

THE WORD OF TRUTH

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"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"—Jno. 8:32.

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"Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" (James 1:18)

SET FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE GOSPEL

A READER SPEAKS OUT AGAINST MODERN SIN

"We do not have to go back with Moses to Egypt to find darkness, even "darkness which may be felt", for today we have this same darkness all about us. But as the Israelites of old, we that are of Christ also have light shining in our dwellings. "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him Who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (1 Pet. 2:9, 10).

We read in Judges 21:25; "In those days there was no king in Israel, BUT EVERY MAN DID THAT WHICH WAS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES." As I look round about me, I feel as though we are living in the times of the Judges, because man's thinking today is the same as it was then—he is "doing that which is right in his own eyes". This is true, and has always been true, of those who are of this world. The point of alarm, however, is that it is even taking place among those that claim to be of God! For instance, women who claim to know and love God, and yet say that they have a right to choose or to decide if the life within their womb may live or die - a life that God has given them—are individuals of great alarm to me. I find this current trend very disturbing. Although I thoroughly reject the validity of this attitude, I can partially understand it coming from someone that is "of the world", "because the carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Another reason why the world continues in its sinful attitude toward the laws of God is found in Romans 2:28; "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient." The natural man is in a state of continual hatred, hostility, and opposition to God. He wants no part of the Lord, he denies Him in all of his ways; he does not care to learn of God. I can, then, understand why a decision to slay life would come from such an one as that. But when I hear such talk coming from those who claim to know and love God—this is nothing less than unbelief, rebelliousness, hardness of heart, and just plain sin on their part. "There is no fear of God before their eyes"! Upon the basis of Scripture, I question their claims of loving and knowing God. 1 John 2:4 tells us "He that saith I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him".

I have heard and read quite a few people say that the fetus is not a person; that you really cannot say that life is there. It sure is a strange thing that they

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The Word of Truth

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consider that life a person outside of the womb, but nothing when it is inside the womb. According to their philosophy, the fetus is nothing more than a blob. If life is not there, then why should one have to have an abortion? Why not just leave it alone, and maybe it will blow away like a **lifeless** leaf in the wind? The problem (from their viewpoint) is that there is life — right from the beginning, from the moment of conception. What takes place in abortion is murder; such are murdering their own children! God does not condone such wicked actions. The law that He has set down from the beginning is still in effect — “Thou shalt not kill”. Those that persist in violating this commandment shall surely “die in their sins” (Jno. 8:21, 24). The day of destruction and fall is at hand for all such, because “pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18). One day all that have engaged in such sin will come before the same God they have so defiantly denied, and with shameless boldness resisted and opposed: “For we shall **all** stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, **every** knee shall bow to me, and **every** tongue shall confess to God. So then, **every** one of us shall give an account of himself to God” (Rom. 14:10-12).

It seems as though everywhere you turn wickedness abounds, and abortion is just one area in which we see the rebelliousness of man against God and His laws. I love the verses in II Peter 3:10-14: “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness. Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for a **new** heavens and a **new** earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless”.

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day

and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” I have given this verse a great deal of thought, and I believe I can understand why we have so many difficulties, and why there is so much discontentment and restlessness, and why we do not always prosper whithersoever we go. It is because we are not reading and meditating upon the Word of God that we might learn what is pleasing to our Lord; or else, that when we read it, we do not “observe to do according to all that is written”. **A lot of our difficulties could be eliminated just by obeying and doing as the Lord has commanded.**

Sister Beverly Brunner
Oakley, Illinois

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THE SOUNDING OF THE SEVENTH ANGEL

“And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever” —

— Revelation 11:15 —

The book of the Revelation is a book of comfort and consolation for the church. It is written to assure the faithful that “those that sow in tears shall,” in fact, “reap in joy” (Psa. 126:5), and that though “weeping may endure for the night, joy” does, in truth, “come in the morning” (Psa. 30:5). Satan shall be banished from the kingdom; his power shall be wrested from him; his hosts shall fall and tumble into the lake of fire, and all things that offend shall be gathered out of the kingdom (Matt. 13-41). The world that has opposed the church shall pass away, together with the “lust thereof” (I Jno. 2:15-17). Earthly government that has repeatedly and consistently opposed the church of the Living God shall be cast down. False prophets that have pervaded the church courts, that have “crept in unawares” and subverted the souls of many (II Pet. 2:1ff) shall be cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. The church which appeared to men to be weak, shall prove the undoing of that which appeared to be strong! The redeemed that often were hidden in dens and caves of the earth, who wandered about destitute and forsaken, who were sawn asunder, persecuted from the proverbial pillar to post, shall emerge as the victors over all! God Himself shall dwell with them, wiping away all tears from their eyes. The former things will pass away and will not be brought to mind again. Sorrow and pain shall flee away, and there shall be no more death. Indeed, there shall dawn upon the horizon of eternity a “new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Pet. 3:13). That, dear reader, is what the book of the Revelation is all about! It is about the triumph of the church — a triumph in earthly obscurity manifested in a blaze of glory! It is the account of the destruction of the wicked one, of the collapse of his choicest powers; of the absolute inability of the powers of darkness to withstand the God of all the earth!

The seven seals set forth the history of the world from the standpoint of the church of the Living God. We saw it victorious in success; victorious under persecution; victorious in the face

of earthly deprivation; victorious in the face of death. The seals ended with "silence in heaven for the space of half an hour" (Rev. 8:1), thereby signifying that the redeemed had entered into rest, and that their troubles and vexations had been brought to an end. "SILENCE", a wonderful and glorious word to the redeemed, setting forth the reality of what they shall experience when heaven and earth shall pass away. Silence from the noise of the wicked one; silence from the harassment of the tares; silence from the vexation of their own flesh; silence from the clanging and the rattling of this wicked world — so distracting it proves in the ears of the faithful!

The seven trumpets, on the other hand, set forth the history of the world from the standpoint of earthly government — the "beast". They are seen as a series of judgements from the Lord. Whereas the saints received opposition from the world, the world-order receives judgement from the Almighty. Her choicest kingdoms fall. Her most illustrious kings die in deprivation, infamy, and degradation. Nations rise and fall as the waves of the ocean, foaming out their own shame. The trumpets do not end with silence, however, but with "voices in heaven"; voices of shouting and praise; voices of exultation and thanksgiving! **The world terminates in judgement and accounting, the saints in silence and rest!** Let us not lose sight of the fact that while the church prevailed in the world, keeping the faith in the face of every single attack of the wicked one, the world order did fall and dissipate with every judgement of God. Her kingdoms fell never to rise again, while the "righteous fall seven times and riseth again" (Prov. 24:16).

"There were great voices in heaven". Not silence, let me reiterate, but "voices". Not merely voices, but "great voices". We have heard voices in the heavens before in this book (Rev. 4:5; 8:5, 13; 1:12). We understand from these "voices" that there is a consistent heavenly response to the works of the Lord in connection with the earth. This response shall not cease even in the last day! This indicates that there is some discernment in the heavens of the things that transpire upon the earth. In the last day this discernment shall be fully realized! We also are to understand from these "voices" that the response is a result of their interest in the Father's working. It is not a casual interest, as is manifested by the term "great voices". The fact that they were "great voices" seems to speak of the sudden release of a mighty expectation. Somehow I can hear the voices of the souls under the altar in this mighty response of the heavenlies (Rev. 6:9ff). Mingled in there are such notables as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the martyred saints, the apostles and prophets. What a gladsome shout it shall be when the kingdoms of this world fall, becoming the "kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ." Certainly we ought to learn to respond to the working of the Lord now, that we also may join in that joyful shout!

"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." These are the same kingdoms that were offered to the Lord by the evil one: "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth Him all THE KINGDOMS OF THE

WORLD, and the glory of them; and saith unto Him, All these things will I give Thee, if Thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matt. 4:8, 9). "And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will, I give it" (Lk. 4:5, 6). Now Satan has fallen, and the kingdoms that he promised to Christ Jesus upon the condition of sinful obedience to himself, have been wrested from his hands and given to another "greater than he"; even "Our Lord and His Christ."

This is the ultimate fulfillment of king Nebuchadnezzar's dream. This is that stone "cut out of the mountain without hands" that has smitten the image of earthly governments, destroyed them all, and become a "mountain" that "filled the whole earth" (Dan. 2:31-45). **This, in short, is language denoting the fall and collapse of evil, the destruction of opposition, the removal of all rebellion — the triumph of the Lord Jesus Christ.** At this point, all things have been restored that were spoken by the mouth of the holy prophets since the world began (Acts 3:20-21). At this point the enemies of the Lord have become His footstool (I Cor. 15:27, 28; Matt. 22:44; Acts 2:35; Heb. 1:13).

Now, the Lord has always reigned; it is not that the kingdoms of this world becoming His kingdoms constitute the first time that He has reigned. **But at this present time He is utilizing the wicked for the perfecting of His own people.** In fact, both the "deceived and the deceiver are His" (Job 12:16). Therefore it is true that "the wrath of man shall praise Thee, but the remainder shalt Thou restrain" (Psa. 76:10). **The wicked, together with their perverse purposes, are an integral part of the Lord Jesus' reign.** To them He has granted the dispensation of evil-working, delusion, perversion, and often the working of ill toward His people in order that they might be driven to Him the more fully. Whatever the opposing power may be, whether it be of nations or of individuals, we are to understand that it has ever been true that our God is the "God of the kingdoms of the world" (II Chron. 20:6; Isa. 37:16). When, however, the bad fish are gathered out of the kingdom net, and the tares are gathered out of God's field, then shall be brought to pass this joyous proclamation; "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ". Note the words "HIS Christ". We are to understand from this that the kingdoms have not merely been transferred to our Lord Jesus — that has already been done (Matt. 28:18). The kingdoms of the world (in our text) have now been given to God, and to His Christ, Who is set down in His Throne with Him. All rule and authority and power has been put down, opposition and rebellion subdued. The kingdoms of the world had successors — they were left to other people. But concerning this eternal kingdom of which we are speaking, "it shall not be left to another" (Dan. 2:44). No successors — it has become finally, eternally, and manifestly so, "the kingdoms" of God, and "of His Christ". Praise ye the Lord!

TEACHING THE BIBLE TO TODDLERS

By Richard Ebler

I speak from experience when I say that one of the most delightful and spiritually profitable things that a young Christian mother or father can do is to instill a love for the Bible into the hearts of their children as early as possible. When the child is old enough to say "Mamma" and "Pappa" they are old enough to learn to say "Jesus," "God," "cross," "pray," "heaven," and other similar words.

The young child will not only learn these important words, but they will also learn attitudes. If the parents delight in the things of God and show an optimistic eagerness to teach them, the child will soon absorb the same attitude.

Pictures have a vital ministry to the very young. It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. Certainly it is much easier to glance at a picture than to try to learn to read at a pre-mature age. Bible stories furnish us with many dramatic and interesting scenes which are able to capture the imaginations of the young.

As a little child looks at pictures they begin to learn simple identifications. A small toddler can easily learn to recognize a picture of Jesus on the cross and say "Jesus." In doing this they are receiving a basic idea that will be a foundation they can build on for the rest of their lives.

This author has found that it is good to go beyond these simple identifications in many instances. It is often easy to sing a few lines of a familiar hymn that perfectly matches the picture. The little one will soon be learning the words and trying to sing along. Teaching little hand motions that fit the story will help them to become more involved and dramatic. At any rate they certainly enjoy the tune from the very beginning, although they may not understand all of the words the first time through. It adds color and life to the learning process.

The following is a list of famous Bible scenes that can be found in most Bible story books. Under each scene is a hymn or chorus that matches the scene. In case some of these songs are not familiar to the reader, most of them can be found in the following hymn and chorus books: **Great Hymns of the Faith** (Zondervan Publishers), **Best Loved Songs and Hymns** (Winsett Music Co., Dayton, Tenn.), **Melody Choruses** (Gospel Publishing House, Springfield, Mo.), and **Melodies of Praise** (Gospel Publishing House).

1. Picture: Fisherman are at work with their nets.
Song: "I will make you fishers of men."
2. Ruth is seen gleaning in the fields.
"Bringing in the Sheaves"
3. Samuel is being called by God.
"I'll be somewhere listening for my name."
4. Samson performs a feat of strength.
"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts."
5. Moses holds up the serpent on the rod.
"Look and Live"
6. There is a picture of Baal's image.
"The dearest idol I have known, what-e'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne and worship only thee."

(Lines are from the hymn, "O For a Closer Walk with God.")

7. Moses and the Israelites are going through the Red Sea.
"I know the Lord will make a way for me."
8. Joshua and the Israelites march around Jericho and the walls come down.
"Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho"
9. David kills Goliath, plays the harp.
"The Lord's My Shepherd"
10. Ezekiel preaches to the valley of dry bones.
"Them bones, them bones, them dry bones."
11. Jeremiah is brought up out of a pit.
"He brought me out of the mirey clay."
12. Baby Jesus is in the manger.
"Away in a Manger"
13. Jesus feeds the 5,000 and/or turns the water into wine.
"He who fed the multitude, turned the water into wine,
To the hungry calleth now, Come and dine!"
(From the title, "Come and Dine.")
14. Jesus talks to the woman at the well.
"Jesus gave her water that was not in the well."
15. Jesus stills the storm as he and the disciples are at sea.
"The wind and the waves shall obey my will.
Peace be still."
(From the hymn: "Master the Tempest is Raging")
16. Peter walks on the water toward Jesus.
"Turn your eyes upon Jesus. . ." (chorus)
17. Thomas looks at the nail prints in Jesus' hand.
"Only Believe"
18. Jacob's vision at Bethel.
"We are climbing Jacob's ladder."
19. Jesus is on the cross.
"The Old Rugged Cross"
20. Elijah is taken up by the chariot.
"Swing low sweet chariot"
21. Paul is let down over a wall in a basket.
"He is able to deliver thee."
22. Adam and Eve are in the garden.
"Yield not to Temptation"
23. Jesus is before Pilate.
"A Crown of Thorns"
24. Jesus is in Gethsemane.
"Lest I forget Gethsemane. Lest I forget Thine agony.
Lest I forget Thy love to me. Lead me to Calvary."
(Chorus of the Hymn: "Lead Me to Calvary")
25. Moses strikes the rock and brings forth water.
"Deep and Wide"
26. Jesus is with the children.
"Jesus loves the little children. All the children of the world."
27. Esau sells his birthright to Jacob.
"Take this old world, but give me Jesus."
28. The blind man is healed by Jesus.
"Be Thou My Vision"
29. The Queen of Sheba is talking to Solomon.
"The half has not been fancied on this side the golden shore. . ."
(Chorus to the hymn: "Still Sweeter Every Day")
30. Rahab lets down the scarlet cord.
"Grace Greater Than Our Sins"

THE SACRIFICES OF CAIN AND ABEL

"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain . . . brought an offering to the Lord. . . . And Abel . . . also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof . . ." — Genesis 4:3-4

Genesis is the book of "beginnings", as the word itself denotes. It is there that we obtain the knowledge of the beginning of the light, the firmament, the dry land, vegetation, celestial lights, fish and fowl, living creatures, and man. It is also here that we procure to our understanding information concerning sin and the fall of man, as well as an introduction to the concept of sacrifice unto the Lord God. It is this latter beginning with which we now seek to concern ourselves — the matter of sacrifice.

Perhaps it would be well to devote a few lines to the defining of the word "sacrifice". The word taken in its most general sense means an "offering", or a presentation of some gift to Deity. **That which is sacrificed must belong to the one doing the sacrificing, and it is presented as an admission of the superiority and worthiness of the One to whom it is sacrificed or offered.** An offering involves willingness, recognition, and deliberation. Involved in the matter of sacrifice is the depletion of one's own resources in acknowledgement of dependence upon One that is the ultimate resource. In relation to the faith and matters pertaining to God, sacrifice is the offering of one's own resources to the Lord God in admission of His Deity and Greatness, as well as in admission of one's own inferiority to and dependence upon the "Father of lights" (Js. 1:17). We also ought to mention that sacrifice often includes the concept of the innocent losing its right to exist in order that the guilty might go free. In this case, the Lord God Himself provided the first sacrifice when He clothed Adam and Eve with "coats of skin" (Gen. 3:21). With these things in mind, let us peruse in a broad fashion:

The offerings of Cain and Abel. Firstly, both sons had the same father and mother (Gen. 4: 1, 2). Secondly, both were industrious: ". . . Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground" (Gen. 4:2b). Thirdly, both of them were mindful of the Lord, bringing offerings to him. Fourthly, they both brought of the substance to which their energies were devoted — Cain of the ground, Abel of his flocks. Fifthly, they both were possessed of willingness, the degrees of which are not specified: "Cain BROUGHT . . . Abel BROUGHT . . ." But at this point, likenesses between the two offerings cease. There was a sharp distinction in these two offerings. Firstly, Abel is said to have brought of the "firstlings of his flock", while Cain is presented as merely bringing "of the fruit of the ground", indicating that it probably was **not** the firstfruits. Secondly, the "**Lord had respect unto Abel and his offering**", while "**unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect**" (Gen. 4:4-5) . . . We are not told of Abel's reaction to acceptance (it would appear that it was obviously one of joy and thanksgiving), but we are apprised of Cain's response; "Cain was VERY wroth, and his countenance fell" (Gen. 4:5b). A great deal is revealed here about Cain. Firstly, it unveils for us the lack of reverence for the Lord God. Secondly, it

reveals his basically self-centered, or fleshly nature. Thirdly, we see here that the offering was given perfunctorily rather than in an earnest quest to please the Lord. Fourthly, the element of true sincerity of heart is obviously absent, for rather than searching his own heart, Cain became angry with the Creator. Fifthly, he was in the "gall of bitterness", and was possessed of envy. Sixthly, he was "of that wicked one", being the child of Satan (I Jno. 3:12). Seventhly, that his works were "evil", even though they were garbed with an apparently righteous appearance (I Jno. 3:12b).

Abel's sacrifice is of especial interest to believers, and that is so because of its acceptability with the Lord God of heaven and earth. Abel did honor the Lord with the firstfruits of his substance (Prov. 3:9). There are some that suppose that Abel tithed the firstlings of his flock in the fear of the Lord. I do not doubt this; as a matter of fact, it appears to me to blend in with the general tenor of Scripture. It is clear from Scripture that this sort of response was the worshipful attitude and nature of the patriarchs of old (Gen. 28:22). There are also those that contend that the sacrifice was acceptable because it was a bloody one, thus showing Abel's insight into the truth that "without the shedding of blood, there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). This also is a very plausible view, and in harmony with the Scriptures. There is, however, a specific analysis and observation of Abel's sacrifice made by an Apostle, and that provides us with a precise and accurate view of the matter: "**By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts . . .**" (Heb. 11:4). Two things are here brought to our attention — the quality of Abel, and the quality of his sacrifice. Concerning the quality of Abel, he was possessed of and motivated by faith, and was a righteous man. Concerning the quality of his sacrifice, it was a "more excellent sacrifice"; i.e., endowed with those characteristics which were more pleasing to God than those which marked the offering of Cain.

Now, where there is faith, there must first be a revelation from God; some word from the Almighty. **Faith cannot exist without a word from God, for "faith cometh by hearing . . ."** (Rom. 10: 17). Precisely what was revealed to Abel, we do not know. It may have been the matter of his sinnerhood in Adam and the requirement for a sacrifice. It might have been a commandment to offer up a specific sacrifice. It might have been some word given him through his father Adam which illucidated to his heart the necessity for offerings to God — we simply do not know exactly what it was; but we do know that it had something to do with sacrifice. We also know that whatever the word, Abel "believed God", and that it was consequently "imputed to him for righteousness", as the acceptability of his offering testified. **Abel offered because he believed; he was constrained by a quest to fulfill God's good pleasure; to do what the Lord had commanded; to bring his life into conformity with God's revelation of himself. His faith is what made the sacrifice acceptable; his heart sanctified the gift; the offering was seasoned with the salt of faith**

and faithfulness. His sacrifice was more excellent, firstly, because of his faith; secondly because his faith prompted him to offer a gift of superior quality.

Cain's sacrifice was not, however, marked by the same traits. His was not an excellent sacrifice; it was not an acceptable sacrifice; it was not an offering motivated by faith. Cain did not offer out of response to God, but apparently to gain a response from God. Well, it is good to remember that **those who offer out of a true response to God will find a genuine and gracious response from God to their faithfulness, while those that seek to gain a response from God will find their offerings simply going into the air** — unapproved by the Almighty. Observe that “to Cain AND his offering” God did not have respect (Gen. 4:5). **God was not only dissatisfied with Cain's offering, He was dissatisfied with Cain himself!** Of course, this is understandable to those that live this side of the fuller revelation, for we are expressly told that Cain was “of that wicked one” (I Jno. 3:12). He was to Abel what Judas was to the Lord Jesus Christ (Jno. 6:70).

What may we learn from these things? That all religious service is **not** acceptable to God. There is such a thing as “vain” worship (Matt. 15:8-9). We also ought to learn that there are those in this world that are actually the children of the wicked one, even though they parade themselves as one of the Lord's elect, even offering sacrifices and offerings to him. Let us not, therefore, judge “according to appearance” (Jno. 7:24), for that is far too deceptive. There are those that are **not** seeking God's favor, but are rather seeking to make an impression, following meticulous routines, but without their heart being involved in them. There are also those that are “true worshippers”, that “have no confidence in the flesh”, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, who within are being motivated by the revelation of God in the face of Christ Jesus. Which are you?

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RESISTING THE DEVIL

“... resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” — James 4:7

“The devil” is truly our “adversary”, and he does walk about “as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour” (I Pet. 5:8). He is not, however, at liberty to consume whom he would at will; he is under authority — the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ that has “destroyed him” and “made a show of him openly” (Heb. 2:14; Col. 2:14, 15). **Believers are no where admonished to fear the devil, though they are exhorted to “fear God”** (I Pet. 2:17). While Satan may well appear to be superior to those in Christ, and roar loudly so as to frighten them, **he has still been “spoiled” and his goods given to another!** The one whose trust is in the Lord shall, indeed, be “safe” (Prov. 29:25), and that is no mere philosophical speculation!

The very concept of Satan “fleeing” is one of great interest to the believer. While the child of God is admonished to “flee fornication”, “flee from idolatry”, “flee youthful lusts”, “flee from the wrath to come” and “flee” from false teachers (I Cor. 6:18; 10:14; II Tim. 2:22; Matt. 3:7; I Tim. 6:9-11), he is not admonished to flee from Satan

himself — it is **he** that does the fleeing **when we engage him** and his craftiness through faith! In the matter of spiritual armor, there is full provision for **face to face** combat — even combat at a distance; but there is no armor for the back, no guarantee of protection if we shrink back in cowardice from the enemy of our souls! The “weapons of our warfare” are, indeed “mighty”, even to the throwing down of the very strongholds of Satan (II Cor. 10:3-5). Our adversary is a pressing foe, but he is not an omnipotent foe; a fierce foe, but not an invincible foe, an active foe, but not an indefatigable foe! You may, however, rest assured of this one thing — he always knows when to flee, when to turn face, when to leave you alone! It is the objective of every believer to come into an awareness of these things. **Too often we come behind Satan in the matter of an understanding of the superiority of our Lord Jesus Christ, His Name, and His Kingdom.** Our adversary's entire kingdom of darkness “trembles” at the awareness of Deity (Js. 2:19). The question that arises concerning these things is this: How may we resist the devil? How is it that we mortals may put him to flight, causing him to “flee”? While there are no magical formulas or secret systems whereby this may be accomplished, there are some plain assertions of Scripture which point us in the right direction.

Satan is effectually resisted when we remain steadfast in the faith: “. . . whom resist, steadfast in the faith” (I Pet. 5:8). Steadfastness in the faith speaks of **perseverance in believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God**, for “who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (I Jno. 5:4-5). Minds that are devoted to a contemplation of Christ's sonship become minds that cannot be pervaded or invaded by the prince of darkness! Steadfastness in the faith speaks of faithfulness, of holding on our way, not quenching the Spirit, not grieving the Spirit (Job 17:9; I Thess 5:19; Eph. 4:30). Steadfastness speaks of running “with patience the race that is set before us” (Heb. 12:1-2), of not being weary in well doing (Gal. 6:9; II Thess. 3:13); and “perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord” (II Cor. 7:1). It speaks of a refusal to be turned aside from our quest for glory by circumstance, opportunity, or aspiration. It means that in the storms of life we trust in the Lord; in the periods of success and fulness we trust in the Lord; during the times of testing and trial we trust in the Lord!

Faith is an invincible shield (Eph. 6:16) which cannot be penetrated by the “fiery darts of the wicked one”. Satan is a deceiver and a deluder; he is a liar and a prevaricator! **He cannot tell the truth** (Jno. 8:44; Rev. 12:9). The only thing he can tempt us with is a lie, a delusion, a wresting of the truth. **He never sets reality before us, only the lie.** Faith, on the other hand, cannot rest in a lie, it can only lay hold of the truth. Faith is, in truth, the “substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen”. It roots us in the eternal, in the unchangeable, in the invariable. **When we truly believe, all doors to our hearts are closed, giving no access to Satan.** He cannot tempt with a lie those whose confidence rests in reality! When the eye of the spirit is set upon eternal things, Satan's delusions appear precisely that — delusions. They are seen

as cheap tinsel and foolishness. However, when we are **not** walking by faith (II Cor. 5:7) and living by faith (Heb. 10:38), we have automatically made provision for him to attack us; our shields have been lowered.

Those whose lives are actually characterized by faith, who do all things as unto the Lord, and seek the approbation of the Lord in all things — whose faith and hope is in God, and who lean implicitly upon the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth — these effectually resist the devil, and he **does** flee from them!

Perhaps it is necessary to develop this grand theme a little more. **Satan's hatred for the truth is just as intense as his affinity for the lie.** Therefore, when he comes up against the child of God whose life is saturated with faith, who walks, lives, and runs by faith — that individual becomes as obnoxious and awesome to him as the truth itself! He may bluff his way for a season, **but eventually the sight and sound of the truth will drive him back to his dungeon of delusion!** He simply cannot stand, fight, or reside where the truth prevails — and **truth prevails where faith is.** O, that this truth were the more fully perceived by us all. Can you, dear reader, see this reality? Can you grasp this with your spirit, that **steadfastness in the faith results in the flight of Satan?**

We ought not to fail to say, however, that a **lack of faithfulness, a lack of steadfastness, a lack of perseverance, will cause Satan to linger close to your side.** His presence will, in such a case, find you resisting the counsel of God. Do not, professed believer, permit your love to wax cold, because **Satan's effective tactics will increase and increment with every degree of diminishment in your love for truth and faith in the Lord Jesus.** Do not settle for a mere intellectual faith, a sort of religious philosophizing, for that is no faith at all. Seek that faith which effectually alters your conduct, your vision, your emotions, your will, your desires, your works! That is the sort of faith that is anchored in reality, and which Satan cannot resist, bash down, or cause to waver! I believe that there is a great need for us to continually speak and exhort on this point, for mortals are so tempted to think too lightly of faith — yea, of the "faith of our Lord Jesus Christ." Faith is strong, and consequently it makes those strong that possess it! **Faith is invincible because it is the very substance and reality of eternal unshakable things; therefore it makes those invincible that possess it** (Rom. 8:33ff). Faith is the very antithesis of the lying delusions of Satan — and not only that, it is superior to all lies and will topple them all like the walls of Jericho! Satan worked on Saul of Tarsus until he obtained faith, and **then Saul, called Paul the Apostle, worked on Satan** (Acts 26:18). Satan provoked Peter to speak ill-advisedly with his lips on the very mount of transfiguration (Matt. 17:4), but when "faith came", Peter routed Satan so thoroughly with the truth and with his own steadfastness in the proclamation of the truth, that three thousand souls were added to the church in a single day (Acts 2). It is no different with you, dear reader. **Satan is just as powerless in the face of the truth when you wield it as when Peter did!** He cannot stand before the

faith of Christ when it is in your heart any more than he could when our Lord Jesus Himself walked by faith. It is a matter of indirection of which we speak; **you do not resist the Devil directly, but by applying your energies to the belief of the truth.** The very act of believing causes him to flee. You will recall that he is able to remove the word of God out of the hearts of **only** those that "understandeth it not" (Matt. 13:19); i.e., whose understanding has been controlled and dominated by carnal and earthly things.

Satan is resisted when we put on the "whole armour of God": "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil" (Eph. 6:10), it is written. To be sure, Satan is wiley, crafty, "more subtle than any beast of the field" (Gen. 3:1). He, like the Amalekites of old lurks behind to pilgrim, seeking to snare him unawares and take him from the strait and narrow path that leads unto life. The very word "resist" postulates an inevitable encounter, the facing of opposition, the confrontation of fierce, deliberate, and calculated attack. Satan IS on the initiative when he is given permission! **It is not the facing of his wiles that is to concern you, but the putting on the whole armour of God — that is the point of the warning.** So many believers become overwrought with the possibility of confronting the evil one, when their concern ought to be the appropriation of godly protection against the devil's coming "wiles".

Observe the classification of the armour: the security of all the armour: "having your loins girt about with truth"; protection for the vital parts of our beings: "having on the breastplate of righteousness"; provision for firm stability, enabling one to hold the ground well: "and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace"; a moveable protection that may be used at all times and under all circumstances to encounter the distant weaponry of the devil: "Above all, taking the shield of faith"; protection for the mind and conscience; "take the helmet of salvation"; a weapon being also provided for the initiative of the saint; "and the sword of the Spirit"; and finally, a submissive attitude, which is proper for the soldier of Christ: "praying always with all prayer and supplication . . ." (Eph. 6:14-18). Now, let us observe more closely this armour which enables us to stand against Satan's wiles.

We are to have an immediate association with the "TRUTH". Reality is to encompass our whole beings; it is to hold everything in proper perspective, and give arrangement to the whole of our defence and offence — "your loins girt about with truth". We are to maintain an actual righteousness, perfecting holiness, as it were, in the fear of the Lord. **Righteousness** is to be upon our hearts and our essential beings. We are to be clean within, and not "full of excess" as the Pharisees of old — "having on the breastplate of righteousness." We are to be unmoveable and able to keep our position because of that **peace** which keeps hearts and minds. Our consciences are not to be defiled, our hearts not to be ruffled or troubled about many things — this makes us vulnerable to Satanic craftiness. **The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ will prepare peace within the recipient of that Gospel** — "having your feet shod with

the preparation of the Gospel of peace". FAITH is to thoroughly characterize our lives as we "walk" and "stand" by it. Believing God then becomes an extremely versatile means of preventing Satan's attacks from actually wounding us — "Above all taking the shield of faith". Remember that faith quenches "all the fiery darts of the wicked" one! It is utterly impossible for delusion to permeate, break down, weaken, or overthrow the real faith. Faith is invincible! Our minds are to be protected with the "**knowledge of salvation**", an awareness that our sins have been covered, and that we have been "delivered from this present evil world", "take the helmet of salvation." We are to become proficient in the use of the **Word of God**, able to "rightly divide it", and use it against our adversary as did our wonderful Lord (Matt. 4:1-9). "And the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God". Our **attitude** toward our Father in heaven is not only to be wholesome, but active; one which finds us **always** relying upon Him, leaning upon Him, deriving strength from Him, letting our requests be made known unto Him — "praying **always** with all prayer and supplication."

Once again, our resistance of Satan becomes a matter of indirection; by devoting ourselves to holy and righteous things, by appropriating unto our hearts the provisions proffered through the reconciliation of Christ Jesus, Satan's power over the heart is nullified. If, on the other hand, we maintain a sloppy attitude toward these matters, we shall at once become the helpless victims of the Evil One. **Our grasp of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus must be firm!** Our lives must be marked positively by righteousness and true holiness. We must devote ourselves to the nourishment of the new man, to the development of strong desires for the Lord Himself. We are to see to it that the Gospel of peace works within us; that the fruits of Christ's redemption are found within our lives — both inwardly and externally. A settled heart, a purged conscience, and a tranquil spirit are to be zealously maintained. We are to capitalize upon believing God — seeking to know His mind on all matters, and then receiving the truth in firm confidence. We are to hold firmly our confidence unto the end, seeking a deliverance from hot and cold periods, from up and down experiences, from spiritual instability! We are not to rest upon the past in the matter of confidence, but always have the knowledge of salvation enveloping our minds. Our emotions, our wills, and our intellects, are to be dominated by the truth that "Christ loved me and gave Himself for me" (Gal. 2:20). I am not to settle for a merely casual interest in the Word of God; it is not only my food and sustenance, but my means of battling against principalities and powers. **I am to learn the association of the Word of God with my particular set of circumstances, with my distinctive situation in this world.** I am to learn how to put Satan to flight by throwing the truth at Him and thereby counteracting his lies. It will do me no good to quote Scripture or even to have an intellectually thorough working knowledge of it within if I am unable to use it against the Evil One in times of attack! The Word of God is not a trophy to be placed in a theological case, or a relic from the past to be cherished as an antique. It is to be **used** — used **daily**, used **ef-**

fectually, used **ferently**. Prayer is also to characterize my life in like manner; it is to be my continual resort.

If, on the other hand, truth is far from me, righteousness is little within me, peace is not in my possession, faith is weak, confidence is abating, the Word of God is unknown, and prayer ill-esteemed; I ought not to expect — I say, I ought not to even expect, to be remotely **able** to resist the devil. In such a case my mind will quickly be dominated by evil, wicked, morose, and lying thoughts. I will be tossed from the proverbial pillar to post, finding myself on a religious tumultuous sea, rising and falling with the waves of circumstance. My own person will be pre-eminent, my own fleshly desires will overturn me and subvert me. I will not be able to sort Satan's thoughts from my own, and my inner man will grow weak and helpless. This is not, then, an optional matter of which I have been speaking. There is no room here for play-acting, or for professionalized religion, or for mere appearances of religiosity! **If you, in truth, desire to resist the devil, then you must, in truth, "draw nigh unto God" — and that is done by means of the things which have here been enumerated.**

Drawing nigh to God is not something that is intellectual only, or merely a matter of the will. It involves the heart, the aspiration, the matter of being discontent with the world order, and of strongly desiring to be filled with the righteousness of God. Those that so approach the Lord will find Satan fleeing from them — taking flight from the truth as he has always done. True, he will fight before he flees, combat you before he gives up the battle; but in the end, if you resist him, you will see him running from **you!** Praise the Lord for that!

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PUNGENT POINTS

Holiness is imputed unto the children of God because of their faith (Rom. 4:6), the "new man" being "created in righteousness and holiness" (Eph. 4:24). However, the matter does not end there; this holiness needs perfectings: ". . . perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord . . ." (II Cor. 7:1); i.e., this holiness must find practical outworkings in our lives to replace the "superfluity of naughtiness" (Js. 1:21). Those that boast of having been made righteous or holy in Christ Jesus, yet whose lives are characterized by unrighteousness and ungodliness do greatly err! They have been, at the best, and in the most charitable view, terrible stewards of the "manifest grace of God." Let all believers diligently seek the **influence** of imputed righteousness in every phase of their lives — this is the way our Lord Jesus is truly glorified!