

Available Power for God's Children!

Psalm 62:11, *"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God."* Power belongeth unto God! What a fantastic and encouraging word! This past Wednesday night I discussed the unlimited possibilities of resisting temptation and all manner of evils through the intrinsic power of the Word of God. In this forum today I want to further ramify how we can indeed resist the powers of darkness. I want to cover this in three phases. We need to know our enemy, prepare for combat and assault with fury.

I. Know Our Enemy

Our enemy is not God. The Bible says, *"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed"* (James 1:13,14). Since God cannot tempt with evil, there is only one other power in the universe that will tempt us to do wrong. It is Satan. *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"* (I Peter 5:8). The Devil is adamantly against Christ and those who follow Him with dedication. Matthew 4:3 refers to the Devil as the tempter. Satan seeks to overthrow the Christian by the process of agitation, *"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat"* (Luke 22:31). He will try to win by deceiving you; Jesus said, *"...he is a liar, and the father of it"* (John 8:44). Lucifer is dedicated to your downfall, *"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy..."* (John 10:10). The Devil is aggressive, consistent, and may depart temporarily, but returns to find the vulnerable area in the individual Christian's life. *"And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season"* (Luke 4:13).

II. Prepare For Combat

Until Jesus returns and gives His people a new body, we must contend with the fragile packaging of our flesh. Paul said, *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* (Romans 7:24). Referring back to James 1: 14, it says, *"...every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."* We must never forget that *"...greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world"* (I John 4:4). We must stay aware that the natural character of the believer is to act in obedience. If we step back from fully following the Lord, our flaws will become apparent and Satan will try to take advantage of the area of least resistance. This is why keeping the guard up is essential. When a person wishes to strengthen their physical body, they will often go through a regimen of exercises that build up their bodies. Paul said, *"But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection..."* (I Corinthians 9:27). In a similar way, three activities do much to prepare us for spiritual combat: praying in earnest; saturation with the Word of God; and perfecting holiness in the fear of God. *"But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost"* (Jude 20). *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord"* (Colossians 3:16). *"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God"* (II Corinthians 7:1).

III. Assault with Fury

If we are prepared for combat, we have nothing to fear: *"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"* (II Timothy 1:7). Be determined not to be conquered: *"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any"* (I Corinthians 6:2). *"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us"* (Romans 8:37). When under attack, identify the source of temptation. Our Lord made direct confrontation: *"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan..."* (Luke 4:8). Then our Lord made a specific biblical reference directed to the area of temptation (Matthew 4:4, 6, and 10). Our Lord teaches us by example to use the Bible as the Sword of the Spirit to cut the power that has come against us (Ephesians 6:17). With every new level of faith, we

are confronted with a new devil of challenge. Believe that God has equipped you to put in bind that which is trying to put you into bondage: *"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven"* (Matthew 16:19). I know that many of you think you are weak, you cannot do this, but listen to the Word: *"Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest"* (Joshua 1:9). *"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"* (Ephesians 6:10, 11).

I sense there is someone reading this that has stood against the temptations of the wicked one and feels that he or she cannot go a step further in the assault. Even the mighty archangel, Michael gave us insight to a final secret weapon we may pull out, if all else fails. Observe these words: *"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee"* (Jude 1:9).

When I was about seven years of age, the boys in our neighborhood were sledding down a steep hill beside our elementary school that had recently been covered with snow. As I came speeding down the hill, the neighborhood bully was directly in my line of descent at the bottom of the hill. It was too late; I could not turn sharply enough to miss him. I hit him in the ankles, flipping him hilariously on his backside. The only problem-he did not interpret it as funny. The fall hurt nothing but his pride, but he intended to make me pay. He walked over to where I was and knocked the wind clean out of my small frame. This began a succession of assaults. These attacks continued until one day after school he caught me just before entering into my house. I was thrown to the ground and he began to work me over. I heard some commotion and looked up just in time to see my big brother, David throw his books to the ground. I saw his face; it was set, teeth were clinched, and he was running full speed at the bully who was sitting on top of me. In one mighty motion, David pulled this monster off me and began to work him over. There was a line of hills in front of our house and my big brother was whipping him from hillside to hillside, the bully screaming his head off! I loved it. I cheered my brother on. Once the bully tasted the wrath of my big brother, I earned a whole new respect. Stay close to Jesus; He is only a prayer away. *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it"* (I Corinthians 10:13). *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble"* (Psalm 46:1). God loves you, He is for you, He will be there when all seems lost, and He will come to your aid: *"The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing"* (Psalm 34:10). *"God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God"* (Psalm 62:11).

- Pastor Pope -

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