

## THE DEVIL MADE ME DO IT

One of my favorite shows when I was a child was the Flip Wilson Show where Flip would play the Reverend Leroy with the four deacons sitting behind him, and their “Amens!” filling the air. But I think for many of us our favorite character was the brash Geraldine Jones. The Geraldine Jones character was based on an old girlfriend and then Flip transformed himself into Geraldine by donning a dress, and speaking in a falsetto voice and the audiences would go crazy for Geraldine and her famous line. This catch phrase was so good it made the t-shirts in the 60’s. *The devil made me do it* was the cry.

*The devil made me do it* was a phrase that was heard often in various situation and it is still being used today. Why was it so popular? Probably for the same reason the phrase *Pass the Buck* was first recorded back in Genesis. The story is a familiar one—a classic excuse—remember Adam’s answer when asked, *Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?*

*The woman whom You gave to be with me, she...*

And the Lord God said to the woman, *what is this you have done?*

*Hey, don’t blame me! It was that snake! Yeah, it’s his fault. The snake said... (Paraphrased)*

Thus we see the old Adam’s sin nature come into play; the attempted avoidance of responsibility. We could say that that sin nature was ingrained in our nature back in the Garden. Every generation has come under its evil influences and Satan and his powers of darkness have capitalized, drawn advantages from, the lies. The enemy will take every advantage he can get and turn it against God’s people.

Satan will launch attacks through lies and subtle suggestions. He will cause us to question what is true, while suggesting that what we hold true is really false. He mocks our belief on righteousness, belittling it when we exercise it and accusing us when we do not walk in the integrity of God. He will even try to get the child of God to question their salvation. Why? Because he hates God’s Word and the power and authority a child of God has as we declare the Word and call it into every situation we are confronted with by the enemy.

I remember well the cartoons I saw as a child. We still see them occasionally in movies or advertisements. In fact, I just saw an ad the other day for a dessert. It showed a picture of a tiny angel seated on a woman’s shoulder, whispering in her ear encouragement to do good (don’t eat the gooey dessert loaded with calories; resist—don’t give in). While a tiny devil—complete with horns, a pitchfork in a red outfit and tail—whispers temptation to sin in the other ear. *Eat it! You deserve a treat. You can work it off tomorrow; come on, enjoy it while you can. What harm can it do?*

We see people use the phrase *the devil made me do it* to explain any bad behavior on their part and apparently to rationalize away any personal responsibility for wrong doing. Sad to say, I was one of those people. I used that phrase a lot. I thought it was cute and the little wink and knowing look I gave with it also said, I know it's wrong, but hey, *the devil made me do*.

We cannot keep listening to these whispers, these promptings to close our eyes and ears to responsibilities and set aside our commitments so we can *live a little*. *Party hardy* and *just do it* and *grab for the gusto* and the many phrases that we use as excuses to do what the flesh and our sinful nature dictates will come under the light of the Holy Spirit of God—some time or another, and then what excuse will you use?

Throughout the Old and the New Testament this evil adversary is mentioned. We are not left ignorant of the enemy we fight against; God reveals—exposes him. In Matthew, Jesus calls him the enemy, the evil one, and Satan. John of the Gospels calls this evil being the devil, the ruler of this world, a murderer, a liar, and the father of lies. Luke tells the story of Jesus and his experience with the devil during His forty-day fast in the wilderness, during which Satan tempted Him with “every temptation” (Luke 4:13). Paul, Peter, and Revelation all speak of the devil.

We are all familiar with Paul and his struggle to do good and the battle he fights internally. We can relate to Paul when he says In Romans 7 *For the good that I wish to do I don't do, but find myself practicing that very evil that I do not wish to do*. So what is the answer? What do I do?

## **PLENTY!**

Beloved, take the Bible at its word, and you will know the truth where Satan is concerned and you will have the power, authority and weapons to fight him when he comes around with his lies and falsehoods; his untruths. Listed below are just a few of the scriptures we can declare, and stand upon to break the lies that blind us and then try to bind us.

### **Using the New Living Translation OR when noted**

1 Peter 5:8 – *stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.*

Romans 6:11-12 – *So you also should consider yourselves to be dead to the power of sin and alive to God through Christ Jesus. Do not let sin control the way you live, do not give in to sinful desires.*

Numbers 32:23 - *But if you fail to keep your word, then you will have sinned against the Lord, and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.*

James 4:7-8 – *So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world.*

Ephesians 6:11-12 – *Put on all of God's armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.*

John 18:37 – *For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice (NASB).*

## **PRAYER**

Thank You Heavenly Father for your goodness of each day and for Your love, grace and mercy that touches our lives again and again. Thank You for the plan of salvation and for sending Your beloved Son to earth to destroy the works of the devil. Thank You God for Your holy Word that is our authority and power against the powers of darkness; You are our hope in the most dire of circumstances and in You, Lord Jesus, we have the steadfastness of Your person to hold us steady when the winds of hell blow against us. You have planted our feet firmly in the Rock; the Lord Jesus. Thank You for giving us the ability of choice on how we will live and the paths that we will walk upon. Thank You for the choice of light that will guide us into the night.

You are our God, and You have established what is right and what is wrong and you sent the Holy Spirit as our Comforter, Teacher and Healer. Thank You that You are with us in every phrase of our journey of life here on earth and for the future You have planned out for Your children. Thank You for Your love; our gift that no one deserves, yet You Father, freely give for Your love is free to all those who freely accept it. Thank You that You count me as worthy Lord Jesus and gave Your life that I might have salvation and my life written in the Lamb's Book of Life. You are my all in all. Amen.