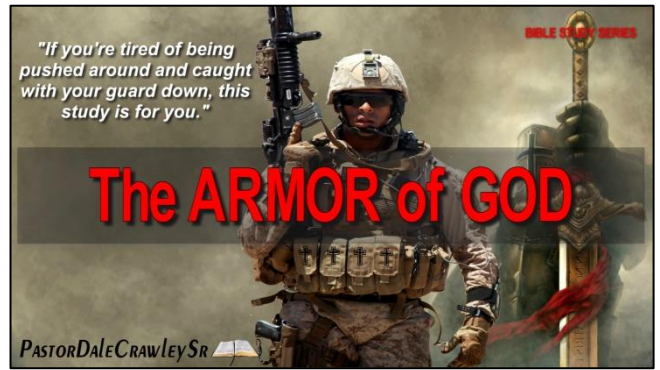


### 3 “DETECTING THE ENEMY’S STRATEGIES”

“10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”  
Ephesians 6:10-12 (NASU)



**(Context: READ Ephesians 6:10-20)**

**BAIT SELECTION ...** Detecting the enemy’s strategies is the first step in defeating him and gaining over his schemes.

**The enemy is a master at choosing the right kind of “bait” to snag you.** Sure, he uses some overarching, one-size-fits-all tactics to disarm God’s people in general, but he doesn’t use only one type of bait for every person, or even the same type of bait for any one individual over time. No, he carefully considers and calculates your current situation, taking into account your weaknesses and strengths, your interests and tendencies, your history and past abuses, everything. Then, utilizing this available information, he crafts a specific strategy to hook you and reel you in!

Don’t believe it? If you look carefully ... you’ll notice that the battles your enemy wages against you—especially the most acute, consistent ones—possess a certain personality to them, an intimate knowledge of who you are and the precise pressure points where you can most easily be taken down.

Random accident? Coincidence? I don’t think so. These areas of greatest fear and anxiety in your life are clues to some important spiritual information. They reveal, among other things ... **that a personalized strategy** has been insidiously put in place to destroy your vibrancy and render you defeated. It’s been drawn up on the blackboard by someone who knows from experience how best to exploit your areas of vulnerability.

Once you become aware of the enemy’s strategy and begin to see his handiwork beneath the surface of your most trying life circumstances, **you can not only begin to target the right culprit**, but you can also start foreseeing some of his intentions and attacks. Then you can be prepared beforehand, giving him little room to make you a casualty of war.

#### **TARGET PRACTICE**

Most of the reason why he gets the best of us so often is because we make his job way too easy for him. So let’s try making it a little easier on ourselves instead. I believe we can boil down his playbook to just a couple of main attack strategies. And to decode them, all you need to do is ask yourself two questions.

## 1) IN WHAT WAY(S) DO I POSE THE BIGGEST THREAT TO THE ENEMY AND HIS PURPOSES?

The enemy will always seek to hinder you in areas where you are keeping his goals from being accomplished. Are you particularly vocal about your faith? Then he may agitate fear or insecurity in you so you'll keep your mouth closed. Is your marriage strong, a good model of stability for other couples? Then he will try to detour one or both of you away from each other through illegitimate entanglements. Satan will predictably want to cripple you in the area of your life where doing so will most directly defame God and hinder His church. Bottom line: *Anticipate the enemy to hit you in the area of your greatest influence.*

## 2) WHAT ARE MY FLESH'S TENDENCIES, INNATE PASSIONS, AND WEAKNESSES?

Every human being has proclivities—a bent toward particular tastes and interests, passions and curiosities ... some good but maybe some bad. Or at least sensitive, perhaps embarrassing, things we don't like others to know about us. And those predispositions and weaknesses are the ones the enemy will seek to exploit. Whether they come from your upbringing, your inborn personality, or vulnerabilities created by events in your life ... these appetites of yours inform the enemy's bait selection when targeting you. And when you combine this suite of selections with his knowledge of just the right time to tease them out, you know as much or more than he does about how he may be planning to attack you at your most susceptible moments.

If alcoholism runs in your family, you know the enemy will likely be looking to destroy you through what's perhaps a *sensitivity* in your mind toward addiction. If promiscuity has been a part of your history, he'll want to keep that fire burning in your body while sending enticing offers to lead you astray.

***Now that you've considered the insight these two areas give you into Satan's strategies against you, can you think of anymore?*** Be honest here ... the more authentic you are, the more specifically you'll be able to zero in on the enemy's plans.

***What practical parameters can you put around your life to safeguard yourself from the enemy's attempts to bait you in this area of your life?*** Keep a close eye on your areas of greatest strength and your areas of greatest weakness. They are likely the places where you can expect the enemy to target his attacks against you. When you know where to look, you can see him coming from a mile away. He's really not that clever ... He's just cunning!

## THE ENEMY'S STRATEGIES

After polling a large cross section of people, asking them to reveal the primary ways the enemy attacks their lives, several common categories defined their responses.

**Below are ten (10) of the enemy's favorite strategies to use against God's people as they pursue abundant life in Christ ...**

### **Strategy #1—Against Your Passion**

He seeks to dim your whole desire for prayer, dull your interest in spiritual things, and downplay the potency of your most strategic weapons (Eph. 6:10-20).

### **Strategy #2—Against Your Focus**

He disguises himself and manipulates your perspective so you end up focusing on the wrong culprit, directing your weapons at the wrong enemy (2 Cor. 11:14).

### **Strategy #3—Against Your Identity**

He magnifies your insecurities, leading you to doubt what God says about you and to disregard what He's given you (Eph. 1:17-19).

### **Strategy #4—Against Your Family**

He wants to disintegrate your family, dividing your home, rendering it chaotic, restless, and unfruitful (Gen. 3:1-7).

### **Strategy #5—Against Your Confidence**

He constantly reminds you of your past mistakes and bad choices, hoping to convince you that you're under God's judgment rather than under the blood (Rev. 12:10).

### **Strategy #6—Against Your Calling**

He amplifies fear, worry, and anxiety until they're the loudest voices in your head, causing you to deem the adventure of following God too risky to attempt (Josh. 14:8).

### **Strategy #7—Against Your Purity**

He tries to tempt you toward certain sins, convincing you that you can tolerate them without risking consequence, knowing they'll only wedge distance between you and God (Isa. 59:1-2).

### **Strategy #8—Against Your Rest and Contentment**

He hopes to overload your life and schedule, pressuring you to constantly push beyond your limits, never feeling permission to say no (Deut. 5:15).

### **Strategy #9—Against Your Heart**

He uses every opportunity to keep old wounds fresh in mind, knowing that anger and hurt and bitterness and un-forgiveness will continue to roll the damage forward (Heb. 12:15).

### **Strategy #10—Against Your Relationships**

He creates disruption and disunity within your circle of friends and within the shared community of the body of Christ (1 Tim. 2:8).