

The Accuser Versus the Intercessor

By Dave Butts

We live in a time of spiritual intensity. There is a very clear battle going on for the souls of men and women. It is not a time for drawing back or shirking our responsibilities. For Christians especially, every word and action counts for something. It is a time of choices, where those choices may mean life or death.

Though this battle is being fought on many fronts, I want to focus today on the words that come out of our mouths. Words are powerful weapons in this war. They have the power to heal or destroy. It's why the Bible has so many commands concerning our mouths and how we use what we say. We have very clear choices every time we open our mouths. Most of us recognize that fact. What we may not have seen is that when we speak we are making a choice between two people...two lifestyles.

As we speak we are deciding whether we are going to follow the Accuser of the brethren or the Intercessor for the brethren. By the words that come from our mouths we demonstrate whether we are following Satan or Jesus. In Revelation 12:10, Satan is called "the Accuser of our brothers." In Hebrews 7:25, we are told that Jesus "always lives to intercede" for us. The Accuser versus the Intercessor—whose side are you on?

The vast majority of you reading this article would immediately say, "We follow Jesus, the Intercessor!" But I would say to you that your words spoken in everyday life might betray you. Let's look at how the Accuser operates:

Dean Sherman, in his great teaching on spiritual warfare, demonstrates that Satan, as the Accuser of the brethren, comes

against us in accusation in three ways:

1. He accuses us before God
2. He accuses us before men, and
3. He accuses us before ourselves.

When Satan accuses us before God, he is defeated most readily. He points out our sins to God and demands justice. Fortunately, in the court of Heaven we have an advocate—a defense attorney who has never lost a case. His name is Jesus. His plea on our behalf is always the same. “Your Honor, the defendant is indeed guilty, but the penalty has been paid. I Myself paid the ultimate penalty for his sin and died in his place.” The Judge of the living and the dead always rules in our favor—not guilty!

It is in the area of accusing us before others that Satan seems to be the most effective. He uses other people to accuse us . . . sometimes for real things we have done . . . sometimes falsely. But these words of accusation and criticism harm us and bring damage to our lives.

What is so serious about this is that Satan often uses Christians’ words to damage other Christians. We must ask ourselves, “Are we doing the Accuser’s ministry for him? Are we carrying around in us the weapons of the Enemy—words of anger, bitterness and criticism?”

We must understand that there is no spiritual gift of criticism, though many seem to think so by their actions. Criticism seems to come naturally to all of us. We say absurd things such as, “Well . . . I’m entitled to my opinions about that person.” Who said so? Where did you find such a thing in Scripture? All I find is that I have been crucified and that it is no longer I who live, but Christ living in me. The only opinion that matters is that of Jesus. And the only thing I want to hear coming out my mouth about a brother or sister in Christ, is the opinion of Christ. Who am I to judge the

servant of my Master?

How are we to avoid such a grievous sin? Could I suggest that we make a pledge to ourselves? Perhaps a pledge such as this: "I will speak no evil of anyone. If I feel that it is necessary to rebuke a brother or sister because of sin, I will do so only after I have asked my Lord for permission to do so." Truly living out such a pledge would keep our mouths shut much more, but would keep our lives free from being followers of the Accuser.

The third area the Accuser operates in is to accuse us to ourselves. Many Christians go through life feeling condemned and worthless. That's not God; that's the Accuser. Satan will even try to get us to beat up on ourselves, talking about what miserable persons we are. Dean Sherman spoke a line once that I have never forgotten. He said, "Never let yourself hear yourself say untrue things about yourself." Satan is a liar. And if possible, he'll get you to believe his lies about yourself, rather than to believe what God has said about you as His child. He has said that you are redeemed, bought by a price, and made holy by the blood of Jesus.

There is a much better way for us to follow than the way of the Accuser. It is the way of Jesus, the Intercessor. Hebrews 7:25 says, speaking of Jesus, "Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them." The present day ministry of Jesus is that of intercession. He is praying for us. What wonderful assurance! Jesus is continually before the Throne of His Father on our behalf.

What is really exciting is that you and I are called to join Jesus in His present day ministry. We are called to intercede—especially for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Paul, in his command to intercede in 1 Timothy 2:1-4 focuses our prayers especially on leaders. I want to encourage you to

pray for leaders. They have great responsibility and because of that face even greater attacks from the enemy. Satan has limited forces and focuses his attacks on those in leadership, whether it is among nations, or in the Church. If the Enemy can take down a leader, many other people are usually badly damaged. So Paul tells us, “pray...for all those in authority.”

Dave Butts is the co-founder and president of [Harvest Prayer Ministries](#). The content of this article is expanded upon in his book, [The Devil Goes to Church](#). [A cd of Butts teaching](#) on the subject is also available.