

## The Attacks Of The Devil

They never saw it coming! By the time they realized what happened 24,000 souls were dead, Numbers 25:1-2. The text says, ***“While Israel remained at Shittim, the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab. For they invited the people to the sacrifices of their gods, and the people ate and bowed down to their gods.”*** Things seemed to be going well for Israel, but all of that would change. They disobeyed God and engaged in sexual immorality. How did this happen? The devil attacked them. He used Balaam and Balak to help God’s people to fall, Numbers 31:16. ***“Behold, these caused the sons of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to trespass against the LORD in the matter of Peor, so the plague was among the congregation of the LORD.”*** The devil wants to defeat us, 1 Peter 5:8. Sexual immorality is just one way that the devil will attempt to defeat us. Let me give you four other tactics that the devil has used in times past and will use against us. He is evil, he is strong, and he wants us. To help us to know our enemy we should consider the attacks he made against the church in the first century. We also need to know how God’s people overcame those attacks. The devil...

1. Used the ***FEAR FACTOR***. He wanted to silence God’s people from speaking about Jesus, Acts 4:1-4, 5:17-23, 33, 40-42, 7:54-58.
2. He used the ***FAKE FACTOR***. Sadly the devil achieved his mission with two Christians, Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-5. While this couple may have appeared to be godly, they had evil intentions. They lied to the Holy Spirit. They were fakers. They thought that they could get away with it. They were wrong. While the devil won a battle, he had not won the war. The people of God continued in their pursuit of spreading the good news, Acts 5:12-14. They continued and so did the devil with his attacks.
3. He used the ***FUSS FACTOR***. The devil’s opportunity came in Acts 6:1-3. Some complaints arose. Certainly the brethren would devour one another. But the devil’s plan didn’t work, Acts 6:7.
4. He used the ***FALSE FACTOR***. A controversy in the church occurred regarding salvation, Acts 15:1-11. Some Jews believed Gentiles had to be circumcised in order to be saved. Yet the truth prevailed.

God’s people prevailed. But how did they do it? ***They kept their focus on Jesus.***

1. This is how they overcame the fear factor. They prayed for boldness to stand strong in the midst of persecution, Acts 4:29, 5:40-41.

2. This is how they overcame the fake factor. The punishment that Ananias and Sapphira received was death. Discipline was given. It had an impact among the brethren, Acts 5:11. God may not strike us dead but a day of reckoning is coming. We have no time to be fakers by acting one way on Sunday, and then living a life of sin the other six days a week. Judgment is coming.
3. This is how they overcame the fuss factor, Acts 6:1-6. The apostles were concerned about God's work. They devised a plan to preserve unity. It worked!
4. This is how they overcame the false factor. They stood on the apostles doctrine, Acts 2:42. This must be our attitude.

The devil never stops his attack toward God's people, Luke 4:13. Therefore, we must always be on the defense.

- Benjamin Lee