

Fighting Satan and Sin

- I. We must not be ignorant of Satan's devices lest he take advantage of us. **2CO 2:11.**
- A. Satan *brings* us into bondage by exploiting the strengths of his ally which is our flesh and blinding us to the ugliness and sinfulness of sin. **EPH 2:3; TIT 3:3; ROM 6:19-21.**
- B. Satan *holds* us in bondage by blinding us to the truth about deliverance and liberty.
- C. Satan's entire operation is based upon one concept: the lie. He is the father of lies. **JOH 8:44.**
1. His power is in the lie: the telling of it and our love of it.
 2. Our battles with Satan should not be *power* encounters (as the vagabond exorcists of **ACT 19:13-16**) but *truth* encounters. It is the truth that liberates. **JOH 8:32.**
 3. Satan sells his lies by deception: the better the deception, the bigger the lie that can be sold.
 - a. Deception might be described as being led to accept a lie as truth or as an acceptable substitute for truth.
 - b. Deception blocks deliverance from bondage to a lie. **ISA 44:20.**
 - c. Remember that Eve was beguiled/deceived (**2CO 11:3; 1TI 2:14**); she yielded to the perceived advantage of a lie. **GEN 3:1-6.**
 - (1) She rationalized away the truth on the basis of sensual satisfaction.
 - (2) Yielding to the lie was a means of meeting a legitimate need.
 - (3) Whenever we are tempted to meet a legitimate human need by a means contrary to God's will, this is temptation by the lust of the flesh. **1JO 2:16.**
 - (4) Food, sex, happiness, peace, rest, success, acceptance, dignity, significance, power, love, respect, etc. are all legitimate human needs. But we sin when we try to meet these needs by acting independently of God.
 4. We must reject and renounce Satan's deceptions and lies about:
 - a. God, His nature, accomplishments and promises.
 - b. Jesus Christ, His person, position and power.
 - c. our natural wisdom and inherent value.
 - d. the identity or acceptability of sin.
 - e. who we are as believers.
 - f. resistance---it is not futile.
 - g. the means of personal fullness and victory.
- D. The battle lines are drawn at distinguishing between God's truth and Satan's lies in all things: our thoughts, our words, our actions. We must strive to:
 1. think Biblically. **2CO 10:5; ROM 12:2.**
 2. speak Biblically. **1PE 4:11; TIT 2:8; EPH 4:29.**
 3. act Biblically. **COL 1:10; 1TH 4:1.**
 4. carefully measure everything against God's word and reject that which contradicts it as a lying deception. **PSA 119:128; ROM 3:4.**
- E. Through the renewing of our minds to the truth of Jesus Christ, we are transformed from bondage to Satan's lies and will to the liberty of proving God's will. **ROM 12:2; 6:17-18.**
1. This means coming to grips with the holiness of God and the utter sinfulness of yourself. **ISA 6:1-5; ROM 7:18.**
 2. This implies that you must stop living in denial: denial of your natural worthlessness, denial of those areas of your life which God says are sinful but your

heart says are OK, denial of the dangers of pathways to evil, denial of the need to effect personal reform, denial of the promises and power of Christ to change you.

F. We will never be satisfactorily victorious over sin until we renounce deception in whatever form it is presenting itself to us.

1. renounce: To give up; to resign (to another), to surrender, esp. to give up in a complete and formal manner. 2. To abandon, give up, discontinue (a practice, action, habit, thought, intention, etc.)
2. In coming to Christ, Paul renounced the Pharisaic deception that subtle perversion of God's word was an appropriate way of ministerial leadership. **2CO 4:2.**
3. Have you been deceived into thinking that you are really something when you are really nothing? Renounce that. **GAL 6:3; ROM 12:3.**
4. Have you been deceived into thinking that worldly wisdom trumps the wisdom of God? Renounce that. **1CO 3:18-19.**
5. Have you been deceived into thinking that overindulgence of fleshly appetites is unimportant? Renounce that. **LUK 21:34.**
6. Have you been deceived into thinking that you are privy to spiritual wisdom which God has not revealed in His word? Renounce that. **COL 2:18; GAL 1:8; ISA 8:20.**
7. Have you been deceived into thinking that you will not reap what you sow? Renounce that. **GAL 6:7.**
8. Have you been deceived into thinking that you will not be corrupted by evil communications? Renounce that. **1CO 15:33.**
9. Have you been deceived into thinking that your liberty in Christ validates your unfettered thoughts, speech or actions? Renounce that. **GAL 5:13; 1CO 6:12.**
10. Have you been deceived into thinking that Christ's victory over the powers of darkness means that you can have one foot in each camp or continue the practices of darkness unto Christ? Renounce that. **2KI 17:33; 1CO 10:19-22; 2CO 6:14-18.**
11. Have you been deceived into thinking that your situation justifies your corrupt speech? Renounce that. **PSA 106:32-33; JAM 1:26.**
12. Have you been deceived into thinking that you need only be a hearer of the word but not a doer of the word? Renounce that. **JAM 1:22.**
13. Have you been deceived into thinking that you can make provision for the lusts of the flesh with impunity? Renounce that. **ROM 13:14; PRO 6:27; 5:7-13; 1CO 6:18.**
14. Have you been deceived into thinking that simply stopping bad behavior is sufficient? Renounce that. **EPH 4:24-32; ROM 12:21.**
15. Have you been deceived into thinking that pride is acceptable if it is called something other than pride? Renounce that. **MAL 3:14-15; 1PE 5:5-6.**
16. Have you been deceived into thinking that your personal prayer life can fall into disrepair and not affect your walk? Renounce that. **EPH 6:18.**
17. Have you been deceived into thinking that you can cover your sin with anything other than broken-hearted confession and forsaking? Renounce that. **PRO 28:13.**
18. Have you been deceived into thinking that you need to only forsake bad behavior but not ungodly thoughts or thoughts that lead to bad behavior? Renounce that. **MAT 5:27-28; JAM 1:14-15; ISA 55:7.**
19. Have you been deceived into thinking that you can trust your heart in the forming of values or doctrine? Renounce that. **JER 17:9; PRO 28:26.**
20. Have you been deceived into thinking that there is a particular sin that you would

- never commit? Renounce that. **ROM 7:8; 1CO 10:12.**
21. Have you been deceived into thinking that Satan has more power in your soul than does Jesus Christ so you might as well give in to temptation? Renounce that. **1JO 4:4; 1CO 10:13.**
- G. We must renounce the deceptions by which we rationalize sin. A few of these are:
1. "I am good enough; I don't need to clean up that area of my life."
 - a. This is outright sinfulness itself. **JAM 4:17.**
 - b. This deception is an expression of the pride of life (**1JO 2:16**), which God resists (**JAM 4:6**), which brings on heavy chastening (**LUK 12:47**), and leads to destruction. **PRO 16:18.**
 - c. We are never "good enough" while there is tolerated sin in our lives. The church at Ephesus had many commendable points but they were still held accountable for the things which were wrong. **REV 2:2-4.**
 2. "I am old enough; I don't need someone correcting me."
 - a. The godly will desire instruction for their latter end. **PRO 19:20.**
 - b. The godly will desire to prove God's will in their latter end. **PSA 71:17-18.**
 - c. Youth is not to be despised when it is validly correcting someone older. **JOB 32:6-10; 1TI 4:12.**
 3. "I have prominence (or prestige, position, power, experience, seniority, etc.) which excuses my sin."
 - a. That didn't save Moses, Saul, David, Solomon, Peter, etc. from censure.
 - b. Scripture holds the prominent to higher standards than others. **LUK 12:48; JAM 3:1.**
 4. "I am not as bad as others."
 - a. Consider **LUK 18:10-14.**
 - b. Such comparisons are not wise. **2CO 10:12.**
 5. "I deny that what I am doing is sinful."
 - a. Jonah declared that he did well to be angry but that didn't make it right. **JON 4:9.**
 - b. God decides what is sinful. **1JO 3:4.**
 6. "So-and-so is doing what I am doing and not being judged for it, so it must be acceptable."
 - a. This is another unwise comparison. **2CO 10:12.**
 - b. You are assuming that the other person is not being judged for what they are doing. They may be under judgment that you do not see, and furthermore, payday doesn't always come on Friday. **ECC 8:11.**
 - c. The other person may be in the midst of a space of repentance (**REV 2:21**), the end of which is only known to God. Do not presume upon God's forbearance. **LUK 12:20; HEB 3:15.**
 7. "I am a victim of (fill in the blank here) which justifies my conduct."
 - a. This is a form of blame-shifting that didn't work for Adam or Saul. **1SAM 13:11-12; 15:24.**
 - b. Again, remember Moses. **PSA 106:32-33.**
 - c. The most victimized man left us an example that nullifies this thinking. **1PE 2:21-23.**
 8. "My medication is responsible for my sin, not me."
 - a. This is another form of blame-shifting.

- b. Medication, like alcohol (**PRO 23:33**), does not cause one to sin; it only reduces the inhibitions that hold in what is going on in the heart.
- 9. “What I am doing can't be all that bad because God is blessing me so much.”
 - a. This is equating gain with godliness. **1TI 6:5**.
 - b. God may be “blessing” as a judgment. **PSA 106:14-15**.
- 10. “I don't think of what I am doing as sin but rather a beneficial liberty.”
 - a. This is the kind of thinking that calls a pornographic stage production “art.”
 - b. We are expressly told not to euphemize evil. **ISA 5:20**.
- 11. “I have failed too often in this area so I might as well accept defeat.”
 - a. God's grace abounds over all sin (**ROM 5:20; 1CO 10:13**) and we can, through Christ, do all that God expects of us. **PHIL 4:13**.
 - b. A just man falls and rises again. **PRO 24:16**.

II. Sin itself must be renounced.

- A. When we fail in our walk with God and transgress His law (which is sin, **1JO 3:4**), we are to confess and forsake that sin. **1JO 1:9; PRO 28:13**.
 - 1. confess: To declare or disclose (something which one has kept or allowed to remain secret as being prejudicial or inconvenient to oneself); to acknowledge, own, or admit (a crime, charge, fault, weakness, or the like).
 - 2. forsake: To deny, renounce, or repudiate allegiance to; To give up, renounce. To break off from, renounce (an employment, design, esp. and evil practice or sin; also, a belief, doctrine).
- B. Thus, the only acceptable response to the knowledge of sin in our lives is a verbal disclosure of that specific sin and a forsaking of it by renunciation (the surrender of that area of our life in which we failed and the steps which led to that failure).

III. There can be no successful resistance of the devil where there has not first been a submission to God. **JAM 4:7**.

- A. submit: To place oneself under the control of a person in authority or power; to become subject, surrender oneself, or yield to a person or his rule, etc.
- B. This is the fundamental renouncing that must occur: renouncing of self. **MAT 16:24**.
 - 1. There is an initial renouncing of self in conversion wherein the sinner surrenders his foolish self-government under the lordship of Satan to dependent government under the lordship and authority of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. This principle of renouncing and submitting must continually be applied in whatever area of our thoughts, words or actions is restricting us from being conformed to “...the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (**EPH 4:13**).
 - a. This is provoked by self-examination measured against the Scripture and by the scrutiny of others who bring Scripture to bear upon the relics of the old man which we have not yet renounced (**2CO 13:5; HEB 3:13**) and should be considered an answer to prayer if our prayers are Biblical. **PSA 139:23-24**.
 - b. As areas of unsubmission are brought to our attention, we must acknowledge their reality and mortify them. **COL 3:5-10**.
 - c. Mind that the *outward* areas of unsubmission are the easier ones to renounce; it is the *inward* ones which are known only to God, Satan and ourselves that are most difficult.
 - d. ANY area of our life where we are not submitting to God is a weakness in

our defenses where we give Satan a toehold with which he will build a stronghold.

3. The genuineness of one's love for God is measured by submission or the lack thereof. **JOH 14:21 c/w PSA 81:15.**
- C. This submission to God can only happen if we truly believe that there is a God Who can be pleased by our submission. **HEB 11:6.**
- D. Therefore it is not just a matter of believing God's existence, but believing His concern and approachability.
- E. If we are to submit to God, we must acknowledge God for Who He is, renouncing all distorted perceptions of God that Satan uses to hold us in bondage.
 1. Scripture declares that God is eternal, holy, just, righteous, perfect, jealous, sovereign, intolerant of sin, separate from sinners, etc.
 2. Scripture also declares that God (because of Christ) is loving, caring, good, merciful, present, available, approachable, gracious, a Giver of good gifts, nurturing, affirming, accepting, comforting, forgiving, and considerate of our plight.
 3. To only see His holiness and enmity against sin to the exclusion of His lovingkindness and mercy paints a distorted picture of God.
 4. Further, the truth about God is sometimes filtered through a negative grid of ignorance, false teachers, blasphemous thoughts, unhealthy interpersonal relationships during early developmental years, poor role models of authority figures (especially poor parents), etc.
 5. As a result, a person's concept of God may be that He is hateful and unconcerned, mean and unforgiving, absent when needed, a "killjoy" who only takes away pleasure, critical and unpleasable, unapproachable, unjust, unfair, arbitrary, unpredictable and untrustworthy.
 6. Perhaps the most dangerous distorted perception of God is the delusion that He is like us (**PSA 50:21**), which conveniently justifies our unwillingness to change.
- F. Submission to God obviously depends upon submission to the truth; therefore we had better be completely convinced that we have a totally reliable source of truth. **1TH 2:13.**
- G. In submitting to God, we must renounce any blaming of God for our own mistakes. **PRO 19:3; JAM 1:13-14.**
 1. Adam tried to cover his error of *commission* wrongly by shifting blame to Eve and ultimately to God. **GEN 3:12.**
 2. The wicked, slothful, one-talent servant tried to cover his error of *omission* by the same means. **MAT 25:24.**
 3. When we blame any other creature than ourselves for our sins, we are ultimately blaming God Who made that creature. This includes Satan who can only entice but not force you to sin!
 4. We must stop justifying ourselves and rather justify God, Whose truth has through one means or another exposed our sin. **JOB 32:2; LUK 7:35.**
- H. The concept of submission to God begs a critical question: how much do you sincerely desire and intend to submit? Will you stop at being a rich young ruler (**MAR 10:21-22**) or lay it all on the line like Paul? **PHIL 3:7-8.**
- I. Remember that submission precedes resistance. If you are failing to resist temptation in something, could it be because that is an area of your life which you are reluctant to submit to God?

IV. Following submission to God, resistance of Satan is an attainable reality. **JAM 4:7.**

- A. In ourselves we have not the power to resist and overcome Satan; we can of our own selves do nothing. **JOH 15:5.**
1. We deceive ourselves if we think we can outwit or outfight Satan at his own game.
 2. Satan brought down sinless Adam and Eve; how much more power does he have over sinful human flesh?
- B. But Christ has such power and appeals to Him for deliverance are honored. **1JO 4:4 c/w ROM 10:13.**
1. We appeal to Christ through prayer. **MAT 6:13.**
 - a. These prayers should include other saints' deliverances. **EPH 6:18.**
 - b. We should also pray for our oppressors in order to find deliverance from Satan's captivities. **MAT 5:44; JOB 42:10.**
 2. We appeal to Christ through appealing to His word. **MAT 4:1-11.**
 3. Appeals to Christ for deliverance from sin must be sincere.
 - a. Be not as the remnant of Judah who dissembled in their hearts about seeking the right way. **JER 42:1-3, 20.**
 - b. Do you genuinely seek deliverance from sin on God's terms, or is it more of a matter of seeking deliverance on your terms? God is only nigh unto the former. **PSA 145:18.**
- C. Resistance of Satan is to be "...stedfast in the faith..." (**1PE 5:9**). c/w **1JO 5:4.**
1. This brings us again to the word of God. **ROM 10:17.**
 2. Our personal faith is a major piece of armour in this warfare. **EPH 6:16.**
 3. But faith must be grounded in truth! Faith in a deception, delusion or a lie is only so much making a shield out of wax paper.
 4. Every aspect of resisting Satan, including knowing his power, God's power, and our power through Christ must be based upon the plain (and sometimes uncomfortable) truth of Scripture.
 - a. Truth is a frontline piece of armour that of necessity precedes faith. **EPH 6:14.**
 - b. Truth must be consciously chosen over a lie. **PSA 119:30.**
 - c. Truth is a vital element in our personal sanctification. **PRO 16:6; JOH 17:17.**
 - d. The more we are familiar with Scripture, the greater our ability to resist and overcome him. **1JO 2:14; PSA 119:11.**
 - (1) We are thus able to spot Satan's tactics and approach and so *avoid* unnecessary entanglements. c/w **2KI 6:8-10.**
 - (2) We see the cover ripped off our own self-deceptions and hypocrisies and renounce them, which deprives Satan of some of his greatest allies.
 - (3) We see our hope of deliverance entirely grounded in Christ to Whom we flee for refuge, Who pleads for us when we fail, thus stripping from Satan the power he wields against us by accusing our consciences. **HEB 6:18; 1JO 2:1-2.**
 - (4) We need grace to bear up under tribulation and trials which tend to wear us down, and grace is multiplied through the knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus. **2PE 1:2.**
 - (5) We gain understanding which facilitates true joy that strengthens us. **NEH 8:10-12.**
 5. Victorious faith is an applied faith that walks in keeping with the knowledge of the

truth it embraces. **JAM 1:22-25; 2:19-20.**

- D. Satan is frustrated by the saint who "...keepeth himself..." (**1JO 5:18**).
1. We are to keep ourselves from idols. **1JO 5:21.**
 2. We are to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. **JAM 1:27.**
 3. We are to keep under our body. **1CO 9:27.**
 4. We are to keep our soul and heart diligently. **DEU 4:9; PRO 4:23.**
 5. We are to keep ourselves from the path and proximity of temptation. **PSA 17:4; PRO 5:8 c/w 7:8; MAT 6:13.**
 6. We are to keep ourselves from the company of corrupt men. **PRO 4:14; 13:20; 22:24-25.**
 7. We are to keep ourselves in the love of God (**JUDE 1:21**) which is obedience to His commandments. **JOH 15:10.**
 8. By such means we keep ourselves from iniquity. **PSA 18:22-23.**
- E. As noted above, Satan loves to accuse our consciences whenever we fail, implying that we are not even God's child, or that we are nothing but hypocrites, or that resistance is obviously futile, and so we should just give up and give in to sin.
1. When our heart is convinced that we are only worthless losers, we will act like worthless losers since "...a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (**MAT 7:17**).
 2. But there is a big difference between *having sin* and *being sin*.
 3. In Christ we are no longer totally depraved sinners; we have been redeemed by the blood of our Savior and are saints who sometimes sin. **ROM 7:21.**
 4. Satan may disrupt our daily victory but not our position and identity in Christ. **ROM 7:22-8:1.**
 - a. But if he can dupe us into believing that we are not in Christ, we will live as though not in Him.
 - b. This underscores again how important truth is to our walk. The truth of what God's word says about believers must be claimed against the deceptions of Satan.
 - c. This is why we must *gird up the loins of our mind* (**1PE 1:13**) and renounce any voices of emotion, imagination or circumstances, etc., that tell us something different than God wrote in His word.
 - d. When we sin it is because we have in some way rejected the truth about the deceitfulness of sin, the sinfulness of sin, the consequences of sin and the power that we have in Christ to overcome Satan and sin.
 - e. Nothing less than repentance to the *acknowledging of the truth* will set us free from our captivity. **2TI 2:25-26.**
 - (1) acknowledge: To own the knowledge of; to confess; to recognize or admit as true.
 - (2) When we sin, the first acknowledgment of truth in our recovery program is an acknowledgment of the fact of our sin. **PSA 51:3-4.**

- V. The acknowledging of the truth must not only be an acknowledgment of the fact of our failure if we are to expect victory.
- A. We must acknowledge the truth about the things that led up to the commission of sin.
 - B. The post-captivity books of Ezra and Nehemiah set forth a people who not only acknowledged the justice of God in allowing them to be put into captivity, but also acknowledged the steps that led up to the captivity. See **NEH 9** for example.
 - C. This would include an acknowledgment of the deceptions and rationalizations that we

