



Satan's War on the Mind

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Part 1

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

EPHESIANS 6:10-11

One of the most common “wiles of the devil” that the believer faces is Satan’s war against our minds. I don’t know exactly how Satan has the ability to interfere with our thinking process, but we know from Scripture that it happens.

Scriptural Evidence

We see it in the life of King David, the great king of Israel. **Now Satan stood up against Israel, and moved David to number Israel** (1 Chronicles 21:1). This had been forbidden, but Satan put this suggestion into David’s mind. David was God’s man—the king He had chosen. We may think that as believers we are exempt from Satan’s attack. We’re not.

We also see Peter influenced by God one moment and by the Devil the next. Peter declares that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus commends him, saying, **“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven”** (Matthew 16:17b). But in the same chapter, Jesus tells His disciples that He’s going to die, and Peter argues against that. Jesus says to Peter, **“Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men”** (Matthew 16:23). We see that even strong believers can be influenced by the enemy in our thinking process.

Paul explains that Satan can attack nonbelievers, **“whose minds the god of this age has blinded”** (2 Corinthians 4:4a). These satanic assaults result in condemnation, doubt, evil thoughts, fear, depression, discouragement, and despair. Let’s examine condemnation and doubt.

Condemnation

Condemnation is one of the Devil’s most common tactics. He attempts to make us feel cut off from the love and the forgiveness

of God—often after some failure on our part. The Devil is an opportunist. The moment we fail, the enemy says there’s no forgiveness for us—no more mercy, no more grace. Perhaps you have failed in some area of your life as a Christian; and even though you have truly repented, you feel that God is angry with you or even finished with you. This is condemnation, and it’s designed to drive you away from God.

Conviction vs. Condemnation

It’s important to make a distinction between condemnation and conviction. Conviction is a real work of the Spirit: When a child of God sins, the Holy Spirit convicts us. First He shows us that what we’re doing is wrong, and then He also shows us that the solution is repentance, confession, and the blood of Jesus washing us. He seeks to lead us to that place of returning to God.

Condemnation is just the opposite. It points out your sin and failure but leaves you with the impression that there is no solution, no real forgiveness, no grace and mercy left for you. This is not from God. The enemy may even quote Scripture to you, as he did when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness. How do we overcome this?

We must believe God’s Word—to stand in faith on what He has said, despite our emotions. He promises in Romans 8:1a, **“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.”** For those in Christ, there is no condemnation; we are free from the burden of guilt because of what Jesus did. God also says, **“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”** (1 John 1:9). After confessing our sins to God, we know that God is faithful to forgive us.

Darts of Doubt

Another of the Devil’s darts is to put doubt in our minds—doubts about God’s existence, your own salvation, your call to

serve the Lord, and anything in between. He especially wants to cast doubt upon

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the Word of God. The enemy tempted Eve to distrust God’s warning by saying, **“Has God indeed said ...?”** (Genesis 3:1b). Satan also tempted Jesus Christ in the wilderness, saying, **“If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread”** (Matthew 4:3b). If the Devil had the audacity to try to get Jesus to doubt who He was, then he’ll do the same to us.

An important thing to remember: There is a difference between the temptation to doubt and the sin of unbelief. Just because you’re having these thoughts of doubt doesn’t necessarily mean that you’re sinning. You may think, *I’m filled with doubt*. Are you really doubting God? Or are you being tempted to doubt God?

Resisting Doubt

When doubt enters your mind, here are three ways to resist that temptation: First, pray right then for the Lord to increase your faith. Then set your mind on the promises of God’s Word because **“faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”** (Romans 10:17). Our faith is actually strengthened through God’s Word. Finally, stand behind the shield of faith. In Ephesians 6:16, Paul tells us, **“Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.”** So when those flaming arrows of doubt come our way, we must say, “No; I believe You, God. I believe in what You’ve done in my life.” James reminds us, **“Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you”** (James 4:7). As you draw close to God and resist the enemy in your mind, he will flee. These are some ways we can stand fast against Satan’s war on our minds. ✚