

19 February 2017

The nature of Satan – Pt 7 A believer's response to Satan's wiles

Satan is seductive and destructive and "we are not ignorant of his devices" (2Cor.2: 11). But how do we respond to his devices when attacked? In our previous teaching we learnt to – put on the whole armour of God, be sober and vigilant, neither give place to the devil. And in this our final study we establish the need for casting down imaginations, praying and fasting, and restoring a brother in meekness as spiritual weapons in our arsenal to defend ourselves.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. Married couples – give yourselves to fasting and prayer.

"Defraud ye not one the other, except [it be] with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan **tempt** you not for your incontinency" (1Cor.7: 5).

In this example of a husband and wife (verse 4), a married couple are given the weapons of prayer and fasting that "Satan tempt" them not.

2. Cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against God.

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2Cor.10: 5).

When we have thoughts that exalt us against God, or thoughts of anything that is not of God our defence is to cast down those imaginations and by prayer bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ".

3. Restore a brother in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself.

"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal 6:1).

Our thoughts can exalt us against God, and when we restore a brother in the spirit of pride we exalt ourselves, and to combat this we are to restore a brother that has fallen in the spirit of meekness, considering ourselves lest we also be tempted.

Additional comments on our three points.

Whether in our thoughts or in action when we exalt ourselves above others we are setting ourselves up for a fall (Prov.16: 18), and in doing so we are not departing from iniquity (2Tim.2: 19).

Applying the teaching to our life today.

My nature is proud, my life-long struggle is with a mind that naturally exalts itself above others and so for me to restore a brother in the spirit of meekness can only be done by much prayer, and constant "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ".

Question to think about.

What does it mean to bring into captivity a thought to the obedience of Christ?

My answer to our question from the scriptures.

If what we are thinking is in disobedience to the word of God then we need to pray and ask the Lord to bring our thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, such that our thoughts would change to reflect obedience to God. An example is a thought to bow down to idols. We know that this is contrary to the word of God and so we pray and ask God to captivate the thought to the obedience of Christ. Hence to be vigilant in the use of this weapon against the wiles of Satan, and to keep us from temptation we need to know the scriptures, such that when our thoughts are contrary to the word of God, we first recognise them as being so, and pray accordingly. Amen!