

# Playing Fast

January 4, 2015—Pastor Dave Buehring

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## Introduction

- Play fast: recognizing the schemes of the opposition so we can respond faster to make the play.
  - Key words: recognize and respond
  - Ephesians 6:18
  - 1 Peter 5:8-9
- How can I help followers of Jesus “play faster” in regard to the enemy’s attacks?

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## Identifying Our Enemy

### Some of Satan’s Names and Titles

- Satan—means adversary (1 Peter 5:8)
- Devil—means accuser (Revelation 12:9-10)
- Enemy—one who opposes us (Luke 10:18-19)
- The god of this world who blinds (2 Corinthians 4:4)
- Serpent—sneaky, poisonous (Revelation 12:9-10)

### Jesus Called Him:

- A Liar, The Father of Lies (John 8:44)
- A Murderer (John 8:44)
- A Thief (John 10:10)

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## Five Schemes: Recognize and Respond

### Distort

- Genesis 3:1-7
  - The enemy of our soul will attempt to distort and disfigure the character of God in our hearts and minds.
    - He begins this process when we’re very young (sowing seeds).
    - He’ll play off life circumstances to do this
- Recognize and Respond:
  - Know and declare the Character of God from the Scriptures and your experiences with Him. A few examples:
    - Exodus 34:6-7
    - Psalm 145:17-18
    - Hebrews 4:16
    - James 1:17

## Distract

- Matthew 16:13–23
  - Peter: imagine the swing going on inside of him!
    - From this incredible affirmation to hindering Jesus
    - His mind was not set on the things of God, but on man's thinking
  - Distractions: loss of focus, diversions, commotion, confusion, "spiritual swirl", "squirrels", picking up offenses
  - Recognize and Respond:
    - Trust (where knowing the character of God comes in handy)
      - Proverbs 3:5–6
      - Isaiah 50:10
    - Obey (we need to "obey the voice of the Lord" throughout the Scriptures)
      - Exodus 14:10–22
        - When you have lost your way, go back to the last thing God showed you to do.

## Discourage

- 1 Kings 19:9–16
  - The enemy tries to accuse us, pouring on failure, despair and hopelessness
    - Revelation 12:10
    - 1 Peter 5:8–9
  - Destroy
    - John 10:10. The enemy comes to destroy relationships, God-given destiny and our courage to follow and obey Jesus.
  - Recognize and Respond:
    - See the big picture through God's set on lenses. Ask yourself, "What role does this 'battle' play in the war?"
      - 2 Kings 6:15–17
        - Get your marching orders and execute them (obedience again)!
          - Elijah was told to "return on your way"; anoint two kings and a prophet (his successor).
          - Note: The role of warfare worship (Psalms 149:6–9) and prayer (Ephesians 6:18).

## Deceive

- Matthew 4:1–11
  - Deception is a blend of falsehoods mixed with a portion of truth aimed at our vulnerabilities
    - 1 John 1:6,8
    - 1 John 2:4
    - If you were the devil, how would you take you out?
  - Recognize and Respond:
    - A commitment to living in the Truth of Scripture
      - Jesus countered three times with the Scriptures (Matthew 4).
      - What is your commitment for having Scripture in you?

- A commitment to walk in truth-filled relationships
  - Ephesians 4:14-16

## **Divide**

- John 13:35
- John 17:11,23
- Ephesians 4:4-7
- Satan attacks the unity of followers of Jesus because he knows the real power within oneness
  - Separating relationships
  - Operating independently
  - Satan cannot defeat a united church, family or group.
- Recognize and Respond:
  - Maintain unity
    - Ephesians 4:1-3
  - Agents of reconciliation
    - 2 Corinthians 5:16-18

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## **Summary**

### **The Schemes of the Enemy**

- Distort, Distract, Discourage, Deceive, and Divide

### **Recognize and Respond**

- Ephesians 4:27
- Ephesians 6:13
- Revelation 12:11

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## **Discussion Questions**

1. Write the definition of “playing fast.” Describe a time when you felt you were playing fast? Describe a time when you didn’t respond by playing fast? What was the difference between the two?
2. In what ways does Satan lie? Blind us? Steal from us?
3. How did Satan distort God’s words to Eve? How is he continuing to do this today in our culture?
4. What is the best way for us to assure God’s Word isn’t distorted?
5. How do confusion or lack of focus distract us from God’s purpose for us?
6. What’s more important winning the battle or the war? Why? How do distractions keep us from all the God has for us? How does discouragement keep you from God’s Word? Hearing His voice? Doing His will?
7. If you were the devil, how would you take you out? What do you need to do to prevent this from happening?
8. Describe the power of unity? What can you do to assure unity within the church? Your family?
9. What can you do in this coming New Year to recognize and respond to these schemes?