

THE

HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." [Luke 10:2]

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THE TWENTIETH CENTURY ... SATAN'S "MOMENT IN THE SUN"

Sin has plagued man for thousands of years, ever since Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden fruit. And at the root of sin is Satan. He constantly tempts man to sin. And we must never underestimate his power. He has always had great power in this world, and is even referred to as *"the god of this world"* (II Cor. 4:4). John tells us that Satan has three ways in which he employs the things of the world to tempt us. These are: *"the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life"* (I John 2:16a).

We can see Satan employing these three methods in his temptation of Eve (Gen. 3:6a).

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He also used these three same approaches with Jesus in Matthew chapter four. All of Satan's deceits can be placed into one or more of these three categories. And there is no "new" temptation today that will not fit into at least one of them. But I believe that today he has at his disposal so many more weapons which he can use against man. It is often said we live in the "age of technology." But to me it would be better stated that we live in the "age of Satan." Not that technology itself is bad, but it has provided the Devil with so many more ways to allure us toward the pleasures of this world, and to make us forget about God.

Let us compare our lives today with those of people who lived only one hundred years ago. We have much more free time than they ever did, yet we never seem to have time to do the Lord's work. Technology is responsible for both ends of this paradox. Innovation has touched just about every aspect of human existence in this country. We now have electrically powered devices to wash our clothes and dishes, to give us light at night, to warm and cool our homes, and to cook our food. We have gasoline-powered machines to get us from one place to another, to mow our grass, to plow our fields and to do so many other things. All of these things save us so much more time than we will ever realize. But what can we do with all of this free time? Well, technology also has the answer to this question. We can watch TV, listen to the radio, read a book, magazine or newspaper, go to the movies, go for a drive in our car, or do any of a number of things that weren't available to those of the last century. Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that there is anything wrong with these items, in principle. But the Devil uses all of these to occupy our time so we can then say, "I just don't have the time", when someone mentions the church.

I said there was nothing wrong with any of these items "in principle". But there is a lot wrong with some of them in the way they are used. Television has become a pipeline of filth today. A show doesn't have to contain vulgar language or nudity to be improper for Christians to watch. Many of the plots and storylines of shows are totally contrary to the way godly people should live. And let me ask you this, if you know you shouldn't live a certain way, then why do you want to watch someone else do it? I just do not believe a Christian can say that he is "entertained" by watching sin. And obviously no one would sit down and watch a program without hoping to get some degree of pleasure from watching it. But please notice what Paul said in Romans 1:32. *"Who knowing the judgement of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."* Paul rebukes the Romans for having *"pleasure in them that do them."* If you read the preceding verses you will find a whole list of sins. He tells us that it is not only wrong to commit these sins, but also to have pleasure in the type of people that commit these sins. And every time we tune in certain programs we are just opening the door and inviting some of the vilest sinners to come in and visit with our families for a while. And parents, I plead with you to think of what will be in your child's mind, by the time he is grown, if you allow him to sit in front of the television watching whatever he wishes. You're just letting your child spend time with the Devil.

The telephone is another modern item that can be of great help to man, if it is not abused. But how often do people use it to gossip? And do you think that a parent of a hundred years ago had to worry about their child getting one

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of these "phone sex" numbers? Again the Devil has corrupted the simplest things.

One hundred years ago could someone walk into a store and buy pornographic magazines or X-rated movies? And although man has known about drugs for thousands of years, did a parent of a hundred years ago have to worry about their pre-teenage children becoming drug addicts or alcoholics? It seems like "sin" is for sale these days. Children can walk into music stores and buy records that contain lyrics that would, as the old saying goes, "make a sailor blush." It's just too easy for anyone to buy things that they ought not to have.

One hundred years ago it was scandalous for two people to engage in sexual relations before marriage. But today, in most circles, children are ridiculed by their peers if they haven't done so by the time they are fifteen or sixteen. People today disgrace God's sacred institution of marriage by "living together." Once upon a time divorce was scandalous. But today people think nothing of it. You're average if you get divorced. What has happened to morals? What has happened to people's respect for right and wrong? Does anyone even remember what the Bible is?

Just a few years ago someone's life was in danger if it was discovered they were homosexual. But now it's nothing to see men

walk down the street holding hands. And certain religious denominations have even "ordained" homosexuals to be ministers! Where does it end?

We are supposed to live in the "modern" world. We are supposed to be advanced. But it seems to me that we are going backward instead of forward. The world may laugh at Christians and call us old-fashioned now, but on the Day of Judgement, I wonder what good their technology will do them?

Technology, in and of itself, is not bad. But the Devil has used it to distract people from what really matters. They have lost sight of what life is really all about. They are so caught up in our fast paced, get ahead at any cost, society that they have lost touch with reality. But do not allow yourself to be blinded by *"the god of this world"*. Open your heart and mind to God.

I believe that everyone can see the rapid decay that has set in upon our society. And it will only get worse as long as people keep rejecting God's way. His way is the best way and the only way. It is not necessary to reject all things new and modern, as some people do, but we need to be careful to USE these things, and not to ABUSE them.

The reason why I say that today is Satan's "moment in the sun" is that he has such a choke hold on the world today. He has so many "toys" that he can amuse people with. And what about the church? Where is that precious institution that Jesus purchased with His blood? It's almost obscured by the chaos of modern "christianity". The Devil has managed to spread so many false doctrines today, that he has people so confused they don't know which way to turn. Satan is using every trick and lie he has up his sleeve. He

knows his time is almost up. But before the Lord puts an end to it all, He is allowing Satan his "moment in the sun!"

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SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Who laughed when she was told she would bear a son?
2. For how long did God give the land of Canaan to Abram and his heirs?
3. What does Peter say is ahead for the heavens and earth?
4. What name is written upon the forehead of the woman in Revelation 17?
5. How did Joab get the position of commander-in-chief?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH ...

and remember last month's questions?

1. Where does every good and perfect gift originate? FROM THE FATHER ABOVE (Jas. 1:17)
2. What did the Lord allow the Israelites to do when attacking Ai, that they could not do when attacking Jericho? TAKE THE PLUNDER AND LIVESTOCK (Josh. 8:2)
3. Before Paul became a Christian, in what religion was he involved? JUDAISM (Gal. 1:13)
4. In which book of the Bible are the Ten Commandments first recorded? EXODUS (ch. 20)
5. When Isaac said Rebekah was his sister, how did people find out he was lying? HE WAS SEEN 'SPORTING' WITH REBEKAH (Gen. 26:8)

CHRIST IN THE BIBLE

The story of the Messiah continues in the last historical books of the Old Testament: Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. In our last studies we witnessed the captivity of Judah. The next seventy years are spent in exile at Babylon but it is the promise of a Redeemer that will lead God's people back to Jerusalem.

EZRA is a book written about the return of the Jews to Jerusalem. The central character, Ezra, is a famous scribe and priest. Through the zeal of this one man we gain further insight into the work of the Christ to come. Ezra tells us about his efforts to restore spirituality and morality among a lamented people. He tells us about the rebuilding of the Temple under the leadership of Zerubbabel, noting that Zerubbabel himself is a part of the Messianic line. Ezra tells us about overcoming obstacles and the work of forgiveness that typifies the Messiah. Truly Ezra was doing his share in preparing the way for the coming Lord.

The book of NEHEMIAH is a sequel to Ezra. Nehemiah completes the return of the Jews to Zion. He is the last outstanding leader in the long history of the Jewish people. When we see Nehemiah, we see a portrayal of Christ. He revives and reforms God's people. He has a specific mission and fulfills it. He constantly prays to God and when his course of action is clear, he acts promptly. We now notice that after Nehemiah's work, everything is restored except the King. The Temple is rebuilt, Jerusalem is reconstructed, the covenant is renewed, the people are reformed, and the Messianic line is intact. The stage is set for the King to arrive and the world anxiously awaits!

(Continued on next page)

GOSPEL MEETINGS

| <u>Dates</u> | <u>Place & Time</u> | <u>Speaker</u> |
|--------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| April 1-5 | Westwood Church Ashland, KY | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| April 7-12 | West Broad Street Wedowee, AL | Gerald Carter (Eubank, KY) |
| April 15-19 | Verona, KY | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |
| April 19-21 (F-Su) | West Gadsden Church Gadsden, AL 7:00pm/10:30am & 6:00pm | Curtis Smith (Cullman, AL) |
| April 28- May 3 | Hopkinsville, OH | James McDonald (Woodbury, TN) |

A GOSSIP IS ONE WHO BURNS THE
SCANDAL AT BOTH ENDS.

(Continued from page 7)

Between the story of the two returns from Babylon, as narrated by Ezra, comes the tale of ESTHER. In this book Satan poses a great crisis before God's plan of redemption: the threat of extermination of the Jewish people, and thus the end of the Messianic line. But, God triumphs once again. Although his name is never mentioned in the book, God carefully places Esther in the strategic position as Queen of Persia. Like Christ, she places her life on the line for her people. Her work as advocate will be a prelude to the Messiah.

RAY