

The Tree of Life for 02-14-99

Divine power extends to the believer the ability to handle divine commands in order to execute divine orders. The Christian soldier is never to desert his army or to go, what is known as, AWOL (absent without leave). Going AWOL in the spiritual realm is the act of reversing or being so reversed to a former state or practice. It is a disorderly retreat and is the status of the believer who fails to execute the plan of God for his life. Whether it be due to a lack of spiritual growth or due to the lack of application of doctrine, if the believer is not going forward he is going *backward*. Most reversionistic processes begin in the thought pattern which is why the Christian soldier is to bring every thought captive, 2Co 10:34. This is what prevents the hostile invasion of negative thoughts and prevents them from expanding outward via the tongue. Spiritual warriors are to be utterly ruthless about what they bring into their souls. They do so by taking the sword of truth and cutting swiftly and clearly through all the extraneous, all the superficialities, the mindsets and addictions that hold them back. Only when our souls are uncluttered with the negative by way of human viewpoint and filled with divine viewpoint do we have the option of the power it takes to resist the devil. Eph 4:27 commands us not to give the devil an opportunity, or a room in our soul.

You could have all the areas of your life covered but if you leave one space open, one room unattended, that is where Satan will concentrate his attack. God has provided for us a defensive position because Satan will do his best to attack and take us out of the plan of God. It is necessary not to fight Satan on his terms, but to oppose or resist him using God's perspective and power. We are called to obedience in spite of opposition. Opposition is never a valid excuse for failure or for going beyond the protection offered in predestination; the pre-designed plan of God. Opposition should rather, spur us on to greater spiritual heights. If you want to take part in the victory that our Lord Jesus Christ won on the cross you must walk in obedience to God's plan rather than react to Satan and the kingdom of darkness. If you don't stand for something you will fall for anything. We have the delegated divine power to resist the devil, 1Jo 4:4. Through this divine power the grace of God actually offers to us a greater power than that of Satan's. But it is up to you to learn of and utilize God's power. Satan's goal is to stop Jesus Christ from being glorified in the believer's life. Even in light of Satan's mad offensive position we are not to fight back, we are commanded to resist. It is only in our defensive position, that divine protection, the wall of fire as noted in Zec 2:5, surrounds us. Once we strike out on our own attack we depart from that wall of fire. Therefore, it is very important to learn the mechanics of God's plans and what He requires of the Christian soldier. "***From now on start becoming strong in the Lord...***", Eph 6:10.

Only when you have the details of your life under control are you ready for spiritual warfare. What makes you think you are stable and prepared enough to handle spiritual warfare

when you can't even handle relationships in life? God demands from the volition of each believer to handle authority in life. Only then can the believer move on to effective combat in spiritual warfare. Knowledge of Satan is critical if we want to stand our ground. Satan is not only the great deceiver, accuser, father of lies, the first murderer and so on, but Satan was also the highest angel and is the ruler of all the fallen angels, Mat 9:34; 12:26; Luk 11:18-19. He is the pre-historic super-creature as noted in Isa 14:12-17; Eze 28:11-18. He was so brilliant in his defense against God that God created mankind to resolve the conflict. Satan is also an organizational genius with a great organization of demons, Eph 6:10-12. Organization is the key to being effective. It is crucial that the believer realize that ever since the fall of Adam, Satan has been the ruler of the world, Luk 4:5-7; Joh 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2Co 4:4; Eph 2:2. Basically, what our soul breathes in from the world system is all controlled by Satan. He is all around us seeking for the vantage point in our soul to subtly infiltrate our system of thinking. That is why Eph 4:27 commands the believer not to give him an opportunity.

The word **opportunity** is the Greek word *topon* and it means an opportunity, a room, a chance, a possibility, place, any portion or space marked off, as it were, from a surrounding space. Everyone has a secret room in his or her soul, David knew he had faults which were even unknown to him, Psa 19:12. And, if it is something you refuse to deal with you can be sure that at the right time (for him) Satan will use it to hinder or destroy your relationship with God. Many believers have a room in their soul where their imagination has been allowed to run rampant and idols are erected. An idol being, not only the worship of a physical image but inordinate attachment or devotion to someone or something. Idolatry is not only giving to someone or something the honor and devotion which belongs to God alone, but the giving in to any human desire as taking precedence over God's will. It is a room where within lies something the person is extremely devoted to. This room in the soul is often a room where personal weaknesses are allowed to continue due to the fact that the individual does not know how to overcome them. So, even to it's host this room can be a mystery. It may be a room untouchable by man, but it is touchable by God.

We see a type of this room in the illustration of the secret room in the Jewish Temple in Ezekiel chapter 8. The secret room in the Temple where they worshipped idols in the dark was known as the chamber of imagery. It is the room, that if the light panels been slide open, there would have flooded in more light than any other room in the temple... but, the panels were kept securely fastened so that no light shone through. It was a dark, abominable, and loathsome place. Many believers have a room in their soul very much like this. And this secret room is quite unlike the rest of the temple. Remember, Israel, in typology, is a picture of the believer's soul (1Co 10:6; Rom 15:4), and today the believer's body is the temple of the living God, 1Co 3:16. And even though this secret room in the soul is an abomination unto the Lord, we find that His attitude toward it is one of grace and restoration. His desire is to free us from

its hold, Psa 146:7b; Jer 15:11; Joh 8:32,36; Psa 68:6; Psa 107:10,14; Isa 61:1; Isa 42:7; Psa 69:3. On the other hand, Satan's desire is to use this room to guilt and condemn us and destroy our spiritual life.

The strategies and deceptions of Satan are multifaceted and very flexible. If it's the good you seek, he can offer that, if it's excitement you seek, he can oblige you there as well. He has many faces and many willing (human) agents. And generally his agents believe they are working for the cause of Christ. In reality, Satan's agents serve to distort the truth of the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. From the proper way to study the word of God, to the proper application of that word, Satan contrives and plots to deceive and lure the unsuspecting not "away" per se, but off track. He allows the majority to think they are "good" and serving God, but what a surprise it will be when they find out otherwise.

Satan's main strategy is of course... *human good*. It is his genius plan to counterfeit the divine good produced in God's plan. Satan's plan, the improvement of this world and of human condition, etc., is secured through the human good that God Himself rejects. In reality, what Satan puts to use is God's rejection, but hey, it works for him. And, it works for people too. People love to feel that they are doing their part, and inserting their portion. It is antithetical to God's *grace* policy but it sure pleases the old sin nature. In God's plan the believer operates in his new nature, and in divine power. That is the only avenue to the production of divine good. In Satan's world system as we know it, man operates in his flesh, his old man, i.e., the old sin nature. And the reason it feels so right is because the flesh loves that which the flesh produces. This is greatly applauded by the enemy and his vast host of fallen angels. If they can but get Christians wrapped up in producing *human* good they offer no threat nor resilience to Satan's endeavor. And this is exactly where most Christians function from... deep in the deceit of the devil's strategies.

Only the Christian soldier who has been fully trained, who is disciplined, and accurate in the execution of God's plan according to what God's word states will be able to spot the evil ambushes along the way. Satan is an expert in the category of evil, be it of the "good" persuasion or of the dark side. All warfare demands intimate knowledge of not only one's own resources but that also of the enemy. What man who wants to cross a ditch starts by jumping half way? Once you are down in the depths of the ditch, measurement is no longer of any use. The time for measuring and calculating and learning your course is before the time of execution. Only then can the warrior confidently venture out toward victory.

God makes available to every Christian soldier the best equipment, the best ammunition, the best maps, the best of everything! But... discipline and accuracy is the key and I say "but" because most people want an easy way out. They are lazy and slothful and do not really desire the things of God. And if they are not lazy, they do not seek God's ways, they seek to elevate self, just another of Satan's strategies.

"...be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him firm in your faith..." 1Pe 5:8-9