

# RESISTING SATANIC ACTIVITY

## **Introduction**

Possibly you are like many Christians -- your passions are strong, your behavior runs so deep. There were moments you were optimistic, but you are back to that habit such as eating too many calories, overcome by sexual lust or the victim of negative attitudes and besetting sins. What has gone wrong?

I have learned from personal experience and a study of the Bible that *both* the flesh and satanic forces are involved in our spiritual struggles. I used to believe that the only time we confronted satanic activity was in cases of bizarre behavior or when people dabbling in the occult. That is not the case.

## **I. THE DEVIL DOES HAVE ACCESS TO OUR LIVES!**

### **1. Consider: Ananias and Sapphira -- Acts 5**

Recall they lied about the amount of money they received from the sale of their land. Who would guess that Satan was the instigator of this deception? Yes, Peter comments, "*Ananias, Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to keep back some of the price of the land?*" (Acts 5:3) Be assured that the father of lies may well be involved when we tell a lie -- even a white one.

### **2. Consider - Satan's goal to ruin all he can.**

Does Satan play a part with someone breaks their marriage bond? (Eph. 4:26,27; I Cor. 7:5b) Again Satan is there, doing whatever he can to ruin a marriage.

Suppose that your sin is cowardice -- you just can't open your mouth for Christ. You feel awkward and embarrassed to be identified with Him. Could these thoughts be instigated by satanic powers?

When Peter denied Christ, who was behind his denial? (Luke 22:31) Then Satan, the evil one, also hindered Paul from visiting the church at Thessalonica (I Thess. 2:18).

He is the originator of false doctrine and the deceived are held captive by him to do his will. (II Tim. 2:26.)

Satan is the one who blinds the minds of those who believe not. ( II Cor. 4:3-4) He is the one who snatches away the good seed, the Word of God. (Luke 8:12)

***You may feel that you have never met a person who has had any contact whatever with demonic forces -- but you have met yourself.*** And I suspect that is sufficient. No one has escaped contact with the prince of the power of the air, the one who has organized his army of wicked spirits to fight God's people. Someone has said that Satan has already meticulous plans for every believer's downfall. Think of it: A powerful evil spirit has already decided how he plans to ruin you.

### **3. Consider Satan's Target**

Satan does have access to the human mind! It exists in a realm that is not off limits to spiritual forces - whether good or bad.

Jesus said that the devil put the suggestion into the heart and mind of Judas. (John 13:2) Satan, you will recall, filled the minds of believers -- namely Ananias and Sapphira, to lie to God. The mind-- *your mind* -- is the target of satanic attack.

He inflames our passions, arouses greed, inflates our egos, and stirs up hatred and resentments. All of this and more is done by the roaring lion who stalks the earth seeking whom he may devour. (I Peter 5:8,9)

***You may be sure that satan is involved in the sin that troubles you.***

*Does that truth free you from responsibility? NO, not in the least. Peter did not let Ananias and Sapphira off the hook because their lie was instigated by satan.*

*We still have the power of choice -- God will hold us responsible for we can give into satan and give him territory or we can resist him. Yes, satan, might suggest that you lie, but we still choose to act upon the suggestion or refuse it. He may suggest any sin imaginable, but ultimately you and I make the choice. He cannot work independently of our cooperation.*

## **II. DEALING WITH THE DEVIL** Study Ephesians 6:10-18.

### **1. Don't give him place in your life.** (Eph. 4:26-27)

It is easy to reason -- *"If I leave satan alone, he'll leave me alone. I don't want to get involved.* Without realizing it, these believers have unwittingly conceded the battle to the enemy. Satan has them where he wants them for they are *too frightened to fight.* We are involved -- you don't want to make peace with the enemy by refusing to do battle with him. It is easy for us to give place to satan.

### **2. Satan's most successful weapon is fear.**

He will make you believe that if you take his existence serious, he will create havoc in your home, or ruin your peace of mind. Don't believe this -- he is a liar and the father of lies. (John 8:44) He will try to bluff you, push you as far as your ignorance will allow.

You have the right of authority to renounce Satan's foothold in your life -- take inventory, check your armor, if there is one piece missing you are vulnerable. One exposed area, and that's where an arrow will be coming through. Satan is an expert marksman. His arrows don't miss their target. He is not a sloppy warrior. This is one war where good luck does not count.

### **3. You must put on the armor:** Eph. 6 Consider the breastplate of righteousness.

Satan always needs some reason to trouble you, some sin that gives him a right to your life. Once that sin is confessed and forsaken, his foothold disintegrates. He still will attack, but you need not fall for his enticements.

***There are some people who are under satanic attack.*** They feel uncomfortable when someone even mentions the blood of Christ. But usually it is because they have wandered into Satan's territory by refusing to deal thoroughly with their past. Righteousness shields us from demonic attack. Satanic arrows are deflected when up against a conscience void of offense. If you are troubled by satanic attack, you should ask: Where have I given ground to Satan's attack? What sin has not been taken care of? Where do I resist God?

Personal righteousness, then is essential in sealing yourself off from Satan's activity. *All the armor is important, too.*

#### 4. Realize that Satan has no rights.

He will not admit that. Christ's death and ascension effectively cut the ground under him. (John 12:31) Christ's death and ascension to heaven won a legal victory over all satanic forces. Christ entered satan's territory and won a decision victory on the devil's home turf. (Col. 2:15. James 4:7 ; Eph. 4:27)

#### 5. Satan is like a ...

- a dethroned king who keeps on giving orders to his subjects;
- he is like a thief who has stolen virtually everything he owns and who tries to persuade you that it was always his.
- He is like a warrior without authority who keeps recruiting mercenaries to fight a battle that he has already lost.

#### 6. All believers have legal authority over satan.

Eph. 1:20-23; Christ's ascension gives Him over all rule, authority, power, and every name that is named. All things are under Christ's feet; therefore, no power exists in the universe without Christ's permission.

We are seated in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus and this means that Satan, along with his wicked spirits, at this very moment is under your feet.

***Resisting Satan is our responsibility. We don't ask Christ to do it for us. We are to stand against him.***

We may feel weak and helpless, but this does not diminish our position of authority. A policeman may not feel strong at all -- indeed, he may be ill or very tired. Physically, he would not be able to stop the smallest car but when he raises his hand all traffic stops. WHY? Because the state has given him authority over traffic.

### III. DEMONIC ACTIVITY AND YOUR SINFUL HABIT

#### 1. How do we confront wicked powers?

We must follow the example of Christ who commanded Satan. "*Be gone, Satan, in Jesus name, for it is written.*" Use this statement, loud and clear. Command satan to depart, based on the promises of Scripture that you have claimed.

*The power of the word of God is unleashed when you bring yourself under its authority.* The disciples could not cast out a demon because of unbelief and pride. They were ineffective because their lives were no longer under God's authority. (Study Matthew 17:15-20.)

*Recognize that -- II Tim. 1:7; James 4:7 is true for you. Satan wants a foothold on your will.* At first he is satisfied with only a tiny bit of control; time is on his side. If you give in a little he'll eventually get more. Sooner or later, you'll be a slave -- that's all he wants.

When you resist him you will find relief, but probably not for long. Satan and his henchmen do not give up easily. Christ was confronted three times in rapid succession. If satan assaults you 10 times, resist him 10 times, but don't give in. You have authority over every suggestion of the evil one.

**Use the pieces of armor-- *Ephesians 6: 13-18***

1. The **belt of truthfulness** -- an attitude of complete honesty.
2. The **breastplate of righteousness**-- all sin must be confessed and we must constantly look to Christ who is our righteousness.
3. The **feet shod** with the preparation of the Gospel of peace -- an eagerness to present the Gospel whenever possible.
4. The **shield of faith** -- a life lived with implicit trust in God and his Word.
5. The **helmet of salvation** -- confidence in the hope of salvation and the sufficiency of the Cross.
6. The **sword of the Spirit** -- knowing the specific statements of God to apply at the point of temptation.
7. **Praying always** -- a prayerful attitude of thankfulness and dependence.