

Proclaiming the Gospel

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness;
But unto us which are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. 1.18).

Edifying the Body of Christ (Eph. 4.10-16)

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The Wise Still Seek Him

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Victim or Victor ?

Do we fall victim to Satan's attacks? Or, are we the victor against Satan?

Do we stand in the power and authority of Jesus Christ – the One who dwells within us – He Who has given us victory in His Name?

Fears. Doubts. Shame – from false accusations. Discouragement. Pride. Lust. Do any of these thoughts and emotions seem familiar to you? The mind is a favorite attack area of Satan – a much used attack area! He will play very disturbing scenarios in your mind. Do not allow them to play out! Satan wants to undermine your relationship with the Lord.

Satan is "prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Jn 12.31; 14.30; 16.11; Ep 2.2), but the Word of God says, "...greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world" (1 Jn 4.4).

Let us look at some of God's people in the Bible who faced some of these same attacks by Satan, yet, in the end, were victorious.

In the Old Testament, there was **Joseph** sold into slavery by his brothers. Think of the hurt and fear he felt! Then he was falsely accused of lust and thrown into prison – what shame! Joseph spent some years in prison before God brought him out and used him to save nations of people, including his own Israelites, from famine (Gen 41; 42).

The prophet **Elijah** became discouraged and wanted to die. He was used of God tremendously; but when Jezebel threatened to kill him, he fled for his life, sat under a juniper tree, and asked God to let him die. An angel appeared to Elijah twice with food and drink sufficient for the rest of the journey to Mt. Horeb, the Mount of God, where the glory of the Lord appeared and talked with him with instructions and the encouraging word that seven thousand still served God (1 K 19.18). Elijah, not experiencing death, later was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire (II K 2).

When we call out to God, He will meet us in our darkest hour and feed us the Bread of Life needed for strength for the journey.

King David fell victim to Satan's ploys, became guilty of adultery and murder, suffered the consequences of his sin (his son, conceived out of sin, died); but he acknowledged his sin and repented (II Sam 12.1-13). In Acts 13.22), he is known as "a man after God's own heart;" and through his lineage the Messiah, Jesus Christ, was born! What a victory!

Himself, used the scripture against Satan; certainly, we should follow His example with confidence. We are the Victor over Satan in Jesus Christ.

He Who is in you has all power over the enemy and has given to you the weapons needed to tear down the devil's strongholds (II Cor 10.3-6).

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:
(For the weapons of our warfare *[are]* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

This is a daily decision to choose to be the Victor over Satan in Jesus Christ. What will you choose?

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Co-laborers together for Jesus Christ

Come apart and rest (Mark 6.31)

In the New Testament, we read where **John the Baptizer** was imprisoned by King Herod after having baptized the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you not wonder if – just if – John may have felt abandoned by the Lord? He baptized Jesus, then later was imprisoned and probably realized he was not going to be released. Recall when two of John's disciples visited John in prison, and he asked them to ask Jesus if He were really the Christ. John recognized Jesus as the Messiah when he baptized him; but now during his imprisonment, he is beginning to ask questions. Satan has a way of causing those walking closest to the Lord to be discouraged and brought to ask questions – uh – do we call that doubt? (Lk 7.19-23). Yes, John did suffer imprisonment and even death for Jesus Christ, but he was victor over Satan.

Peter, out of fear, denied Jesus (Mt 26.69-75); and even after Jesus rose from the dead, Peter doubted that He had risen until he saw for himself (Luke 24.9-12). But Peter played a major roll in the birth and growth of the Church and laid down his life for Jesus; he became a victor over Satan!

Saul/Paul, an unbeliever, fought against the Christians effecting the imprisonment and death of many believers – until Jesus stopped him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9.1-6). Paul truly met Jesus that day; his life changed; and he became unstoppable in his devotion to Jesus and the preaching of the Gospel.

Satan's time is short, and he knows it. Saints, we should not be surprised nor fearful when Satan unleashes his angels against us (Mt 25.41; Rev. 12.9; II Cor 11.12-15); but we must have the power of God's Word within us as we stand against him in Jesus' Name.

He has marshaled his forces in an effort to defeat the body of Christ and overthrow God's kingdom in the earth; and if you are seeking a closer relationship with Jesus, desiring a life of total commitment to the Lord, endeavoring to walk in complete obedience to His Word, be prepared! I say again, **Be prepared!** The enemy will come. Stand strong, your heart and mind fixed, prepared to spend much time in prayer and in the Word – to become saturated in the Word of God which is the "sword of the Spirit" against the enemy (Eph 6.17).

Notice the apostle Paul's admonition to the Ephesians – and to us – in Ephesians 6.10-12:

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places].

Paul knew that none of us would be strong within ourselves, not strong enough to be the victor in a battle against Satan. On the other hand, we serve a mighty God; therefore, Paul commanded us to be strong in the Lord, knowing that we can, and must, stand in His mighty power. Ephesians 6.13-18 (**read it**),

gives unto us our defense against Satan's attacks and our one offensive weapon – the "sword of the Spirit," the Word of God. How important is it that we read the Bible? That we feast on it? Devour it? Every day! It is imperative in these days that we have an insatiable hunger for the Living Word, Jesus, and the written Word, the Holy Bible.

Do not fall victim to the ploys of Satan to weaken you in your life for the Lord. If you do fall, there is forgiveness when you repent; but through Jesus Christ, you have power to overcome Satan. Stand strong "in the power of His might" (Eph 6.10) and resist Satan.

Let us look at I Peter 5.7-9a

Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

Peter first instructs us to cast our cares upon the Lord Jesus Christ, then to be sober and vigilant. Why? Because Satan surely is attempting to destroy each of us – not just if he "happens to bump into" someone. He does not randomly choose; he is specific. Satan seeks out his victim!

In his referring to Satan as a roaring lion, Peter says, "Whom resist steadfast in the faith . . ." Steadfastness in the faith comes from time spent in the Word of God and in prayer in the presence of the Living Word without which, our resistance would be ineffective. James also instructs us to resist the devil: James 4.7.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

To resist the devil is to take an active, assertive stand against him.

The word resist in these two scriptures means "to set oneself against." It is a decided stand against Satan.

We must not hesitate in our actions at the time of Satan's attack; we must be determined in our decision to serve Jesus with our whole heart, our whole being. We must be set against Satan – always – vigilant – alert to his wiles and quick to resist.

Let us look again at James' writings (James 4.7, 8).

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse [your] hands, [ye] sinners; and purify [your] hearts, [ye] double minded.

Our resistance against Satan begins with our relationship with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. James says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God . . . Draw nigh to God . . . Cleanse your hands . . . Purify your hearts . . ." As we are diligent in our time spent with Jesus and in His Word, He fills us with His Spirit and the power of His Word with which to resist Satan. When tempted, Jesus