

**THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF
SIDNEY EDWARD COX**

Message: Satan's Substitutes

Editorial Note: What follows is one of a series of 3 sermons delivered by Sidney Cox on the subject of Satan: Satan's Strategy, Satan's Substitutes and Satan's Synagogue.

These sermons were delivered to the Grace Bible Church in Detroit, Michigan sometime in 1971. Sidney Cox was 84 years of age in 1971.

Sidney and Violet Cox resided in Detroit during their retirement years. In 1962, they retired to the Salvation Army retirement home in Detroit, "The Eventide." Violet was in failing health and ultimately died in 1967. Sidney continued residency there until a late in life move to Birmingham in 1972.

During the latter part of his life, Sidney Cox had developed a close relationship with the Christian and Missionary Alliance ("CMA"). CMA operates as a vast network of churches, similar to a "denomination." Grace Bible Church was a CMA church to which Sidney and Violet belonged during their years in Detroit. Sidney was often asked to lead Bible studies and often filled their pulpit to preach.

John Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney Cox. December 29, 2008.

...is one of the fundamental things we ought to do.

You know, we ought to go back every once in a while and learn to do our spiritual scale exercises. Now, those of you who play the piano, or try to, or have hoped you would, or have tried to get somebody else to do it – your children for instance, you know that one of the fundamental things are those scale exercises. Before a symphony ever appears, there's scale exercises, and if God is going to bring a symphony out of your life, my dear, He'll do it through the Word of God and He'll do it when we do our five-finger exercises. And these are some of them: the fact that Satan will imitate everything that God has done.

You'll remember, and I'm going to repeat a paragraph that I said last week, and I have it here before me so I can repeat it word for word, and this is what we said, "That Satan's big business is not making drunkards or harlots or thieves; he is not interested in sin as a nasty, obnoxious thing. He is not running the liquor business. He does not own the houses of ill fame. He is far more interested in human uplift than in human degradation. He wants the world to be a nice place to live in. He rules over it now and wants to continue to do so."¹

Whenever Satan is mentioned in the scripture, he is always in the company of holy, good, righteous people – church people; never with the worldly minded. Satan wants this world to be his world, not God's world; his program, not God's program; and Satan will oppose, if possible destroy, God's

¹ I do not have a copy of a sermon with this quotation, leading me to believe that I'm missing at least one sermon from this series. J. Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney Cox. November, 2010.

program and substitute for it his own program – his program for the betterment of the world; his program for uplift; his program that men will not be able to distinguish from God’s program; so subtly will it be presented; so obviously will it have good in it; so obviously will it appear to our intellects and to a lot of other things about us, and Satan is out to present a program, not only for the world in general, my dear, but he’ll present a program for your life, if you’ll listen, and you better be aware of it, that will be so like God’s program that it is difficult to distinguish the one from the other.

I think I mentioned to you a sermon subject that I saw on a church bulletin that I receive every week from the First Methodist Church in Atlanta, Georgia and the great pastor there preached on this subject: there is little difference between the saint and the sinner, but how important is that little difference.

Now, there’s very little difference between the saint and the sinner in so many things, but if there is one thing that ought to be distinguished by its clarity, surely it’s our personal prayer life. I suggested last week that Satan will attack us and substitute something at the very heart, the very essence of our prayer life. The two main things about your prayer life and mine, my dear, are these: our adoration and worship. And, for adoration, he will propose activity. The more we fail in our adoration of God, the more active we’ll be likely to come in order to make up for it. And instead of worship, work. Work for worship and activity for adoration. And when you think about it, my dear, if there is anything that is almost totally lost in the Christian church it’s both the meaning and the presence of adoration, and we know practically nothing about real worship. He’ll substitute anything for it.

Now, the reason for that of course is that what Satan is after is that we should worship him and before he can accomplish that purpose, he must spoil our worship of God – Satan’s Substitutes.

Now, here are some of the basics, the five-finger exercises. Let me remind you of one or two that we mentioned last week. One of the basic things we need to remind ourselves of is that salvation is by grace and not by works. Now, let me remind you of something else. I don’t know whether you noticed it, or whether you catch it now or not: I didn’t plan the beginning of this meeting tonight, but can you see who did? What were we singing about right at the beginning? What were we quoting right at the beginning? What was the subject that was brought before us, and I had nothing to do with it – absolutely nothing to do with it. Not at all. And yet here we were introduced to the subject of grace – grace, grace, grace, grace. You see.

And now I want to remind you that Satan imitates that basic thing of salvation by grace, and he does it by substituting works in the place of it and works appeals to every last one of us, whether we are saved or not. If we can just do something, do something, do something – my, what a lot of stuff and fault and failure and all the rest of it we seek to cover up by getting busier and busier, and doing and doing and doing. And that is exactly what Satan was looking for and once, and probably suggests for us.

Salvation is by grace alone. This is one of the basic things. We’ve been over it a thousand times – get out your spiritual fingers, my dear and go over that old scale, that old basic thing, let your fingers go and when you do, you will find God is taking some of these things that He’s reminding us of and putting them together in a beauty that’s indescribable.

We’re saved by grace and not by works. And if there is a thing that ought to be emphasized over and over and over again, it’s that great, basic fact that God saved by grace and not in anywise by

anything that we can claim merit or credit for - not one single thing. Not by works that we have done. Not by works. "By grace are ye saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It is a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast."²

I wrote a song several years ago with these words in the opening section of it. I wrote these words, and the song has gone all around the world and millions of people have been singing it and listening to the melody of it; for one of the greatest musicians that America ever produced wrote it into a cornet solo that is absolutely fabulous, and I'm speaking moderately there, I'm not going off the deep end, I know what I'm talking about. But Eric Leidzen set this to music,³ and the words were these:

I am amazed that the Saviour should die,
For sinners like me and like you,
That we may be saved by the work He has done,
And not by the works that we do.

² Ephesians 2:8.

³ Eric Leidzen is an internationally renowned Salvation Army musician, composer and arranger from England. He was very fond of the compositions of Sidney Cox. (Sidney Cox was a noted Salvation Army officer and musician/composer from 1910 – 1944.) Leidzen took the chorus melody of this Sidney Cox song *I Am Amazed* and arranged it into a spectacular variation cornet solo that gained wide acclaim, particularly among the leading cornet players in the world. Leidzen named his arrangement *Wondrous Day*.

" I AM AMAZED "

S.E.C. SIDNEY E. COX

1. I AM A-MAZED WHEN I THINK OF GOD'S LOVE, SO WON-DE-RFUL, MAR-VEL-LOUS AND
 2. I AM A-MAZED WHEN I THINK OF GOD'S GRACE, O WORD WITH THE HEAVEN LY
 3. I AM A-MAZED WHEN I THINK OF GOD'S SON, FROM GLORY TO CALVARY HE
 1. FREE, THE LOVE THAT COULD SEE, FROM E-TER-NI-TY, SOMETHING WORTH SAVING IN
 2. SOUND. FOR SINNERS CONDEMNED WHAT WAY COULD BE FOUND, MORE THAN SUFFICIENT GOD'S
 3. CAME. TO BEAR IN MY PLACE SIN'S DARKNESS AND SHAME, O WHAT A SAVIOUR, AND
 SINNERS LIKE ME, I AM AMAZED THAT THE SAVIOUR SHOULD DIE, FOR
 1. GRACE DID ABOUND.
 3. JE-SUS HIS NAME.
 SINNERS LIKE ME, AND LIKE YOU, THAT WE MAY BE SAVED BY THE WORK HE HAS DONE, AND
 NOT BY THE WORKS THAT WE DO, BUT IT'S TRUE, IT'S TRUE THIS
 WON-DE-RFUL STORY SO OLD, BUT SO NEW, I AM AMAZED THAT THE
 SAVIOUR SHOULD DIE, FOR SINNERS LIKE ME AND LIKE YOU.

Sidney Cox's original manuscript for *I Am Amazed*, written in the early 1950s while conducting a series of meetings for The Salvation Army in Texas.

And all I was doing when I was writing it was doing my five-finger exercises. That's all. We'd better do it and do it faithfully. We'd be a whole lot better in our Christian life, and there would be clarity and beauty and ease and power if a hundred times a day, and it wouldn't hurt us one bit, we said over to ourselves, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

And you're washing your dishes there and you wouldn't miss a beat while you're doing it; and you're driving along and you wouldn't miss a beat while you're doing it; and you're waiting for a red light there and you wouldn't miss a beat while you're doing it.

This is one of God's basic things and you can be quite sure that anything that is as important as that to God, and is as important as that to us, there's going to be a substitute for it. There sure is. There certainly will be. And there'll be the substitute that 9 folks out of 10 who look just as good as you are,

and probably are as good fall for it every time – the program of works and effort and development and a little more this week than we had last week; and a little more of this and a little more of that. Why 9 churches out of 10 estimate themselves and other people measure them by how much more we did this year than we did last year.

And here it is – this old sickening thing. I'm sure it's sickening to God, and so few folks are lifting hearts to God in prayer thanking Him that salvation is not by what we do, it's by what He has done. That's one of the basic things that's there.

Now, out of the midst of salvation by grace, there's a cross and there's blood, but Satan will suggest a way of salvation without a cross and without the blood, and without the person of the Saviour. And there are lots of folks who are quite interested in the mechanics of a religion, even that has a cross in it, even that mentions the blood occasionally; but their interest stops there and it doesn't go on to the one who hung upon the cross. There are thousands of people who will be singing either *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* or *The Old Rugged Cross* or something, and sing it without once ever thinking about the one who was there. I know I've done it scores of times – gone through the whole rig-a-marole there, and that's what it becomes when we lose sight of the person that was there. Satan doesn't care one bit, my dear, what you believe about Jesus if you don't know Him. That's what he's after. He's after preventing you from getting to know Him and to stopping putting His arms around you; and he'll substitute all kinds of things in the place of it.

Now one of the reasons why we must be saved by grace, and here's another point of attack, and not by works, is that there isn't anything in anyone of us and never will be that is of the slightest value to God in the matter of our salvation. There isn't one thing that we can do. We can do things as the result of being saved, but there isn't one thing that we can ever do in order to contribute to something that God Himself has finished, and He isn't asking us to put one single iota to it. Not at all. And when we do, we put our fingers upon God's masterpiece and the result of it is as bad as if we went into the art gallery there and put our dirty fingers on some masterpiece that hangs on the wall. And here, God has hung His masterpiece of salvation and we go and put our dirty fingers on it sometimes in our effort to improve what God has finished.

Now we can look at His masterpiece and go out and tell somebody else about it, and put life and feet and all the rest of it to our witness, certainly; but, salvation, my dear, is of grace. There isn't one thing that we can contribute. That's the reason why the basic thing about salvation by grace, the basic thing that salvation by grace produces is a regenerated person – not an improved one. And Satan knows exactly what to do about regeneration. In fact, the first thing he will do will be to suggest that we deny the necessity of it, and he does it by suggesting that we don't need to be regenerated, all we need to be is reformed and that there is something in the heart of man left over – a fragment of the divine in every man; and there will be thousands of people in Detroit and elsewhere who will hear that stuff next Sunday morning.

There's a spark of the divine, all you have to do is to fan it into a flame, and you can do it by this and by that and by the other; but the Word of God says that the reason why we need to be saved by grace is because we are dead in trespasses and sin and the only thing that can be done for a dead man is to give him new life. He doesn't need a new suit of clothes. He doesn't need a new environment. And much of

the stuff that we do for dead Christians is only to improve the coffin in which they are to be buried. That's all.

And here you find it all the way around – reformation instead of regeneration. What God is after is not a better man, He's after a new man altogether. That's what God wants from your life and mine – not an improvement of the old, but a new thing altogether - a new man, altogether. A new man that starts with a new birth and enters into a new creation; and old things pass away and all things become new, that's what God's after. And if that's the basic thing – are you doing your exercises. If that's the basic thing, my dear, you can be quite sure somebody's interested in offering a substitute for that. And you can find it all the way around, everywhere you turn you will find that this is the effort that is being made to bring people to a new level of life without being regenerated at all. That's what they're after and it's amazing isn't it as you think of what kind of a world you live in, how these substitutes are all labeled.

For example, did you ever hear folks talking about, “What is needed is a reemphasis of *The Sermon on the Mount*.” Well, if you haven't heard it, you will before 1972. I think there's an election coming on in '72, isn't it? And every politician will be mouthing something about, “This is the way to improve America and the world in which we live. We need a new emphasis on this, or The Ten Commandments, or Good Samaritanism, or The Good Neighbor Policy, or The Golden Rule, or Moral Rearmament, or The Four Freedoms,” or something of the kind. And every last one of them are just a label for a program that improves man without regeneration. And the rock on which they all spit is not the fact that man needs to be better than he is, and not the fact that perhaps in the Bible there is a program suggested that would make a man better. But there isn't anything in the Bible that suggests that man can ever be made better, ever be made satisfactory in the sight of God, except by his personal allegiance and union with not the precepts of Jesus, the personal Jesus.

Now you can take any crowd you like, political, religious, church, lodge; anything you please and you can get them all united around the precepts and programs of Jesus. But the moment you bring Jesus personally into the midst of it, then the union vanishes immediately. The dying Son of God, the great foundation truth of salvation by substitution – that there is no remedy for sin except by the blood of the lamb that was slain – a lamb satisfactory to God. Now that's the basic thing, and everywhere around us you can find folks that are being sidetracked.

Satan's Substitutes, and we've been talking about it just a little bit tonight; and I hope my dear, I sure do, I hope you've heard somebody's voice other than mine; because if all you've heard is just my voice, you'll go home just like you came. But if you've heard His voice reemphasizing something that is foundational, we won't go home just as we came.

Our father, we pray that Thou wilt take our hearts and open them to Thy truth. We have said this so often that no sooner do our hearts open than they close again. We're so busy we haven't got time to keep them open. Oh God, our father, we pray that Thou wilt so control us in the deeps of our lives that these great fundamental things shall flow unhindered, not only into us but out of us; for Thou art prepared to not only regenerate us, but to clothe us with Thine own righteousness. May we know something about this and know it in the deeps of our lives. Help us again, we pray Thee, with these problems of our personal prayer life. And so take us into Thy care and keeping and watch over us and hover over us and spread Thy wings about us through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.