

"The Devil's Math"

1. He ADDS extra biblical sources of authority.
2. He SUBTRACTS from the person and work of Jesus Christ.
3. He MULTIPLIES the requirements for salvation.
4. He DIVIDES your loyalty from God and Christ by emphasizing the importance of another "religious figure."

Matthew 28:18; John 14:6; Galatians 2:11-20 and 1 Corinthians 1:10-31 should be sufficient to support the principles listed in "The Devil's Math".

The picture is interesting, but I like to see examples, so I thought of Jesus' encounter with the Devil. It is found in Matthew chapter 4 and shows how the Devil works...

Matthew 4 (World English Bible)

- 1** Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.
- 2** When he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was hungry afterward.

- 3 The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread."
- 4 But he answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'"
- 5 Then the devil took him into the holy city. He set him on the pinnacle of the temple,
- 6 and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, 'He will put his angels in charge of you.' and, 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you don't dash your foot against a stone.'"
- 7 Jesus said to him, "Again, it is written, 'You shall not test the Lord, your God.'"
- 8 Again, the devil took him to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory.
- 9 He said to him, "I will give you all of these things, if you will fall down and worship me."
- 10 Then Jesus said to him, "Get behind me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and you shall serve him only.'"

Consider the following thoughts...

Satan will attack you when you are the most vulnerable. Vs, 2

When we are under stress, sometimes we just do not think clearly or logically. Stress can come in a variety of forms; sickness, danger, problems, worry, etc.. The one Satan took advantage of was Jesus' hunger. Jesus didn't succumb to Satan's temptation, but rather looked to God in times of stress; so should we!

Satan will try to create doubt in your mind. Vs. 3

Satan is clever, he knows that if he can't create doubt in your mind, he has won the battle. Remember Adam and Eve? Doubt led to disobedience and sin. Don't ever doubt God's love, for HE will take care of you. Beware when someone who uses the word "If" a lot, you will be glad you did.

Satan will try to get you to do something you shouldn't in order to achieve a supposed "good" goal Vs 3-6

Jesus could have turned the stones into bread, but if he did, that would have shown that he really didn't trust God to take care of him. As far as throwing himself down- what would be the point of that? It would have been an unnecessary test of God, and a sinful thing to do. Satan is in fact trying to goad Jesus into doing something he knows is wrong. This sounds a lot like those times I heard "I dare you to do that" or "I double dare you to do that", and also remember those accepted dares didn't end well.

Satan will offer you something "better than what God has given you" 8-10

God loves us and gives all we need. The unbridled acquisition of power, wealth and possessions is chasing after the wind – it is foolishness and can be very sinful. Also, God is God and Satan is merely a fallen angel. Put God first and he will bless you.

In this chapter, Satan tries to put a wedge between Jesus and his heavenly father, but our savior responds with the Scriptures. We should do the same. Know your enemy, understand how evil works and avoid sin at all costs. If you want to think about math, go to 2 Peter 1:5ff. And grow in grace and knowledge!