

Chapter 12

Divine Protection From The Devil

God offers His protection from the devil to all who will submit to Him:

“Submit yourselves to God; resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7)

How it must grieve the Holy Spirit, to watch us flailing around frantically trying to gain control of our lives. We cannot do it. And one of our biggest obstacles is unseen: the devil.

There are three guiding principles:

1-When a believer speaks God's Word, it's Jesus Himself speaking!

2-The Word of God contains the power of God!

3-Obedience: Our part is to submit to God's authority

Biblical Principle: When a believer speaks God's Word, it's Jesus Himself speaking!

Key Supporting Verse:

“He who hears you hears Me, and he who rejects you rejects Me, and he who rejects Me rejects Him who sent me.” (Luke 10:16a)

The phrase, "He who hears you hears Me", declares that when Jesus' followers speak His Word, it's really Him speaking through them.

Biblical Principle: The Word of God contains the power of God!

Here are verses supporting the assertion that there is power in God's Word:

“For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18)

The Word of God seems foolish to many. In reality, it contains the power of God!

“God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

(2 Timothy 1:7)

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”(Ephesians 3:20-21 NKJV)

‘For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes’ (Romans 1:16)

Biblical Principle: Obedience: Our part is to submit to God's authority.

“Submit yourselves to God; resist the devil and he will flee from you (James 4:7)

What He is really watching for is steady progress in the right direction. He wants us to voluntarily come under His authority. In other words, He wants us to submit ourselves to God.

Application: Jesus has given us the perfect “how-to” strategy for gaining victory over the temptations, lies, and attacks of the devil. In Matthew 4:1-11, Satan tried to tempt Jesus three times. But Jesus deflected each temptation by speaking the Truth of Scripture. In each response Jesus said, “It is written...” followed by a statement of Truth from the Word of God. Example:

The temptation of Jesus:

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” But he answered, “It is written,

“‘Man shall not live by bread alone,

but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,

“‘He will command his angels concerning you,’

and

““On their hands they will bear you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.””

Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Again,
the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and
their glory. And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.”

Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,

““You shall worship the Lord your God
and him only shall you serve.””

Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

(Matthew 4:1-11)

That's how we must “submit ourselves therefore to God” and in the process “resist the devil.”

The Word of God is our weapon against demonic beings who would otherwise easily devour us.

The battle takes place in our minds, and we win the battle with Scripture.

To put it another way: the more Scripture memory you've done, the more powerful is your
weapon against the devil!

God reaffirmed this strategy when He inspired Paul to write:

And take... the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. (Ephesians 6:17)

You have to put first things first:

Submit to God In this case, that's Scripture memory. But don't just take them in as "head
knowledge". Allow the Word of God to penetrate into the "soil of your heart". That's simply a
discipline of saying the passages over and over, and as you say them, visualizing yourself as
already living according to the principles contained in those passages.

Then, as the Word takes root and begins to grow and "bear fruit", remember: one of the Fruits of your relationship with the Holy Spirit is self-control, now you have the power of the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ active in your life, and you can easily resist the devil.

A Personal Anecdote: This illustrates the difference between doing something in my own strength vs. the power of the Holy Spirit working through me. As one of my sons and I were stopping for a red light in the left-turn lane of a busy street, the engine in my minivan suddenly quit and refused to start. Although the street was "nearly" level, we had to really strain to push the van around the corner and into an area where it was out of the way. That effort left us exhausted. I thought of that a year or so later, when I again found myself waiting at a red light in another left-turn lane. This lane had a substantial incline. Nevertheless, when the green arrow came on, with just the slightest pressure of my foot upon the gas pedal, the same minivan moved easily up the incline, around the corner, and quickly accelerated to highway speed.

It's a lot like that with spiritual matters. Just as it was all my son and I could do to move the heavy vehicle just a few feet under our own strength -- without power from the engine -- you and I are nearly powerless in the spiritual battles we face, without the power of the Holy Spirit to help us.

There is almost always a part that we have to do first. In the last half of my anecdote, my part was to press my foot against the gas pedal. Once I did that, the power of gasoline being burned in the cylinders of the car's engine caused the car to move forward without me having to do anything else. In the same way, when it comes to areas of obedience to God, there's always a part I have to do first. Once I've done my part, God does the part I cannot possibly do.

An Example From Scripture Of Submitting To God: Tithing.

“Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of Heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.”

I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your soil, and your vine in the field shall not fail to bear, says the Lord of hosts.” (Malachi 3:10-11)

And let us have no doubt as to who the "devourer" is:

“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8)

Getting God's protection from the devil is a huge deal!

The devil has incredible power over us, but God has him on a leash. When you walk in obedience to God, He promises He will not allow the devil to destroy your finances.

How To Apply The "obedience" principle:

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” (James 4:7)

The key to all of this is submission to God. That's why the "submission" part of the verse comes first. It's like: "Step #1: submit to God in all your ways", "Step #2: Now that you've done that, you have the power to resist the devil."

We don't have to be perfect. God is well aware that we cannot be perfect. He just wants to see us making steady progress in the right direction.

If you do slide back a bit, don't let the devil tell you that you are a loser, and that you might as well give up! No, just like learning to play the piano, submitting to God takes determination and daily practice. God is patient. He's on your side. He soooo wants you to succeed. He created you. He loves you. The Father sent His only Son to die on a cross to pay for your sins. He hasn't given up on you, so don't you give up on yourself!

In 1 Corinthians 6: 19-20, God's Word reminds you that you are not your own and have been bought with a price. (A very high price!)

Do this: Memorize this verse: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." (James 1:7)

You can do it. Just write it on a recipe card and read it over several times a day until you can say it "by heart". Then -- very important -- recite it silently to yourself frequently throughout the day.

You will be astonished at how it helps you! One more thing: if the devil tries to guilt you by reminding you of your past, just remind him of his future:

"Depart from Me you cursed, into the everlasting fire" (Matthew 25:41)