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FOLKS  
Like Us

SATAN

“Unmasking The Opposition”

Timeless truths from our ancient past,  
for a journey with God in the modern era.

**Fran Sciacca**

## “*Folks Like Us*” — an introduction

Over the years I’ve written and published a number of Bible studies that collectively have sold well over a half-million copies. They were forged, most of them, in the furnaces of pain, doubt, and loneliness. Maybe that’s why they were well-used, they touched people where they hurt most.

Recently, my publisher decided that they no longer wanted to handle the books that contained these 60 or so individual studies. So, I’ve decided to make them available to any who might benefit from them. At no cost.

I have always believed that because God thought it best to become human in the Incarnation, that perhaps “incarnational truth” was His preferred method of revealing Himself and His purposes to us. I suppose that’s where the basic genre of these studies originated. I wanted to provide believers with Bible studies rooted in our ancestral past. The lives of men and women, who it turns out, are “folks just like us” in so many ways.

So, please take your time and work slowly through as many of these studies as you care to do... there’s a lot of them! And may God use the combination of the struggles and insights of your *ancient* brothers and sisters, combined with those of mine, your modern brother, to help you in your spiritual journey. That is the goal of this project.

Warmly in The Lamb,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Fran Sciacca". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fran Sciacca  
Birmingham, AL

# SATAN

## “Unmasking The Opposition”

**A**BIDING PRINCIPLE – For the believer, the evil intentions of Satan are always connected to the good purposes of God. But the fact remains that the one who forever hates us, seeks to destroy the work of the One who forever loves us.

*“If I take on Jesus as my Lord, I take on the devil as my enemy.”*

—Michael Green

Satan will never pen an authentic autobiography. His preference is for others to write about him, based on misinformation, mystery, and misunderstanding. For someone who speaks only three times in Scripture, Satan has quite a reputation. C. S. Lewis said that the two greatest errors we can make about the Devil are to discount him completely, or to have an unhealthy pre-occupation with him. But a third and perhaps more serious error is to be *misinformed* about him. Fortunately for us, the Bible is replete with both biographical and historical insight about Satan. We can know who he is and what he is about in our lives and in the world.

In modern times, Satan has been blamed for everything from the Holocaust to COVID. Caricatures of him abound both in literature and in the media. Even Hollywood has found his character to be a steady source of financial revenue because of endless interest and intrigue about him. While it's true that Satan is the epitome of evil and the antithesis of all that is good, his designs to disqualify God's work in His children may be successful because of his innate *deceitfulness* and our simple *ignorance*.

**KEY SCRIPTURE:** Luke 22:7-34

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### STUDY QUESTIONS...

1. Isaiah 14:12-16 is often understood to be a cryptic description of the fall of Satan from heaven, prior to the creation of man (see Luke 10:18). From verses 13-14, summarize what appears to be Satan's primary ambition.
  - a. What further evidence for this can you see in the passages below?
    - (1) Genesis 3:1-5 –
  
    - (2) Matthew 4:8-10 –
  
    - (3) 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 –

2. Read Job 1:6-11 and 2:1-5. What was Satan's *real* intent as he dealt with Job? Explain.
3. In both Hebrew and Greek, Satan's name can be translated "adversary," meaning "*one who opposes another in purpose or act.*" Look at 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 and Revelation 13:6. These two passages describe the activity of global evil figure near history's end called the Antichrist. We also find insight regarding Satan's ultimate purposes in these verses. Based on what you've discovered, who is Satan's *primary* adversary? Explain.
4. Based on his statement to the Christians in Corinth in 2 Corinthians 2:11, what was one of Paul's primary concerns for them?

There are further insights about Satan in this verse. What do you see?

5. Read Ephesians 2:10. How would you describe *Satan's* perspective on "God's workmanship" in your life?
  - a. Paul provides further insight into Satan's tactics for believers in 2 Corinthians 11:3. What do you think this means, and what might it look like as it unfolds (think about your own life)?
6. If *God's* purpose for your life is to progressively transform you to resemble Jesus, what must Satan's purpose be?
7. Do you think Satan's primary "work" is in your thoughts or in the circumstances of your life? Explain.
8. Read Romans 8:28-29. The "good" that God works "all things" towards in verse 28 is what Paul talks about in verse 29 (i.e., Christlikeness). How should this affect the way we view difficulty, suffering, and our own failure that result from sin?

9. The following verses expose two enterprises: God's goal to transform us to the image of Christ, and Satan's plan to derail the purposes of God. Read each passage and explain each strategy.

God's Goal

Satan's Plan

Luke 22:31-32 –

2 Corinthians 1:8-10 –

Ephesians 4:26-27 -

Philippians 4:6-7 –

Hebrews 12:5-8 –

Hebrews 12:14-15 –

1 Peter 5:8-10 –

10. As we consider the tactics of Satan, what truth and comfort can we find in Romans 8:28-31?

11. In your own words, summarize the relationship between spiritual transformation and spiritual warfare.

## LOOKING BACK...

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In the Bible, we discover that Satan can orchestrate sickness, death, and dissension among people—especially gods people. He can also masquerade as a "murderer, a "thief," and "the accuser of the brethren." However, Satan's primary passion has not changed since he was expelled from the host of heaven. He wants to *be* God, and he harshly opposes anyone who resembles God. If the work of the Holy Spirit in the believers life can be described as progressively

making us *more* like Jesus, then the desired work of God's enemy must be to progressively make us *less* like Jesus. Satan's goal is that we look less and less like Jesus every day. And he employs all the same "all things" God uses to conform us to the likeness of his Son. But we must choose who we will be partners with, because one process or the other *will prevail!*( Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18). Our encouragement and hope comes from the indisputable truth that within the circumference of God's sovereignty, Satan himself is one of the "all things" that God can use for his glory and our spiritual transformation.

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. What do the following passages teach about Satan and your transformation?
  - a. Hebrews 2:14 –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. 1John 3:8 –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. 1 John 4:4 –
  
2. As a result of this study, explain how your thinking has been challenged or changed in the following areas:
  - a. Satan's primary goal for your life –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. The relationship between God and Satan –
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. The relationship between spiritual progress and spiritual warfare –
  
3. Paul addresses the constant conflict between the plans of God and the plans of Satan in Romans 12:1-2. What's the solution, and what do you think this would look like in your life?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Read Ephesians 6:10-18 (especially note verse 17). How can you apply this strategy in a practical way in your own struggle against the purposes of Satan?

5. Assuming that you have learned some new things, what affect should your discoveries about spiritual warfare and sanctification have on:
  - a. Your prayer life—*who* you pray for, *what* you pray for, and *when* you pray
  - b. Why you need to memorize Scripture –
  - c. Why you read and study the Bible –
  - d. Why you need to resolve conflicts in your relationships –
  - e. Why you should aggressively resist bitterness –
6. Look back over this study and find at least two verses that you will memorize to help you stand against the schemes of Satan in your life. Ask a friend or family member to check in on your progress in a week.
  - a. verse #1 -
  - b. verse #2 -
7. Look back over your responses to question 5. Select one area where you've seen that you've given Satan a foothold in the past through neglect or an improper perspective. Put an X next to it and write out two specific things you will do this week to recapture this lost ground.

#### SCRIPTURE MEMORY (optional)

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- The nature of the fight - Ephesians 6:10-12
- The Enemy's "scheme"- 2 Corinthians 11:3