

Satan's Flaming Darts

This little body is growing in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are growing in maturity and in passion for His kingdom. This is an exciting time in the life of our church. While we may look around and just see a small church, the enemy looks at us and sees a threat.

Years back when I was an Pastor at the Clearwater Vineyard, we were growing, and we needed to hire some new staff. At our first staff meeting, Jon Sterns put bullseyes on the back of each chair. He warned us that as we took on our roles on staff, we had to be aware that we were putting bullseyes on our backs because we were becoming threats to the enemy.

1. Resist the Devil

1 Peter 5:8-10

Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 9 Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world.

In the Screwtape Letters by C.S. Lewis, he uses fantasy to describe an apprentice demon writing letters to his uncle describing the ways that he is trying to nullify a recently converted follower of Christ. While it is an amusing read, it reminds us that the enemy is always formulating plans to attack us and derail, to keep us focused on the problems and challenges.

Far too often, it's just enough to keep us busy. If we are not praying, reading His Word, worshipping, or showing God's love to someone, then he is winning.

Remember that in the here and the not yet of the Kingdom, everything is a power encounter.

It's not enough to go to church on Sundays and maybe go to group during the week if you do even that. We need to become committed followers of Christ.

As committed followers of Christ we need to remember the authority that we have in Christ. Nothing strikes more fear in the heart of the enemy is a person who knows who they are in Christ. While the Bible tells us that while Satan is looking to attack us, we don't need to live in fear.

James 4:7-8

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

That is what Jesus did in the desert and it says that the devil left until a more opportune time.

2. Stand Firm

Eph 6:10-15

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the

devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace.

In the battle for the Kingdom, we are not without armor and weapons. In the here and the not yet of the Kingdom we are living in "**this present darkness**". Nothing that we see happening in the world should surprise us because the devil is still the prince of this worldly plane.

He is constantly on the attack against those who do not give into him. Still, we stand firm on our faith in Christ.

- We don't go along with the world's convenient truth, but His immutable truth, no matter how unpopular that makes us.
- We live righteous lives that don't conform to the lack of morals of this world.
- We are always ready to share the Gospel in and out of season.

3. Go on the Offensive

Ephesians 6:16-18

16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.

One thing we need to be aware of is that the armor of God is offensive in nature. The shield, helmet and armor are meant to protect our front. There is no retreat or surrender. There is no turning. We attack and then we stand firm.

- We protect ourselves with the shield of faith in Christ, the helmet of our assurance of salvation. The helmet protects our mind which needs to be constantly renewed.
- The breastplate of righteousness which protects our heart and,
- Stand ready to do battle with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Bible. The Spirit can only use that which we have deposited into our hearts.
- Finally, we pray in the Spirit. In other words, we listen for His voice, and we pray His will back to Him.

4. Claim the Victory

1 Cor 15:57-58

thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58 Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

The awesome part of all of this is that we are guaranteed the victory.

- We need to know who we are in Christ.
- We need to know the authority we have.
- We need to know that Christ won the battle on the cross and it was reaffirmed at His resurrection and ascension.
- We need to know that as His co-heirs, as the priesthood of believers, as the body and bride of Christ; He endows us with that victory.
- We need to know not only are we victors in Christ, but we are also overcomers.

1 John 5:4-5

4 For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world— our faith. 5 Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

Our names are written in the Lamb's book of life and we are assured of victory IF:

We allow God's rule and reign over every area, every nook and cranny of our lives. Yes, we are under attack, but fear not, "**for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. 1 John 4:4-5**"