

Six of Satan's Favorite Conflict Phrases

"Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." James 4:7

Satan promotes conflict in many ways. Among other things, he tempts us so we give in to greed and dishonesty (Acts 5:3), he deceives us and misleads us (2 Tim. 2:25-26), and he takes advantage of unresolved anger (Eph. 4:26-27). Worst of all, he uses false teachers to propagate values and philosophies that encourage selfishness and stimulate controversy (1 Tim. 4:1-3). Here are some of the expressions that often reflect the devil's lies and influence:

1. "Look out for Number One."
2. "God helps those who help themselves."
3. "Surely God doesn't expect me to stay in an unhappy situation."
4. "I'll forgive you, but I won't forget."
5. "Don't get mad, get even."
6. "I deserve better than this."

Satan prefers that we do not recognize his role in our conflicts. As long as we see other people as our only adversaries and focus our attacks on them, we will give no thought to guarding against our most dangerous enemy.

Adapted from The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict
by Ken Sande, Updated Edition (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 2003) pp. 50-51.

Food for Thought

Read Jesus' responses to Satan's temptations in Matthew 4:1-11. Note that in contrast to Satan's favorite expressions noted above, none of Jesus' responses contain the word, "I". What's more, none of Jesus' responses to Satan even contain the word, "you"--usually our second favorite word in conflict! How do we prevent Satan from getting a foothold in our conflicts? We keep our conflict responses (and our words) God-centered, remembering that if God is not at the center of our thoughts during a conflict, Satan will be altogether too happy to quietly take God's place.