

RESISTING THE DEVIL

Peter has a helpful statement on resisting the devil:

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, . . . (1 Pet. 5:8-9).

Here we are given the **features** of our resistance: (1) Soberness (being seriously conscious of Satan and his desire for our souls), and (2) vigilance (being both wide awake watchful, on guard, for Satan's attacks).

Here we are given the **fact** of our resistance. We are **ordered** to resist him, for such resistance will cause him to flee (Jam. 4:7). Some saints think the devil and his agents not so bad after all and they compromise (or worse) cooperate with him. To resist means to oppose, to fight against. Those who oppose those of us who resist the devil's doctrines and practices (and their advocates), reject this plain command. Contrary to the belief of many disciples, religious controversy is not only permissible, it is required when the Truth is under assault. Those who shelter the Lord's enemies and oppose His defenders are traitors to the Christ!

Here we are given the **facility** of our resistance. We are to resist the devil "stedfast in the faith." To be steadfast is to be firmly positioned or solid as a rock. Our firm position is to be "in the faith." "The faith" refers to the Truth, the Gospel, the whole law of Christ. It embraces both the Gospel plan of salvation (Acts 6:7) as well as principles of Christian conduct (1 Tim. 4:1-3). We are to contend earnestly for it (Jude 3), which involves resisting the devil by use of it. One cannot steadfastly resist Satan apart from the faith. To oppose error one must know the Truth.

It becomes immediately obvious why many saints have fallen for the "social agenda" approach to religion, along with the latest fads, "ministries," and assorted other gadgetry, instead of crying out against them. They know so little of the faith that they could hardly know what it authorizes and what it does not authorize. They are incapable of discriminating between things of the devil and things of the Lord. When they hear Gospel Truth forthrightly proclaimed, it is so strange to their ears they think it is false doctrine.

The great need of the hour in the Lord's church is more men and women who are grounded in the Truth like the Rock of Gibraltar. Such cannot be "carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14). Such will not only be prepared to or have to be reminded to resist the devil and his emissaries; they will **instinctively** resist him. All others are doomed to be swallowed up by him.

—Dub McClish

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