

Modern Day Schemes of the Devil

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[0 : 00] Okay. Okay. Emotional for me.

Sorry, my intentions are never to get emotional like this.

Again, it's embarrassing. It's, but I'm. I don't think so. I think it's the Lord. Praise God, Mark. So. Honest. Speaking from.

Honest. There's just something about lifting each other up in prayer. And I'd forgotten what it was like.

Because it's been a while for me to do that. And, you know, and I won't point anybody out. But at one point there was somebody that went over to another person and just simply laid their hands on them and let them know that they cared.

[1 : 16] And then quietly prayed for them. I would encourage that. There's some power in there where if you just felt led by the Holy Spirit during prayer and shared time or any time during a service.

And it's not out of order. As long as you're not drawing attention to yourself. But what a beautiful thing that is to rise up when somebody, when the Holy Spirit has put somebody on your heart.

And you just rise up and you go over to them. And you just lay hands on their back, on their shoulder. And what a comfort that is that people feel, the person you're praying for.

You don't have to say a prayer out loud. You're just, you're basically saying I'm coming along beside you. I agree with you. I'm going to pray for you. And there's just, there's power in that.

So, again, another thing I encourage. All right, let's, I don't think it's in your bulletin as far as where we're going to even be going today, is it? I don't think it's in there.

[2 : 21] Oh, it, it what? Oh, it does? On the back in prayer and share. Got it. Darn, I was hoping it wasn't on there and I could go wherever else I wanted to.

Apparently I'm stuck still going here. Well, that's good because that's what the notes say anyway. We will be reading out of Ephesians chapter 6.

And we'll be going over verse 10 through 18. And, of course, this will sound extremely familiar because it's exactly what we, part of what we went over last week.

Towards the end of the sermon, this is one of the things that he talked about, the putting on the full armor of God. We're going to look at it a little bit differently. And I am going to only concentrate on one of the verses today because I think we all know what the full armor of God is about and everything.

And if you don't, there are plenty of messages out there to talk about it. Or that, anyway, you can delve into all that. But today I want to, just like the title of the message, Modern Day Schemes of the Devil, so that we can recognize that.

[3 : 29] So if you are able, could you please stand for the reading of God's word? Again, Ephesians chapter 6, starting in verse 10 and going through 18.

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the full armor of God so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

For our struggles 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.

Therefore, take up the full armor of God so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm, therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

In addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the

word of God.

[4 : 50] With all prayer and petition, pray at all times in the spirit, and with this in view. Be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.

Let us pray. So read God's word. Father, we just thank you that you have gathered us here today to listen to your word, to study it, to understand in this particular passage about some of the schemes of the devil, so that we can fight against them, so that we can stand firm.

And we just ask, like it was prayed in the beginning, that we would have the Holy Spirit just overflowing with that Holy Spirit.

We need you to be our teacher. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. You can be seated. Amen. Sorry.

So. Like I said, well, parts of the sermon last week included the armor of God.

[6 : 17] The last part of the last week's sermon was one of the reasons that Jesus appeared was to destroy the works of the devil and for us to put on the full armor of God.

Well, what things did he destroy the works of the devil, which caused the separation from the Father.

But we're also told that there's schemes of the enemy. Well, he didn't come to destroy those schemes because if he came to destroy them, they would be destroyed.

There would be no more schemes. He wouldn't be able to trick us and deceive us. So they're still here. We need to understand that. Okay. One other thing that I've said before and I want to say it again, coming up here to deliver a message is I take it with, I don't even know what word to use. I take it very seriously. I want to make sure that the heart of God is proclaimed, what he wants to speak to us.

[7 : 36] And so I diligently seek the Lord on what he wants to say. And being that I'm, for whatever reason and how the Lord works with me, that he has to take me through the teaching first, and then I get to deliver the message.

And sometimes those teachings aren't so fun because I have to live it out. And in this case, with this one, this is no different.

In praying about what the Lord would want for today, because I was told that I would be teaching about a month ago, and so I started preparing back then.

And then all of a sudden, what came over me was just a huge cloud came over me. I was very foggy in my thoughts.

I was very confused. I wasn't able to concentrate on things. It was very disconcerting. I was forgetting things.

[8 : 55] I couldn't remember anything. The pastor, I mean, obviously I'm old, but I shouldn't be forgetting like that. But, I mean, it was really, really bad.

And it caused me to really pause and go, what is going on here? I'd forgotten that I was praying, you know, Lord, show me what the people need to hear and stuff.

And all of a sudden, this comes on me, and it wasn't dawning on me because I wasn't thinking clearly that maybe this is something the Lord is trying to tell the people, is that there is a, and if this message isn't for you, then take it with a grain of salt or whatever.

But if you know somebody that this message is for, maybe you can help them in this. Okay, so I want to do that as a caveat so that I don't ever want to say that the Lord said, oh, you're like this.

And no, not everybody's in the same place. Okay, but the majority of people I believe that the Lord is speaking to today, and we'll get there. So I was confused.

[10 : 03] I was foggy. I even asked Pastor Bill, you know, and I said, Bill, I'm not doing so good right now. And I think this is what the Lord is saying.

And he said, sounds like you need to give that message. And I was like, all right. So anyway, and then to top it off, because, again, the Lord has me live it first, at work, my boss, okay, all of a sudden he, my work is to do maintenance stuff at the correctional facility in Douglas County, the jail and stuff.

And so we have to take care of different things that arise, obviously. And it happened to be lunchtime. You sit down to have lunch, and my boss is sitting in there having lunch with us, and all of a sudden his phone goes off, like our phones constantly do while you're working, because there's always a work order that comes in.

Oh, I need this fixed. Oh, I need that fixed. This fell off the wall. Go, please fix it. Could you change the battery in my clock? Really? Got it. Anyway, so we're sitting there, and his phone goes off. Because it's, anyway, so he gets this message that says, I smell an electrical fire. And so he puts down his, and he reads it out loud and everything, and so he puts down his lunch, and he gets up and he leaves.

[11 : 42] I'm thinking, oh, he's going to go take care of it. And great, fantastic. And not that I cared, sorry, but I didn't. Because we get so many work orders in that are all high priority, ASAP.

He, everything's, you know, it's the sky is falling type thing. And it's like, so after a while, you just go, whatever. I'll get to it when I get to it, okay? If the place ain't burning down, we're good.

And the fire department won't come anyway, so we're good. I'm sorry, but that's my attitude. And anyway, so he's gone for quite a long time. And about a half hour later, he comes in, and he is hot under the collar.

And he says, so the maintenance team doesn't have to do anything. It doesn't have to respond to these calls. What do you guys deem as an emergency?

What do you think is important? What do you think is a priority? And he was rightfully so angry. I was even telling Sherry this story on the way home. And she was saying, well, yeah, you should have responded to that.

[12 : 57] And it's like, yeah, you're right, I should have. Thank you very much, dearest. And drink time. Thank you.

So he's saying, oh, no, but the maintenance team, they have to take their lunch first. They can't be interrupted during their half hour lunch.

So, again, rightfully so, he was getting after us. And I was thinking, and I was telling him, you know, hey, boss, sorry. I was taking responsibility for myself, not for anybody else in there, because I'm not going to drag anybody else into this, too.

And I said, sorry, I should have recognized that. I should have gone up there and helped you with this. And so my point being is that what that did was it brought me back to the center again.

It re-stirred in me. It reminded me what I am supposed to do in my job. It's like, okay, got it.

[14 : 05] And I thanked the Lord for that and said, I see you. And he said, that's also what I want to tell the people. This is why some of these messages, sometimes the messages that are given, it's to re-center us.

It's to stir us up again. They're exhortations to get us back in line, get us back on track, to get us thinking about something that maybe we're not thinking about, okay, when it's all around us.

And in this particular instance, verse 11, put on the full armor of God so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

That's the message he wants to give today. We need to remember to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Now, we can say, what are the schemes of the devil? We're told that we're not supposed to be ignorant of them. That means we're supposed to be aware of the schemes.

[15 : 12] So are you guys aware of schemes of the devil? Do you recognize a scheme of the devil when it comes your way? Or do you chalk it off to some other thing? And I'm not saying that everything is a scheme, any bad things that come your way or something.

I mean, I could have on when the boss was yelling at me, that's a scheme of the devil. It's to get me down. I could have done that. But of course, that's not accurate. So you can't attribute everything to as a scheme of the devil because the main scheme of the devil is to let me look here.

First Corinthians 11 three says, but I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

That is his number one scheme is to lead you away. I'm talking about believers now to lead you away. Your thoughts lead them astray, lead them away from a sincere and pure devotion from Christ to Christ.

If I can get you distracted over here, you know, you're in God's word and all of a sudden squirrel. Huh? Huh? What's going on? Huh? Okay. So we start looking at this and that and the other thing.

[16 : 40] We get distracted. Okay? And so that is a huge scheme of the devil. Get you distracted.

I was going to get real clever and say, go into the whole thing about this whole thing about this, this package that Satan likes to present to us.

I'm still may do it. I like it. I still may do it. Anyway, Revelations 12.9 identifies Satan as the deceiver of the whole world.

Deceiver simply means deception. He loves to give deception. So that's one of his schemes. If he can deceive you, if he can pull you away and lead your thoughts astray, that's how he's going to get you from your devotion to Jesus.

But I wrote on there the title of modern day schemes of the devil. But you know what? There is nothing new. Ecclesiastes tells us this.

[17 : 55] There's nothing new under the sun. Nothing new. He's using the same old tactics that he has always used. The only thing is he packages it a little bit differently.

But it's always the same schemes, the same thing. He's not creative. He doesn't need to be. It works. Why do you need to just keep throwing it out and package it up in a nice little thing and put it out there and see how many?

Oop, I'll take that. So, let's see. Nothing new under the sun. He uses lust, pride, power, discouragement, doubt, money, escapism, pleasure, hate, anger, jealousy, selfishness.

The way he attacks us, those schemes, they could go on and on. But, again, the whole thing is all about deception. You know, the magician, look over here as I'm doing this over here.

You know, you're not going to see it. But the important thing for Satan is the package can't appear to be harmful.

[19 : 04] It doesn't have a sticker on it that says, ooh, warning, caution, ooh, open this with care or something like that. Nope. He just presents it because he masquerades as an angel of light.

We know that. So, this package will appear to be something enticing, right? The package will seem so wonderful. It's a promise of making our life in this.

All right. So, now I'm starting to focus in more on the package that I want to talk about today. Okay? The package will seem so wonderful. It promises of making our life better in all respects.

It's going to be, this package has something in it that will allow us to get closer to our friends and family. It's something that will give us all kinds of knowledge.

It's something that will even enable us to reach untold millions for Christ. What could be wrong with that package? That sounds great.

[20 : 10] Wonderful. You guys are probably already, your mind's already jumping in. You know what I'm talking about already. Okay? Sounds like a great package. Knowledge. Aha. But when you open it, guess what?

You do find all those things. Yeah. You find that I can get closer to my family and friends. I can, it's full of all kinds of knowledge. And that I, if used properly, I can reach untold millions for Jesus.

Okay? It's all true. But you know what? There's even more. But wait, there's more. Okay? Ah. There's even bonus offerings.

Like, I can connect other things in my life to it. And it will do my bidding. It will turn on my lights. It'll order my food. It will keep track of my bills.

It'll even keep me safe with my home security. Ah. Ah. And I can even now monitor my health. Gosh.

[21 : 13] This is a great package. I want it. Sign me up. I'm in. Yes. All right. Who wouldn't want it? And then, so you go ahead and you get that package.

But as time goes by, you start discovering that this wonderful package is really a cleverly disguised Pandora's box.

And once you've opened it, it's like, ugh, how do I? No, no. Ah. It's not only full of all these wonderful things, but it has a dark side to it, too.

It's got an insidious deception. It has many pitfalls and snares. Ah. The old poem. Come into my parlor, said the spider to the fly.

Mmm. Yeah, my. There was a song written by Casting Crowns back in 2007 called Slow Fade. I don't know if anybody remembers that or has heard it before, but I'll just give a few different lines on it.

[22 : 23] Be careful, little eyes, what you see. It's the second glance that ties your hands. Not that first glance, that second glance that ties your hands as darkness pulls the string.

What a picture, huh? Be careful, little feet, where you go. Be careful, little lips, what you say. Be careful, little ears, what you hear. It's a slow fade when black and white have turned to gray.

The journey from your mind to your hands, it's shorter than you think. Be careful if you think you stand.

You just might be sinking. A price will be paid when you give yourself away. People never crumble in a short day.

Daddy's never crumble. Daddy's never crumble in a day.

[23 : 32] Families never crumble in a day. It's a slow fade. That's a powerful song. And Satan's schemes are just like that.

They are a slow fade. They're insidious and they're very slow. Just like the old thing with the frog in the pot. How will a frog sit in a boiling pot of water?

Well, you start it out at just the room temperature. You put it on the stove. The frog is in there and he's happy as a frog, as a clam. And all of a sudden you start turning up the temperature and he'll sit there.

He will not jump out. And he will just sit there until he cooks. Because it's so slow. And that's how we are.

And Satan knows this. And so he doesn't come with the attacks right away. And they're always subtle and slow. That's a scheme. Get in there slow and subtle.

[24 : 35] Get in there first. But get in there. We are told in 1 Corinthians not to be outwitted by Satan.

Again, we are not to be ignorant of his designs, his schemes. We are not, not, not, not to be ignorant of them.

Can we grab a hold of that? We're not supposed to be ignorant. And, of course, with all this that I've said, what package am I referring to?

Of course, I'm talking about the Internet. Okay? We are so connected to it, it is truly living up to its slogan of the Internet of everything.

We're connecting everything to this with our apps and everything else. So, am I saying that the Internet is evil? Is evil in a word?

[25 : 38] No. Of course not. It's what gets done with it that makes it evil. And you guys be the judge of where those lines need to be drawn in your own life.

Because we're all different. There's different things that entice us. There's different things that we get sucked into. But, anyway, I'll stop there for a moment.

It definitely has many, many good uses. But we mustn't be ignorant of those deceptive pitfalls that it does have. And that's, aka, apps.

The apps that we download, that we go into. Those things that we willingly choose to put on our phones.

Okay? Put on our computers. These are things that we, yeah, this will make my life better. This will be great. I can keep in touch with friends with this. I want this.

[26 : 37] This is so wonderful. But what are the pitfalls of it? Let me get my place in my notes here.

With certain apps, he simply appeals to our sin tendencies of lust, the pride, the power, the money, the escapism, on and on. And our thoughts are led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

This is the big thing. Remember that we do not wrestle with flesh and blood. Okay? Because we always want to blame things.

Men, people, we want to point our finger at something. But we've got to understand behind the scene, behind all this, what's really going on, it's really happening in the spiritual realm.

This realm that we have here, we think it's the real realm. It is not. The spiritual, this one is the one that's seen through a veil. Okay? Being able to see into the spiritual realm.

[27 : 45] In fact, it's closed off from us. But that's reality, the spiritual realm. This is but a mirror, but a very cloudy one, so to speak.

This is not it. We all know that. Okay? I don't need to belabor that. But so we wrestle 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 heavenly places.

Now, I had a dream. And no, I'm not Martin Luther King.

Acts 2.17 tells us that in the last days I will pour out my spirit. Your young men will have visions, and your old men will dream dreams.

Well, I had a dream. Okay? So apparently, I'm an old man. The Bible tells me so. But you know what was hard to take was when I had this dream.

[28 : 54] I was only 44 years old. And it's like, oh, I'm already an old man at 44? Oh, what a bummer. What's it going to be like when I'm now?

We won't say how old I am. Anyway, and this is true. I had a dream. And I want you guys to, I'm going to try and paint the picture of this dream so you guys can really grab a hold of it.

So, in the theater of your mind, picture this, right? I had a dream of gargoyles.

Okay? They were flying around in the air in an ordinary neighborhood. All right? They were circling around, and then they landed in the front yard, in a front yard.

Okay? I think it was my front yard. I'm not positive because I don't remember that part, but it did land in the front yard. The front yard looked familiar. Anyway, so these gargoyles are flying around, and they landed in the front yard.

[30 : 02] And they were in a line next to each other. Boom, boom, boom, boom. Okay? Maybe it was five. Anyway. Then, so they stood there, and then they transformed.

They're standing there. The gargoyles are standing there. And all of a sudden, they transformed into electronic equipment. Various electronic equipment. One of them turned into a computer. One of them turned into a TV. Now, this dates me. And now you'll see why I was 44 years old. One of them turned into a DVD player. One of them an MP3 player.

And one of them into a video gaming system. So they transformed into that, and then they sunk into the ground. Okay?

That was my dream. Very vivid. Very powerful. Because I woke up pretty quickly from that. And I said, Lord, what does that mean?

[31 : 03] What was that about? I know I'm a crazy, I got a good imagination. I got a real good imagination. But this one was, no, this one was directly from the Lord, and he was trying to tell me something.

So I asked him, what does this dream mean? Okay. So, first, he was telling me that the gargoyles that were flying, he used gargoyles because this is the way he could talk to me in a sense that I could relate to it and what I related to it.

The gargoyles were demons. They were the principalities of the air. Okay? So they're flying around. Okay? And they're flying around in the neighborhood.

And what's happening in the neighborhood is just an ordinary neighborhood representing that it's everyday life. Life is just going on. It's nothing tumultuous or anything like that is going on.

It's just an everyday life. And so, just like in the days of Noah, everything is normal. Everything is good. Or it seems like it. And they're circling around because they're seeking who they may devour.

[32 : 14] It's like, oh, wow. And then they land in the front yard. And that was representing that, first of all, they were bold about it. They didn't care who saw them.

So, but the other thing was, how often do you, are you looking out into your front yard and you can see something? It's not very often. There's now and then that you get an opportunity.

I mean, that you look outside and you go, oh, and you're looking in. You can see the neighbor's front yard or something like that or your own. But what he was trying to tell me is that there are some that are going to be able to see what's transpiring.

Because this is a scheme that's going on. So that's why they landed in the front yard. And they were in a line, like I said, and that shows that they were orderly.

They were simply following orders. It was rehearsed. It was planned. This wasn't just a per chance thing happening. All right. And then they transformed, meaning they were masquerading as angels of light.

[33 : 16] Something that was good. You know, the computer, what's wrong with that? What's wrong with the DVD player? What's wrong with all this stuff? But that's how they got into the front door.

So masqueraded as angels of light, good things. And they got their foot in the door. And the electronics, they're harmless entertainment.

We welcome them into our homes. But we also know that all those devices I talked about have a bad side to them, too, right? If you think about it, like TV, yeah, it's good.

But what do you watch on it? That's what makes it not good. You know, if we're watching the same thing. Or the same thing. If we're watching things that we're not supposed to.

The music, the DVD players, we can go down and, or we can rent something that maybe we're not supposed to rent and we put it in there and, you know, that type of stuff.

[34 : 14] So we can use these things for evil. Listening to music that maybe we're not supposed to listen to. That's not uplifting. So anyway, on and on that goes.

And then they sank into the ground. So that was, he was showing me that they operate underground. They're blinded. We are blinded from seeing that happening or from seeing it occurring.

It's that deception that's going on. So it was a powerful dream for me. Huge. And today, all those electronic devices are all encapsulated into our phones.

It's all there. So, to me, it's that same thing. We have that. The potential is not good. That it can draw us away.

Right? It can lure us away. We know that. We understand that. But I will say that demons cannot, I want you guys to hear this, demons cannot attach themselves to inanimate objects.

[35 : 26] You don't have a demon attached to this thing. Okay? That's not what I'm saying. All right? And these devices are not demonic.

Again, it's how they're used. They're given as something as a good thing. Man, of course, turns it into evil. Man likes to twist things around.

But wait, Mark, I thought you said that we don't wrestle with flesh and blood. We wrestle with the principalities of the air and on and on. So which one is it? Is it man that's turned it into bad?

It's man who is under the influence of demonic activity. People who open themselves up to this. And they have nothing to do with Christ or anything.

God, no, I don't want anything to do with that. So it's these people that are susceptible. And they are the ones that are being influenced by Satan to create these programs and stuff.

[36 : 28] All right? Now, like I said, the Internet is good for many things. But it does have a dark side. And it comes in the form of the various apps. Now, I could focus on just social media, the different social media platforms.

And I could talk about some of those pitfalls. And I'm just going to highlight them real quick because I could stop and talk about them. But I don't want to because I don't want to stop at this point. So we could say that making the focus on social media, what it does is that it makes the focus on you and all about you, you, you.

It takes selfies all the time. And instead of look at Jesus and stop lifting up yourself, right?

He needs to increase and we need to decrease. But social media makes us do the opposite. Let's boost ourself up.

Okay? Again, we can, I'm not going to stop at all. Anyway, obsessed with the number of followers. That's what social media does. And that it almost can get to the point where it makes you jealous if others have more followers.

[37 : 44] Well, how come they got more than me? Or how come they're getting more likes or something like that? That's not right. You know, in, in scripture, it talks about how Saul, the, the, the, the song that was being sung, King Saul, where Saul has killed his thousands.

David has killed his tens thousands. That made Saul jealous. He wanted to get David. That's what happens. We can start getting jealous of, oh, that person's got more.

What am I doing? So now we start, um, catering our, our, um, I don't even know what you can call them because I'm not on it. So I stay away from it. I have to stay away from it. Um, but anyway, that, um, so how many likes you get and always getting, trying, trying to get people to like you.

And so that you're compromising. Um, so then comes in, am I seeking the approval of God or am I seeking the approval of man? We got to ask ourselves that. Why am I putting in what I'm putting in? It's because I want likes because I want more followers. And you guys get the idea. Um, we allow social media to steal our time. We know what that's all about too.

[38 : 53] Um, we're all, but we're told in scripture that make the most of your time for the days are easy. Is it wise to spend so much time on social media? You guys answer that for yourself.

Um, uh, some, we also try to make meaningful relationships with it. We think we deceive ourselves to think that we're, we're developing meaningful relationships.

Well, got to remember that God created us as relational beings, but in person. All right. We forget that part of the equation that it's supposed to be in person.

We're told do not forsake the assembly of the brethren coming together, right? To in person. Um, let's see, uh, social media, uh, causes you to be conformed to the world. And that causes us to look no different than the world. We start looking like the world and we're not supposed to. We're told to be not conformed to this world.

[39 : 58] Uh, another thing that, uh, people do is that they get caught up in senseless topics and debates. And when they're caught up in those things, they start attacking other people's points of views and start arguing.

And I guess there's a huge thing where that's exploding right now on social media. At least that's what I've, I've read, um, that, um, arguments and stuff and the fighting that's going on, the division that's going on.

Um, what does scripture say? It says, and this is, you guys can relate it, uh, with the same tongue, you bless God and curse his creation.

That's what we're doing when we're typing, however you do it. I'm the old school typewriter.

Anyway, you guys get it.

So, um, when you're, when you're getting caught up in these things and, uh, screaming to somebody, yeah, you don't know what to talk about me, whatever, whatever the attacks that happened that remember that with the same tongue, the same phone, you can bless God by going in and looking up things about him and sharing things about him and stuff with that same phone.

[41 : 11] You can bless God, praise God, but you're also cursing his creation. Think about it. Um, we also try to use it as a means of resting and relaxing ourselves.

I've had a stressful, hard day. I'm going to get on social media. But usually after scrolling through countless pics and videos, you actually feel drained and not relaxed.

And then here's, here's the interesting thing that studies have shown that the light from your device, from the screen is actually detrimental.

detrimental, so much so detrimental to our ability to sleep. Maybe that's a reason why you have trouble sleeping. I don't know. If you have trouble, I don't know. Some people don't have problems at all.

Some do. It's because there's something about the blue light. And that is a study that they've proven. Okay, this isn't just, meh. All right, so, um, let's move down to this point here.

[42 : 16] This is, uh, this is what I think one of the huge traps of the internet in general is about. A scheme, a deception. A scheme, a connection, and what it's doing to our brain subconsciously.

So we don't even know that it's happening behind the scenes, hidden in the ground. And so, subconsciously, I, a long time ago, did a lot of studies on subconscious, um, um, experiments that people did, um, um, um, to do subliminal teachings.

Um, to train the brain and stuff. And an interesting study, I nodded my notes here. Um, I remember, um, um, at one time in a, in a movie theater, uh, what they would do, because the eye catches things, the brain catches things.

In a movie theater, they experimented in every, and I don't remember how many frames, but every 20th frame or something like that, they inserted a slide.

You know, the movie projector goes up and you got just still after still after still that's going by. But every 20th or whatever it was that they determined they needed to do, they put in a single slide that said, drink popcorn.

[43 : 42] I mean, drink, drink some popcorn and eat some Coke. But the other way around there. So they had one slide that said, drink Coke.

And another one said, eat popcorn. And they would interdisperse this, but they would, so as it's going by and it's showing up on the screen, you can't see it, it goes by so quickly, it's in the, you know, a millisecond that it flashes on the screen.

But they did this experiment. What do you think happened? This is back in the day when they had intermissions in movies. This is how long ago it was. They used to have movies and then halfway through the movie they'd stop it, have intermission, everybody would get up and go to the snack bar and buy something and come on back, sit down, and then they'd start watching the movie again.

Those were good days, weren't they? Anyway, so what do you think happened at intermission?

Record huge explosion of sales.

They ran out of Coke. They ran out of popcorn because everybody was buying it. They were also talking to theaters that held 1,000 people at the time, too.

[44 : 53] Again, good old days. But anyway, that's the power of subliminal technology, subliminal things. Okay? So, subconsciously we pick up things.

Now, because we're in this time of year and everything, you guys can relate to it, this deception is like black ice on the road.

Okay? You can't see it. It gives us a false sense of security. And we become haughty and we think, it won't happen to me.

Ah, I got my guard up. You can't stop that kind of stuff from happening. And you cannot stop this, what's happening with the internet. Again, I'm going to get to it here.

What we are in essence doing is we are training our brain to jump from topic to topic. We sit there and we scroll and we scroll and we're just bouncing.

[45 : 58] So, what is, we're training our brain. Nope. I see that. Boom. On to the next. On to the next. On to the next. We may stop for a moment. Look at it a little bit. On to the next. On to the next.

Or that we come across something that, you know, like cute puppies. And we say, oh, look at the cute puppies. Oh, they're doing this. Oh, this is so, I love this.

And so we go on. Then it pops in another one. And it's like, oh, look at that one. And then the next one. Oh, look at that one. Oh, look at that. And before we know it, two hours are gone.

We're going, what happened? A lot of cute puppies. I did see a lot of cute puppies. But anyway, what that is in behind the scenes in our subconscious, it's teaching our brain to jump from topic to topic.

So because we are mindlessly scrolling, we're absorbing nothing of value. Okay. And unfortunately, this is where the Lord was telling me when I went through that short period, thankfully, of being under that cloud, not being able to think clearly, not being able to grasp a hold of anything, even hearing a sermon and going as soon as I walk out the door.

[47 : 15] I mean, it was that fast that it was gone out of my mind. It was like, what happened? And because I've trained my brain from, that's what we are doing.

Again, if this pertains to you, take it. If it doesn't, still be on guard. Because black eyes, man, don't think, oh, I got it. I got it.

It'll never happen to me. So this rolls over into our spiritual life. Nothing sticks. Okay. This is so, it's so close, us doing this stuff, it is so close to an addiction, and we don't even realize we're being addicted, we're getting addicted to it.

What happens when we do this stuff, scrolling through stuff, getting on the social media and stuff, looking for the likes, that it starts to release, not starts, whenever this happens, it releases dopamine every time you get a notification.

Did you realize that? I did, again, did some studies on this. You are scrolling, or you're sitting there, your phone's down, all of a sudden you get a little ding, you hear the little ding. Well, that releases dopamine.

[48 : 34] And dopamine is around the pleasure centers of the brain, and so it releases the chemical that gives us pleasure. So it's not a bad thing. Dopamine. Yay.

Everybody likes dopamine. Yay. Yay. But we're only supposed to have just so much of it, because it can be an overload in our body. And it's what gives addictions to things.

Pleasurable things release dopamine. You get a notification, somebody cares. Ding. So, ooh, validation. Yay. What they say, what they say. And the likes.

Yay. Yay. Somebody likes me. Somebody liked what I cleverly said. Oh, aren't I so smart? Aren't I so clever? What else can I write to get them to ding? We're like the little monkey.

Ding. Ooh. Play for the monkey here. And give me my food. Ooh, ooh, ooh. So, the statistics back in 2017, they said between 8% and 10% of people were addicted.

[49 : 37] If you look at these statistics now, they say, but you have to look at them carefully, because they're trying to hide it now, how many people are addicted, because I think it's getting to be an epidemic, so to speak.

And from everything that I weeded through to find stuff, it's as high as 49% now of people. So, half of us are addicted to social media, addicted to our phones.

Hmm. Crazy. That's a high number. Again, they've done studies, so that's how they know what is happening.

So, you get dopamine, a burst of dopamine every time you get notifications, when you get likes, when you even simply get comments. Um, um, and over time, what's happening is that your brain is

rewiring itself, because it craves the dopamine rewards for looking at these different things. It rewires itself. So, that means, what's happening? It's, oh, this is, so now all of a sudden, we, we, we, we have to have it.

[50 : 58] And we are, again, like that trained monkey. Ding. With, oh. Because we're wired to do it. We'll get into some other things about that in just a second here.

Um, the part that makes me the most angry, the developers knew about this dopamine thing when they created the algorithm for, um, Pinterest, for, um, uh, uh, Facebook, for, uh, chit-chat, whatever. I don't know what these things are called. You guys know, I don't know. I have, I don't know. Like I said, I'm not on any of this stuff. Although I do find myself on Pinterest and mindlessly scrolling through things.

And, uh, um, anyway. So, they knew that going into this. That's why they created the algorithms. And I know I'm giving you guys an education here.

And I'm not, I am meaning to because this is part of the scheme of Satan. And understand, keep, please keep that in the back of your mind here. That this is all a scheme of Satan.

[52 : 06] This is all planned by him. To why? To get us to make our thoughts astray from following Jesus. Right? From having a true, sincere, pure relationship with Jesus.

That's its whole goal. Remember that. All right? Um, so don't think that it's harmless. Don't think that, oh, it's no big deal. It's not doing that much to me. So, the developers knew this and they exploited it.

And I don't normally say this. And I would not normally, um, uh, um, encourage, uh, to see a particular show. This one is on Netflix and it's called The Social Dilemma.

Okay? It is put out, um, it's a documentary and it's all about, um, the, uh, Facebook. It's got different, uh, CEOs, past CEOs, uh, that they interview and stuff.

And they talk about it. And the CEOs won't even let their own children on these sites. They say, uh-uh. We know what we developed.

[53 : 11] And in fact, it's gotten so out of control that they don't know how to turn it off. The people are so entrenched in this stuff that if they turn it off, what would it do to society?

They're worried about that. So, it's a, it's a very fascinating, um, documentary. Um, again, I normally don't, uh, it's a secular one.

So, it's not done, um, a Christian didn't put this together and say, oh, this is the stuff that's happening. No, this is the secular world that's saying this is what is happening with these apps out there.

Social Dilemma is what it's called. I encourage you to see it. It may remake you think what you do on social media or on the internet at all.

Okay? We are sold as a commodity with these programs, with this algorithm. That's their purpose of, that's their purpose of doing it, is to sell you as a commodity because they sell you how many hits you have on this site, that site, because then that's where they put the advertisements and stuff.

[54 : 22] So, that's their reason for doing it. They're just raking in the bucks. So, you got people, or you have, uh, companies that are bidding for your, um, information because, and they'll pay for it.

The highest bidder gets it. And it's, all the stuff is done, because it's all computerized, it's done so quickly. Just, it's, anyway, it's crazy. Um, uh, and then to keep you interested, to keep you scrolling, to keep you, um, on that, uh, platform that they continually send you feeds of things that they know you like.

You clicked on the, the, uh, um, dogs, and so, I'm going to send you more dogs. You know, you think these dogs are cute? I'm going to keep you on this platform longer because the longer you stay on it, the more money I make.

And what's happening behind the scenes, the more dopamine that's being poured in me because they're cute dogs. That's a pleasure. Oh, this is so nice. I like this. Nothing wrong with cute dogs, obviously, right?

But here becomes the problem with these feeds, this steady diet that you're getting of your likes. Okay? Guess what? That's all you're being fed.

[55 : 47] That's what's partly dividing the country. That's what's partly dividing so many people because all you're being fed are the things that you like, your point of view, your way of looking at something.

And so, politically, if you're a Republican, whatever, Democrat, you, you look, your, your tendency is to look at this type of news or these type of articles.

And so, it goes, oh, that person likes this. Okay? Send them all this stuff all about this. If, um, you know, a Trump basher, um, we can dump on them real good here and here.

Every article I'm going to send you talks bad about Trump. Again, getting in place. Or it talks bad about Biden. Or it makes fun of them. Or whatever. It's, it, it, that's all it feeds you.

The danger in that is, again, is it never gives you the other side. All you get is one side. You're lopsided. And so, you think this is how the world should be.

[56 : 49] Instead of realizing, wait a minute, there's two sides to every story. Isn't there? And we know that, uh, the good old reliable, you know, whatever's on the internet, you can trust.

We know that. Right? Shoot, yeah. So, if it's on there, it's gotta be true. What's that old commercial? It was on there. It's gotta be true. And, um, uh, so anyway, we never get the other side of the story.

We never get another opinion in there. And so, we got the people who think like this, and the people who think like this. Totally divided. That's all it's doing to us, as human beings.

Let alone our country. Or I should say, it's happening to our country, let alone to us as human beings in our personal relationships. It's getting in there so far that it's now dividing, uh, into families and stuff.

Not, uh, gotta be aware of these, these things that are going on. Um, dopamine effects. This is what happens when dopamine happens.

[57 : 51] Again, these are studies, and they know these things for, for a fact. When you get too much dopamine, oh, by the way, when, uh, this dopamine that's released, it's up to, and almost always, a hundred percent increase of dopamine of what you would normally get.

That's how strong this release is of this dopamine. Of course we want it. No wonder why we want it. No wonder why we want the ding. Woo, woo, yay.

All right? So, the dopamine effect also decreases mental clarity, because you're too busy thinking about pleasure. So, mental clarity, I don't need that.

It's a type of hypnotism, okay? Um, it also decreases your focus, and these are, these are words that are, uh, in, in the, um, um, articles of these studies that they've done.

It creates a foggy head. It makes you out of sorts. It makes you unable to retain information. It gives you memory loss. It makes your mind lazy.

[59 : 01] It makes it difficult to concentrate. Huh. Those very things that the Lord had me go through, I didn't know anything about any of this stuff, until I finally came out of my fog, and I said, okay, this is what I want you to give it on, the talk.

Okay? But I had to live it first, so that I could relate. It also creates this dopamine, uh, also creates stress. Too much, I'm, I'm talking too much dopamine here.

When we get in, in too much of it, it creates stress. It can, uh, which in turn, uh, gives us higher blood pressure. And here was an interesting one.

It actually, um, melatonin, we've heard of that before. It's something good that helps us sleep. It's a natural occurring thing in our brain, and it's supposed to be released at night, uh, when it's time to go to sleep.

And, uh, but dopamine suppresses that. It counteracts it. So, maybe, maybe, I don't, again, you guys have to figure this all out for yourselves, personally.

[60 : 05] Um, that if you're having trouble sleeping, that maybe too much dopamine is in your body. Uh, anyway. Um, being addicted or obsessed with social media is essentially, we're making an idol out of it, and we place it before God.

Because we, we even will, uh, forego, um, having a quiet time. We'll forego, uh, studying. We'll forego meditating on something the Lord's trying to tell us.

Because we're too busy with social media. We're busy. Uh, I heard it said, there was, and I forget who said it. But, but social media will be the, uh, or it, um, eradicates the excuse that we say we don't have time for, uh, Bible study.

We don't have time for, um, meditation. We don't have time for the things of the Lord, uh, because, obviously, we have time for social media. We got time for that.

That's something that maybe could be curtailed. I know, I'm not saying you wipe this stuff out completely. I'm not saying that. But, in moderation. Um, signs of addiction.

[61 : 20] So, you ask yourself these things. Signs of addiction. First thing you think of or look at in the morning is your phone. Or get onto one of the platforms.

Uh, another one is that you spend way too much time on it. In fact, when you look up, hours have gone by. That's an indication of an addiction. Um, another one is you reach for your phone often to check notifications and likes or comments.

It's just, you know, that's what you're looking for, those rewards. Boom, boom, boom. Um, that ding, train the monkey. Um, another, uh, possible thing of being addicted is, um, sign of it is while you're with others in person, that you may be sitting there with them, but you're on your phone.

You're not even engaged in a conversation with them because you're too engaged in your phone.

How often do we see that? I see it at lunchtime at my work all the time. Man, it's amazing.

Uh, you've got all these people in a lunchroom. Plenty to talk about because, you know, you work in the same place and going through the same things, but nope, everybody's on their phone.

[62 : 36] Hypnotized, mesmerized. Screaming, scrolling through. Oh, addicted, maybe. Um, if you get stressed out or anxious about not getting likes or followers, you're getting stressed out.

I'm not getting, nobody's liking me. Nobody's following me. I'm not getting them. If that's happening to you and you're getting stressed out about it, you got an addiction. And here's a big one.

Um, you panic when you leave your phone at home. Oh, no. I didn't bring my phone. Where's my phone? Where's my phone? It's my lifeline. It's my life.

We get so engrossed in our phones in an alternate reality, basically, that we start to neglect too many everyday things.

Okay? Our productivity at work goes downhill because we're too busy on our phones. We're not doing what we're getting paid for. Um, our health goals, you know, we may have health goals.

[63 : 45] I'm going to go exercise or do something like that or eat right. But no, I was on my phone so long. I ain't, I don't have time to cook a nice meal. So, I'm going down to the McDonald's or I'm going to pop something in the microwave that's, again, something that's not healthy for me.

So, our health goals go out the window. Our home organization. Dishes are stacking up. You know, I ain't got time for dishes. Scroll, scroll, scroll. On and on it goes.

Again, studying God's word. You know, to think what's the sad part also about this, and I think about this at work, because lives all around us are falling apart.

We don't know it. Too busy here. We don't even know what's going on around us. Just, nope. Me and my own little world. Me, me, me. All about me.

So, this is, this is a, the, one of the schemes of Satan. I just wanted to point that out, that this is one of them. Think about it.

[64 : 56] One of the solutions, or try it, I guess, and you'll find that it's extremely difficult, and that's try fasting from your phone. You might find out how addicted you really are.

It may surprise you. But I will tell you, the results will be the opposite of what the addiction is doing to you.

All these things of being foggy mind, and not being able to remember things. Stress, not being able to sleep, on and on. Those different things that occur with too much dopamine. That the opposite will start happening.

Okay? You won't be as stressed. Because life still stresses it out. We get it. Okay? Why do we want to add to it with our phones? But anyway, so try fasting from your phone.

But remember that to truly get freed from stuff, like anything else, we can only do it, and it can only be achieved through the power of the Holy Spirit.

[65 : 57] We need help. We're mere humans. Okay? We're susceptible. Satan knows it. That's why he introduces it to us. It works.

It's been working. It worked. It just, again, packaged different way back then. But this is how it looks in our day and age. So that's what we need to think about. Okay? Don't be ignorant of the schemes of the devil to pull you away, to pull your thoughts away from a pure and sincere walk with Jesus.

Okay? A few scriptures I'll just throw out there. We already know them. But just reminders.

Self-control is the fruit of the Spirit.

That's out of Galatians 5. And in Proverbs 25, 28, it says, A man without self-control is like a city broken into, left without walls.

The walls, of course, of a city was its security. You built those up and you were secure. You build yourself up with the Word of God.

[67 : 04] You put that hedge around for protection. But if you don't have any self-control, you're like a city broken into. You're defeated. Right? We're told in Galatians 5 also is to walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

That's a type of lust of the flesh, this phone stuff. So walk in the Spirit and you won't fulfill that. That doesn't mean you're not going to do it. Right? But you're going to do it in moderation and you're going to do it in a holy manner instead of being deceived.

Lay aside every sin that ensnares us, Hebrew tells us. Is this a sin for you? If it is, get rid of it. If it's something you just cannot control, get rid of it.

We're told that if your right hand causes you to stumble, what are you supposed to do? Chop it off. Does that mean he really want us to chop off our hand? No, he's saying do something drastic to change it.

A drastic measure is what it takes. So if you just can't help yourself, you keep going to websites or doing something that you should not be doing, get rid of it.

[68 : 19] If that's what it takes, lay aside every sin that ensnares us. Again, don't be ignorant of the schemes of the devil.

Stand firm after you put on the full armor of God because we need that. Right? Let's pray. Father, I thank you for your word today, for your exhortation.

And I just ask that we would take it to heart, that we would not become numb to it. We would not become haughty in our own thoughts and think that I don't have a problem with that.

And if that is true, Father, that you have delivered people from it, because you have. But maybe lead them to somebody else that needs help. And just so, Father, that we can have a right relationship with you and realize that you are the most important thing and not all these other things that we get distracted with.

Anything that was said today, Father, I ask that if it's from me, that it just be forgotten. If it's from you, that it would be retained.

[69 : 46] And one more time, we thank you for your word. We thank you for loving us so much that you don't leave us where we're at. But you bring also correction to those whom you love.

You exhort us. And all this is part of our sanctification. And we say this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.