



# REFLECTIONS

March 12, 2017

**Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made.**

*Genesis 3:1*

## Devil in the Details

The time had come. The brothers had families with differing needs to care for; and differing needs made for differing priorities and even differing business philosophies. So, after years of togetherness, the time had come to divide the business between them.

The division called for economic equality, but each needed to come away with a part of the business that he was both passionate about and competent to run. Logic and fairness were the rules in the minds of both brothers, still negotiations were difficult. Finally, after hours of discussion one Saturday morning, they sprang to their feet, shook hands, and exclaimed simultaneously, "You've got a deal!" But did they?

The devil is in the details, as the saying goes. And isn't it true? It certainly was that day. Each brother understood the deal a bit differently. The differences were deal breakers. The devil was in the details.

Two brothers who loved and supported each other all their lives stood at odds. Anger and distrust replaced affection. Common goals took a backseat to differences. The devil is in the details. But it really isn't the details that divide. The evil one does that. So when disagreements arise, why don't we see Satan's hand in it instead of assuming evil intent in the mind of the other party? And isn't such confusion exactly what Satan intends? He has been doing it for ages. The first time was in a place called Eden.

While strolling through the garden, Eve encountered a crafty serpent. He quizzed Eve to encourage doubt and confusion, "*Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?*" Eve caught the error, but made some of her own, "*We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'*" (Highlights mine.)

Then with details twisted ever so slightly, the serpent moved in for the crowning moment. "*You will not surely die,*" the serpent said to the woman. "*For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*" And the serpent's job was done. The devil is in the details.

How cunning that sneaky snake was! He created doubt by suggesting God had ill-serving motives, then he declared that God had been dishonest. Eve fell into the trap and the world has never been the same.

The brothers fell into the same trap, at least for a while. The differences were eventually resolved and the business divided fairly; but scars from anger and distrust caused by the evil one remained. The devil is in the details.

Remember that when disagreements arise over them.

*You are the light of the world,*

*Richard +*

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