

Resistance Is Not Futile

James 4 Pet 5.7-8

James 4.7-8 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you

1 Pet 5.8-9 Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same kinds of suffering are being experienced by your brotherhood throughout the world

The Point: We have a powerful adversary; resistance to his schemes is essential daily.

The Question: Why is it always me?

You are not alone (1 Pet 5.9-10)

Submit to God: Pride (James 4.7)

Resist your tempter: Where will he strike? (The Ten)

Draw near to God: Clean up your act! James 4.8-10

Hands (James 4.8)

Heart (James 4.8)

Attitude James 4.10

Really! You are not alone!

1 John 5.18, 1 John 4.1, 1 Cor 10.13-14, and Matthew 16.18)

The evil one of the Lord's Prayer is the serpent of the garden, the tormenter in Job, and the dragon of revelation. His name in Hebrew means accuser or adversary. In Greek, his name means the adversary, Satan, the devil. His army is angels that rebelled against God, whom the Scripture calls demons, devils, and unclean spirits. He also has humans who choose to do his will and war against the kingdom.

Peter warns us that our adversary, the devil (Greek: slanderer, false accuser), is on the hunt to "swallow us whole." We resist him and his forces, knowing we are not alone in the battle. Every believer is under attack daily; are you a friend of Jesus, then you have a sworn enemy with an army. He wants you to feel abandoned and alone in the fight.

In the earliest letter in the New Testament, James gives believers the formula to resist our enemy in this spiritual war. It is a simple outline: Submit (to God), resist (the slanderer), and draw near (to God).

What does it mean to submit to God, and what is our primary obstacle? You have few choices when you read his Word and see his will. First and best is to say, "I obey—give me strength." Another road is to find loopholes, which is resisting the wrong party. The third option is to say, NO, I will do it my way—the willful sin of idolatry.

We resist the evil one by knowing the Word and knowing where he will strike. So, turn to Exodus 20 and look at the ten commandments he gave to Israel; nine are meant for all humanity (five are universal in all cultures), and one was for Israel alone.

Do you know your weaknesses? Your tempters know you better than you know yourself. They know how to trick, deceive and lay traps. You are not their first patient. He will strike when you are tired, emotionally, and spiritually weak: lacking fellowship, prayer, and study.

Draw near to the God who loves you. Clean your hands, heart (mind), and attitude (spirit). Examine yourself daily and renew repentance when you find a new sin pitching a tent on your lawn or an old sin, putting a shingle over your door. You never fight the enemy alone!