

If I Were Satan

Written by Thom Rainer

If I were Satan . . .

I would focus on the churches. I would get members to demand their own preferences. I would urge them to complain about the length of the pastor's sermons and the color of the carpet. I would set member against member to fight over the right worship style. And I would make the business meeting the time where the most carnal members spoke and fight and destroyed.

If I were Satan . . .

I would encourage church members to avoid high levels of commitment. I would remind them that they are there to get their needs met. I would whisper to them that they shouldn't be involved in ministry, because that's why they pay the pastor and staff. And I would urge them to fight one another over tertiary and minor doctrinal issues. I would encourage Christians to identify themselves by their tertiary doctrinal stand and to exclude anyone else who does not match their precise standards.

If I were Satan . . .

I would let the leaders know that it's okay to minimize and avoid the truths of God's Word. I would encourage them to preach less Bible and deal with more relevant issues. I would make certain that small groups barely dealt with Scripture, but instead spent most of their time talking about sports, gossip, and politics. I would suggest that members do not need to spend time in the Bible on their own; a thirty minute sermon each week is sufficient time.

If I were Satan . . .

I would make certain church members understood that evangelism is not relevant in today's society. I would tempt leaders to stay away from urging members to be engaged in gospel sharing lest they offend someone. I would dissuade everyone in the church to think about hell. It's really better to keep it at as an abstract concept rather contemplating the eternal consequences of rejecting Christ. And I would tell church leaders to send their called pastors and missionaries to seminaries where evangelism is an afterthought.

If I were Satan . . .

I would whisper to Christians in the church not to think about abortion. It is politically incorrect and unpopular to broach the subject. I would tell them not to focus on the reality that over one million babies are killed each year in the United States alone. I would make sure they didn't know that, in the time of a one-hour worship service in church, more than 130 babies were killed in the United States. I would let them know that it's okay not to dwell on the greatest slaughter of humanity in the history of our nation.

If I were Satan . . .

I would keep church members so busy that they wouldn't have time to pray. I would make certain that the leaders are discouraged from ever mentioning prayer as a priority in their congregations. I would assure the members that a brief time of prayer during a brief worship service is sufficient for the totality of their prayer lives. I would indeed do all I could to keep people from prayer, because it's such a threat to me and my power.

If I were Satan . . .

And if I could do all these things, I am sure I would see churches across America void of power. I would see most churches in both spiritual and numerical decline. I would see Christian fighting Christian. I would see apathy, discouragement, dropout, and disillusionment. And I would look over the landscape of American churches, and I would see all of my victories. Then I would roar with pleasure at the new church order I see, and I would declare:

"It is good."

"Indeed, it is very good."

