

All Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise indicated.

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**The Snare
of the Devil
Part 3**

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Introduction

This is Part 3 of a series of mini-books on **“The Snare of the Devil.”** It would be very helpful if you had Part 1 and Part 2 also. There is a lot of information in the first two parts that is not in this part. Some of the information in this part will be a repeat of what was already in parts 1 and 2. This is done simply because many who read this part will not have read the other parts.

In 2 Timothy the Apostle Paul is writing to Timothy, instructing him of things he should avoid, and how to minister to those who have been taken captive by the devil, **“...that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will”** (2 Tim. 2:26).

The Devil has a snare by which he takes many captive at his will. Christians need to have wisdom and knowledge, that the Devil does not take them captive with his snares.

In Matthew 4:1 it says, **“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.”** Jesus was tempted in all points just as we are. Jesus defeated the Devil by the knowledge of the Word of God.

Jesus knew the Word of God, and we must also know the Word of God. The snare of the devil is used against those who do not know the Word of God themselves.

Many times in our lives we do not know or understand what is happening and why it is happening. When these things take place in our lives we must **“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding”** (Prov. 3:5). We must **“walk by faith and not by sight”** (2 Cor. 5:7).

Yet, one of the greatest helps we have is in understanding the Word of God. Many Christians suffer for a lack of knowledge of the Word of God. We must **“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”** (2 Tim. 2:15). If we do not take the time to study the Word of God, we could be among those who are already taken captive by the snare of the Devil.

It is important that Christians learn how to study the Word of God. Just reading the Word of God is not enough. We must study the Word of God and know precisely what God is telling us in His Word.

Some information on “how to study the Scriptures” is contained in a mini-book, **“STUDY THE SCRIPTURES”** by Merle E. Koepke. That mini-book is available by downloading freely from our Web sites at:

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The Snare of the Devil

The Devil knows the Scriptures. He knows what is written in the Scriptures. The Devil uses the Scriptures to get Christians in his snare, and take them captive at his will.

One of the greatest snares of the Devil is to get Christians into churches where he is in control. The Devil knows that God is drawing people unto Jesus, that they can become born again into the family of God. The Devil also knows he cannot prevent a person from being born again, once the Holy Spirit draws them to Jesus (John 6:44,55).

Therefore, the Devil tries to control what happens in the Churches that Christians join. He comes as an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:13,14).

The Devil gets the Pastors of Churches to focus upon “the desires of their heart,” to get control of those who come to their church. Once the Pastors can get their churches to believe God wants to give them “the desires of their heart,” the Devil leads them right into his snare.

Therefore, once the Devil gets the Pastor of the Church to fall into his snare, then he can get all the members to fall into his snare with the Pastor. Jesus said, “**...if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch**” (Matt. 15:14). The Devil knows if he can blind the minds of the Pastors, he can lead the whole church into his snare.

Christians need knowledge and understanding of the Word of God, otherwise they will be open to the snare of the Devil themselves. One of the snares of the Devil used in many Churches today is telling Christians, “**God wants to give you the desires of your heart**” (Psa. 37:4). When Christians hear that, and believe what they hear, the Devil leads them right into his snare.

It is because of a lack of knowledge of the Word of God that many Christians are taken by the snare of the Devil. If we study the Scriptures “correctly,” we will find that God DID NOT SAY, God will give you “your” desires of “your” heart. If it is true, that God will give you “your” desires of “your” heart, then everything God was teaching in the Scriptures is not true.

First of all, the reason God sent Jesus into this world is because mankind was following “the desires of their heart.” The desires of man’s heart was wicked from the time Adam sinned in the garden of Eden. Man’s heart needed to be changed. Therefore, in Ezekiel 36:26 it says, “**A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.**” First of all, God has to first give us a new heart.

Then God added something else in Ezekiel 36:27, saying, “**And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.**” God wants Christians to be “**led by the Holy Spirit,**” not by the will of the flesh. In Romans 8:14 it says, “**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.**” This has always been the will of God from the foundation of the world, “that everyone would be led by the Holy Spirit.”

The desires of most Christians today is to do their own will, not to submit to the will of God and “be led by the Holy Spirit.” If Christians would read Psalm 37:3-5 correctly, they would see what the LORD was saying in that Psalm. What is not good concerning what is written in Psalm 37:3-5 is that Christians are using English Versions of the Bible, rather than the Hebrew Versions. What they think it says in the English Versions is not actually what it says in the Hebrew.

In the King James Version of the Bible it says, “**Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed...Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart...Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.**”

First it says, we must “**Trust in the LORD, and do good...**” Once we Trust in the LORD (rather than in our own ability), then God can cause us to prosper and live by His provisions. Therefore, we must start by “**trusting in the LORD**” and “**doing good.**” If Christians do not start first by “**trusting in the LORD,**” what they believe will not be what God said.

Also, God’s idea of “**doing good,**” and man’s idea of “**doing good,**” are not the same. For God, everything that He does is good. Anything that man does “of his own ability” is not good. It

must be “God working through man” to be good. Therefore, doing good is “doing the will of God, God’s way.” God is good, and to do good man must “walk in Love as God walks in Love.” To walk in love and to do good, a person must be “led by the Holy Spirit.”

Doing good is not becoming religious like the Pharisees “condemning others to justify themselves.” The Pharisees used the Law of Moses to control others, but did not follow the Law themselves.

Therefore, in Psalm 37:3,4 it tells us, first we must be “led by the Holy Spirit and do good,” like God does good. Then in verse four it says, “**Delight thyself also in the LORD...**” The Hebrew word for “Delight” is “anag,” meaning “to be soft or pliable.” To be soft or pliable is to be in a position whereby God can put His desires for us in our heart.

When God sees our heart is soft and pliable, then “**God will put His desires in our heart.**” (God is not going to give Christians whatsoever they desire. God is first going to put His desires in their heart).

God will not put His desires in our hearts, if we are not willing “to be led by the Holy Spirit.” We must first be willing to be led by the Holy Spirit, then God will put His desires in our heart.

This is very evident when we look at the New Covenant, where it says, “**This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh...For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would**” (Gal. 5:16,17). God’s desire is that we “**Walk in the Spirit...**” If God desires for us to walk in the Spirit then God is not interested in giving us the desires of our flesh. “**For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace**” (Rom. 8:6).

Once God has put His desires in our heart, then verse five tells us we must “**Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.**” We must “walk after the Spirit, and not after the flesh” (Rom. 8:5-7). We must be willing to do the desire that God puts in our heart. This is how ministry work is to be done. When we are willing to do what God desires for us to do, then God will bring to pass the desire He puts in our heart.

God will not “deceive” anyone, especially those who are His own Children (born again of the Word and the Spirit). Before God can give us the desires of our heart He must give us a new heart, that He can work with. Then God must change our thinking, and our ways.

In Isaiah 55:8,9 it says, “**For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD...For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.**”

Our “hearts desires” are established by our thoughts and our ways. First, God needs to change our thoughts and our ways before He can give us the desires of our heart.

The snare of the Devil is to use Pastors of Churches to tell their members, “*God will give you the desires of your heart.*” Then they will even pray with their members, that God will give them whatsoever they desire. It looks so religious that the people believe the lie of the Devil.

Satan has a snare, by which he takes Christians captive at his will. He does this by helping the Pastors pray for their members to receive “worldly riches and wealth,” which they call “Blessings from God.” These blessings of “riches and wealth” draw Christians into believing God is blessing them with the things of this world. Whereas, 1 John 2:15-17 says, “**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in**

him...For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world...And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

Why would God bless Christians with **“...the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...”**? That would be contrary to the will of God.

Satan is **“the god of this world”** (2 Cor. 4:4). Satan is able to cause people to receive **“worldly riches and wealth.”** Thereby, the Devil gets Christians in his snare, and they take pride in their gains of **“worldly riches and wealth.”**

When Christians look for **“worldly riches and wealth,”** they get their eyes upon the world and off the will of God for their lives. Money and riches become **“their GOD,”** and they think it is God making them rich. The more they seek **“worldly riches and wealth,”** the deeper the Devil gets them into his snare.

What is sad, is that if they continue to seek **“worldly riches and wealth,”** they will find themselves trusting in money, **“rather than the Holy Spirit.”** When they trust in money rather than the Holy Spirit, God has no choice but to let them go their own way, and the Devil has them in his trap, which could lead them right into the pits of hell.

When Christians are not led by the Holy Spirit, **“they are being led by other spirits,”** which are not from God. In Romans 6:16 it says, **“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?”**

I love being led by the Holy Spirit. It is exciting to see how the Holy Spirit leads, and the way He controls our lives when we **“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding”** (Prov. 3:5).

The Holy Spirit does not lead according to our thinking, or the way we want Him to lead us. Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3:8, **“The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”** When the Holy Spirit leads us, many times we have no idea what is going to happen until we see it happen. We may think we are going some place for a certain purpose, but when we find out what happened, we know if it was the Holy Spirit leading us, or not?

Those who are deceived by the Devil think God is leading them, when many times it is not GOD, at all. If we let the Holy Spirit lead us, we will not get ourselves into situations where we do not have peace and joy at all times.

Let me give an example of God giving us the desires of our heart. I was born and raised on a farm in northern Wisconsin. After I graduated from High School I left the farm to work in factories. My desire was to make a lot of money, buy all the things I desired, and live free of working seven days a week on the farm. (I wanted to have time for myself, to do what I wanted to do).

I wanted to have the things **“I desired”** and make my own decisions. So I started working in a factory (eight hours a day, five days a week). I did the best I could, to do what they wanted me to do. I gained favor with the bosses in the office. Within a year, they wanted me to go on salary and become a foreman in a new plant they were having built.

But, that was not **“my desire,”** and I left that job and went to another job in a dairy business. There I drove a milk truck and picked up milk from the farmers in the mornings, and worked in the plant in the afternoons.

I was not satisfied on that job, so I left that job and went to work in a paper mill. In the paper mill I gained favor with the bosses. Within twelve years, I was being considered for a salary job. Yet, that was not “the desire of my heart.”

That was not the kind of Job I wanted. At that time I was studying electronics. I wanted to work on electronic equipment instead. I left that job and went to work for a manufacture of electronic controls. Within less than a year, they offered me a salary job working in the lab with the engineers. That was a day time job, which would have taken up my whole day. That was not “the desire of my heart.”

I left that job and started my own television repair business. After I was born again, I saw the LORD working in my life in many ways. I began the television business in 1970 and was born again in 1979.

Following my new birth, the more I talked to my customers about the LORD, the more my business prospered. After eleven years in the television repair business, I felt the LORD was calling me into the ministry.

I made an application to attend a Bible School, thinking it would help me get into the ministry. Before I went to Bible School in 1982, it was prophesied to me, that “*the ministry I would be going into was not anything I thought it would be. But, when it happens I would know it was of the LORD.*”

Two days after that prophecy, I awoke about 1:00am in the morning with “a desire in my heart” to write a book. The title of the book was, The LORD said, “**Tell Them I Love Them.**” I spent every hour I could find writing that first book. It took about three weeks to write it.

After writing that book, I had 15,000 copies printed, and gave them away free! I never asked anyone for money. I paid for the printing with my own money.

“The desire” to write books for the ministry was so great in me, that I never stopped writing books to help people in the ministry and help people get to know the LORD and the will of God for their lives. I am still writing books today.

At this time, we have two Internet Web sites with over ninety books on them. They are all free by downloading all over the world. Almost every country in the world has people going to the Web sites (including Bible Colleges, Bible Schools, Churches, Pastors, Ministries of all sorts, and individuals). All of these are getting the books free. Many are sharing the information with others all over the world. It is a joy to serve the LORD, and do “the desire He put in my heart.”

Before I started writing books, I did not have any desire to write books. The idea never came into my mind that I could write a book. It all happened within two days, following when the LORD spoke to me through another brother in the ministry.

Today, just as it has been for the past twenty-five years, I would not want to be doing anything else, other than writing books and teaching in the Body of Christ.

My heart is filled with peace and joy as I continue to do “what the LORD put in my heart.” When the LORD puts “His desires” in your heart, you will always have peace and joy in doing what you do. That peace and joy comes from the Holy Spirit within you.

It is not something we want to do. It is something the LORD wants us to do. It was never my desire to write books all the years before that day when I awoke about 1:00am that morning, with a desire to write a book, called, “The LORD said, Tell Them I Love Them.”

My own experience concerning “the desires of my heart” confirms what Psalm 37:3-5 is

talking about. I am a living reality of what it truly says in Psalm 37:3-5.

You can also let God put “His desires in your heart,” if you will do what it tells us in Psalm 37:3-5, **“Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed...Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart...Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.”**

Oh, that Christians would only know the truth concerning what our Bibles have to say. Do not go by what men say. Go by what the Holy Spirit has inspired to be written. The original writings of the Scriptures were inspired by the Holy Spirit. If you set your heart right before the LORD, the Holy Spirit will teach you what the Bible truly says. He will be your Helper, Guide, Comforter, Leader, and Teacher. By the Holy Spirit teaching you the truth from the Scriptures, you will know the Truth and the Truth will set you FREE!

There is no joy greater than being “taught by the Holy Spirit.” He knows everything. There is nothing He does not know. He will reveal to you everything you need to know. The Holy Spirit will not withhold any good thing from those who walk uprightly.

This is what it says in Psalm 84:11, **“For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”** In Proverbs 2:7 it says, **“He layeth up sound wisdom for the righteous: he is a buckler to them that walk uprightly.”**

Do not waste your time here on earth seeking “the desires of your natural mind.” Do not seek “the desires of the flesh.” Do not seek “the things of this world.” All of this will pass away, only that which comes from God will be of any value when we leave this earth.

The snare of the Devil is to draw as many Christians away from the will of God for their lives as he can. If he can get them seeking “the desires of their minds and their flesh” he has them right where he wants them. They will be doing just what the Devil wants them to do. He will give them everything “they desire in this world.” Then, he will take them along with him to hell when they leave this earth. It is not worth it! Do not even give it a second thought. Cast down all thoughts of the things of this world, and seek only that which comes from God. In Colossians 3:1,2 it says, **“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God...Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”**

Jesus warned us of the way the Devil works to destroy Christians in Mark 4:13-20. In Mark 4:13 it says, **“And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?”** This is one of the most important parables that Jesus gave. This parable identifies the works of the Devil among those who become Christians. If we do not understand this parable, it will be unlikely that we will understand very many of the other parables. This parable is talking about one of the most important subjects in the Bible. It tells us how that the Devil comes to steal the truth of the Word of God from Christians today.

In this mini-book we will not go completely through this parable, but it is important to see what Jesus said about those Christians who endure the first two temptations of the Devil. In Mark 4:18,19, Jesus said, **“And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word...And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.”**

The greatest snare of the Devil is to tempt Christians with **“...the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things...”** The Devil does this by getting our

attention on the things of this world that we desired before we became born again into the family of God. Therefore, it is important that we do not seek the things we desired before we were born again. We must understand Psalm 37:3-5, and follow it step by step. Seeking first to **“Trust in the LORD, and do good...”** (Psa. 37:3). When God sees our desire to do His will, then God will take us to the next step, **“Delight thyself also in the LORD...”** (Psa. 37:4). Once God puts His desires in our heart, then we must **“Commit thy way unto the LORD...”** (Psa. 37:5).

The Devil will try to stop us every step of the way. First he tries to **“steal the Word”** out of our heart (Mark 4:14). Then he will send **“affliction or persecutions”** our way (Mark 4:17). When that does not stop, us he will come with the **“deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things”** (Mark 4:19).

Christians need to understand Psalm 37:3-5. To overcome the Devil, we must know the Word of God, and how God works among those whom He receives into the family of God by the new birth (John 3:6,7).

We must be aware of the Snare of the Devil. The Devil knows that if he can get Christians to seek after the desires of their heart, he can lead them into his trap.

All throughout the Bible you will see evidence of the Devil trying to get people into his snare. Already at the time of Job, Satan was working to get people in his snare.

First Satan got Job into fear (Job 3:25). Fear only comes when a person is trying to do their own will of the flesh. When we **“walk after the Spirit of God,”** we have no fear. In 2 Timothy 1:7 it tells us, **“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”** Other spirits (which are not of God), cause those who walk after the flesh to get into fear.

Once Job was taken captive by the Devil in fear, pride and self-righteousness controlled his life. These two, **“pride and self-righteousness”** cost Job almost everything he had.

Job lost his possessions (Job 1:13-19). Job even lost his seven sons and three daughters (Job 1:18,19). Job was also stricken **“...with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown”** (Job 2:7). Only Job’s wife remained.

Job was sowing to his flesh, and of the flesh Job suffered loss (Gal. 6:7,8). Many Christians today are being taught **“that they must suffer without a cause,”** like Job. These are the teachings of men, and not of God. It is by the teachings of men that Satan can take many Christians captive at his will.

Jesus warned us of this happening in these last days. Jesus said, **“For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ {saying, I am anointed}; and shall deceive many”** (Matt. 24:5). These are walking after the flesh, and not after the Spirit (Gal. 6:7,8). Those who say **“they are anointed”** and try to control others are not walking after the Holy Spirit. They are **“walking after the flesh.”** Those who follow them could easily find themselves being led by the blind (Matt. 15:14).

Christians must learn to be **“led by the Holy Spirit,”** and not **“walk after the flesh.”** Only the Holy Spirit can keep us from corruption, which comes to those who walk after the flesh (Gal. 5:16,1; 6:7,8).

Fear, pride, and self-righteousness are snares of the Devil to lead Christians into his control of their lives. Unless Christians do what Jesus said to do (deny ourselves and follow Him), they could easily be deceived.

Christians must walk in the Light as God is in the Light (1 John 1:4-5:21). **“God is Love”**

(1 John 4:8). In 1 Corinthians 13:4, it tells us that love is **“not selfish.”** The word “selfish” means, “too much concerned with one’s own welfare or interests and having little or no concern for others.” This is also a description of the Holy Spirit, He is not selfish or self-centered.

The Holy Spirit will never force Himself upon someone else. The Holy Spirit will never do things against your will. Love does not operate by force and is never rude or selfish. Love also **“...suffers long and is kind...”** (1 Cor. 13:4, NKJV). Only by walking in Love, can Christians have fellowship with God (1 John 1:5-7). Walking in love means preferring others before ourselves (Phil. 2:3,4).

Unless the desires of the flesh are brought under subjection to the Holy Spirit, we could be easily taken in the snare of the Devil.

For more information on this subject, get all the Parts of “The SNARE of the DEVIL” Watch for this series on our Web sites and download as many free books as you desire. Go to:

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