrow, or wallow in self-pity about yesterday. Failing that, if you would pray for today, he will entice you to be monkish and deny yourself daily bread (in this way deceiving you to think yourself more spiritual than your neighbor). And if you won't fall for that one then he can always resort to the faithful standby—suggesting you pray for two loaves of bread, not one. Then when you wake up the next morning to bread spoiled by maggots he will cackle in delight.

Consider how we view others. Here again the devil has two great strategies. The first is to persuade you to despise Christians for fear you might become one. Failing that, if you should become one, his second strategy—his backup plan—is to persuade you to despise those who are not. And if you should not despise them, perhaps you will smother them with your favorite texts (too much). Or, feed them so much soup that you have no time to feed their soul (too little).

Take the subject of righteousness. The devil hates a righteous person just as much as an unrighteous one. The latter, of course, is his companion. But the former can often become an ally—a fifth columnist, if you please, to infiltrate the Christ Camp with smugness and pride.

Self-righteous deeds not only alienate men from God but also from each other.

Too little righteousness is a very good thing—to seduce a man to a moral failure will win accolades for ambitious young devils. But too much righteousness is even better. For unrighteous deeds alienate men from God, but self-righteous deeds not only alienate men from God but also from each other, spoiling the lovely little community of saints the devil so detests.

And now let's consider good works. The devil has two great strategies for good works. The first is to so preoccupy you with "self" that you would do nothing at all. But if you should come under the sway of a convicting sermon and want to do something, the devil will beguile you to want the minimum