

Resist Him

From: Overcoming the Overwhelming:
A 40-Day Journey toward Rediscovering Faith in God

Day 27: Resist Him
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Let us now consider the other extreme view of our enemy, that of thinking that because he has been defeated, we need not consider him at all, as if to imply that he no longer exists. Let us consider these two passages.

2 Corinthians 2:10-11

Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, "lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Peter 5:8

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

We see from these two verses that Satan is still roaming around seeking whom he may devour, and also that he has “devices”. “Devices” has to do with his purpose, which, as I’ve stated previously, is to get us to deny the faith. Again, we need not fear the devil. Jesus has stripped him of his power, but he will still try to stumble us. Here are some of his tactics.

Questioning God’s Character

Not only will he roar like a lion to try and make us think he is more than he is (God’s evil twin), Satan will bring into doubt God’s true character, so much so that instead of us seeing Him as the loving, giving, and caring God that He is, who keeps His promises and abides with us forever, he will try and make us think that God punishes His children with sickness and even death, makes promises that He has no intention of keeping, and whose love is not

consistent. If he can get us to doubt who God really is to us, we will be reluctant to trust in Him.

Questioning God's Directives

Thankfully, we are not under the law, but we have been given instructions for living. The enemy has been questioning God's will for us from the beginning of time, and he's still able to do this.

Genesis 3:1

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'"

This questioning sounds a bit like this: "Does God really want us to abstain from sexual immorality? Does it matter at all to Him if we dabble in other religions or the occult? When Paul told the believers to be sober, did he mean that for us also? Would it bother God if I cheated on my taxes? I mean they are unjust! God didn't mean to love *my* wife like Christ loves the church. She's intolerable. Surely submitting to one's husband is antiquated, isn't it? Is fellowshiping with other believers really required? God doesn't expect me to forgive *every* offense, does He?" God's grace teaches us to deny worldly lusts and to live godly lives on this earth. The enemy will challenge God's grace. **Grace isn't freedom to sin; it is freedom not to sin.**

The enemy will also challenge individual directives in our lives, and these can vary and change over time as our lives change. Whatever it is God is calling us to do, let us do it, but also understand that there will be opposition.

Not every person with whom David and I have tried to share the gospel of grace has listened. Some have ignored us; others have openly lied to defame us and then spoken ill of the message we preached once they had rid themselves of us. The temptation would be to preach a watered-down version of the message we've been called to share to make ourselves more acceptable. By God's grace, this is not going to happen.

Questioning God's Provisions and Promises

Clearly, questioning God's provisions and promises is the same thing as questioning His character, for if He provides for us and does not allow us to partake of it, or if He promises to do something, and then withholds what He has promised, He is not the God He claims to be. Yet He is who He claims to be. He will not keep us away from what He has provided. He will do what He has promised. We can rest in this, and when the enemy challenges these truths, we must resist his lies.

2 Corinthians 1:20

For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

This promise about His promises is faithful and true.

Accusations

We know that the enemy makes accusations against God, but one of his other tactics is to make them against believers.

Revelation 12:10

*Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven,
"Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of
our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for
the accuser of our brethren, who accused them
before our God day and night, has been cast down.*

Perhaps you've heard this before either in your mind or from the lips of those being used by Satan to destroy you.

"You are a pitiful example of a human being. You are weak and worthless. No one loves you because there is nothing about you worth loving. You will never be successful. Your marriage will never be happy. You'll never be well. You failed again. This grace and faith message isn't working. Who would ever want to marry you? Nobody likes you. Everyone hates you." You know the rest of the song, don't you?

If all of these things were true, what would be the point of even trying or believing anything? Can you see that when we believe these lies about ourselves, the enemy has won? These ideas render

us powerless. They put all the focus on us and our shortcomings, and get our eyes off of Jesus.

Resist Him!

My friends, don't be ignorant of how the enemy now fights against us. Recognize his thoughts against you and don't remain motionless while he accuses you before your God who loves you. Resist him! How do we resist him? Gloriously, "steadfast" is not an adverb describing how we resist. It is a noun referring to us. Resist him, steadfast (ones) in the faith.

It's not our steadfast efforts by which we resist, but by our position as being steadfast ones in the faith of Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 5:9

Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Ephesians 6:11-13

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Intimidation by False Prophets

Here is yet another tactic of the enemy. Sometimes he will use other human beings to do his dirty work—and I'm sorry to say that sometimes these people are misguided Christians.

This happens in two main arenas. The first is in the form of false doctrines. These are teachings about God and the gospel that are not true or which are a mixture of truth and error. Remember:

Truth + Error = Error

We aren't surprised that the world falsely accuses us, but it is most painful when our own brothers and sisters lash out against us. This is the second way false prophets will come against us. (Whether they are true believers or not—God knows.)

Verse 4 below has commonly been used to refer to Satan, and even though he is surely involved, it is actually speaking of false prophets.

1 John 4:1, 4-5

*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because **many false prophets** have gone out into the world. ⁴You are of God, little children, and have overcome **them**, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵**They** are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears **them**.*

The good news is that we have overcome them because the One living in us is greater than the ones living in the world. While the enemy will use other human beings to try and discredit the gospel of God's grace, we can continue preaching it with confidence. Though false prophets abound in the church today exalting themselves and their supposed office, we need not fear. God in us is greater than the false spirits guiding them.

