

Our victory over the devil is not a myth

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By Dave Havir

BIG SANDY, Texas—Whenever we talk about the gospel to our family, coworkers and friends, all of us have the opportunity to plant and water seeds of truth (1 Corinthians 3:6). If our words can provide any benefit to another individual, we are happy to give the credit back to God, who gives the increase (same verse).

A few years ago I had the opportunity to give a four-part sermon series titled "Victory Over the Devil." The reason I chose this subject was to help people deal with the increasing number of trials in their lives.

I saw things like marriage and family challenges, job pressures, addictions, discouragement and depression. I wanted to help.

The specific titles of the four sermons were:

- "Names and Descriptions of the Devil."
- "The Battlefield Is a Person's Mind and Emotions."
- "Protection From Millions of Evil Angels."
- "Christ Fasted."

Power of the name

One of the most important tools in resisting the devil is to understand the power of Christ's name.

After Jesus sent out the 70 disciples to preach the gospel, they returned with great joy (Luke 10:17). The first thing that is quoted in the Scripture after their return was: "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through Your name."

The 70 disciples saw the importance of the name of Christ in resisting the devils.

Later Jude described how the archangel Michael won a dispute with the devil. In Jude 9 he described how Michael disputed with the devil about the body of Moses. Michael didn't bring a railing accusation against the devil. Rather, he said, "The Lord rebuke you."

There are many good books that describe the importance of using the name of Christ to resist the spirit world.

Power of fasting

Another important tool in resisting the devil is to understand the power of fasting.

When Jesus was in the wilderness to be tempted of the devil, He fasted.

We have to be honest and admit that fasting does not always work. Some people fast to impress other people (Matthew 6:16-18). Some people fast as a form of their personal righteousness (Luke 18:12).

However, Isaiah described fasting as a powerful spiritual tool. According to Isaiah 58:6-7, fasting can do the following:

- It can loose the bands of wickedness.
- It can undo the heavy burdens.
- It can help the oppressed go free.
- It can break every yoke.
- It can motivate a believer to help the hungry and poor.
- It can motivate a believer to help his own family.

When believers face marriage and family challenges, job pressures, addictions, discouragement and depression, they need the power of fasting in their lives.

The accuser lives

At this time let's notice that the accuser of the brethren lives, and let's consider three ways that he accuses.

- Satan influences authorities to accuse brethren. (See Revelation 13:1-18, Matthew 10:17-18 and John 16:2.)
- Satan influences brethren to accuse brethren. (See Matthew 24:10, John 13:27, Matthew 26:14-15 and John 18:2-3.)
- Satan accuses brethren to God. (See Revelation 12:10.)

Do you know what can help a believer deal with accusations from authorities and from brethren?

The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy that believers should employ supplications, prayers, intercessions and the giving of thanks for all people (1 Timothy 2:1).

In the next verse he mentioned a specific reason for such fasting and prayer: "that we might lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

Here is a premise that I would like for you to consider: A believer can deal more easily with accusations from authorities and accusations from believers when he is not worried about Satan's accusations against him to the Father.

Although Christ expressed that He was sorrowful unto death (Matthew 26:38), He kept His focus on His personal relationship with the Father and fulfilling the Father's will.

Whenever a believer is dealing with trials (whether due to his own sins or due to suffering for Christ), he has direct access to the Father. Since we have a wonderful High Priest, we should go boldly to the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:14-16).

When we resist the devil with grace and truth, he flees from us. When we steadfastly resist the devil, we know that the God of grace will establish us, strengthen us and settle us (1 Peter 5:9-10). He gives us the victory over the devil.