

# Learning How to Extinguish Satan's Fiery Attacks by Faith

Ephesians 6:16

God's Word shows us how God wants us to live.

If we want to learn how to extinguish Satan's fiery darts, God shows us through the lives of those in the pages of Scripture, how they did it.

## Peter Resisted Satan Devouring Him: By Faith

Peter died a martyr.

His last days were days of being hunted, arrested, waiting for execution, and then perhaps a very long and painful death.

According to Church History what Jesus said in John 21:18-19 (NJKV), ended up as being crucified upside down for Peter:

Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; **but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.**" <sup>19</sup> This He spoke, **signifying by what death he would glorify God.** And when He had spoken this, He said to him, **"Follow Me."**

Jesus made the two choices Peter had for living life, very simple:

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>By Faith:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Following Jesus by listening to Him, believing Him, &amp; following Him.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Always Hard:</b></p> <p>It goes against the way we are from birth, and is only possible when we flee to the Lord. This is walking in the Spirit, paddling against the current of the world, &amp; denying our flesh by sanctification.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>By Fear:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Devoured by Satan, by listening to the Devil's lies, and doubting God's Word.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Always Simple:</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">It's the flow of this world, and done by almost everyone around us. This is our default setting, do nothing, just float along.</p>
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## So what did Peter do?

When Peter was on death row, he was such a target for the Devil.

Think of being hunted down, arrested, and imprisoned.

Then think of all those days of waiting, wondering, sleepless nights and endless days.

Think of separation from family and friends, with no contact.

Then comes the day, being led to the place of execution. Wow.

## The Shield of Faith is Trusting God's Word

Peter was headed towards what would be a most horrible, long, slow, painful death by crucifixion (what seems to have been predicted by Christ in John 21 "taken to where not want to go, stretched out...").

Church history is nearly unanimous about Peter's crucifixion and triumph.

How do you get ready for a long, slow, agonizing death?

The same way you make it through a long, hard struggle in life.

Both are only by faith: a settled assurance that leads to confident actions.

Fear of death is a common element that Satan likes to use.

Hebrews 2:15 (NKJV) **and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.**

Jesus defeated the one who owns the fear of death, so we can resist and extinguish that fiery dart.

Peter knew that.

So Peter trusted God instead of believing Satan's lies.

How? Stand with me to read as Peter explains how God taught him to survive the onslaught of the Evil One in 1 Peter 5.

1 Peter 5:8-9 (NKJV) Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. **9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith,** knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

## Pray

## Original Sin & Shield of Faith

Did you know that the shield of faith has been the only way to resist Satan's attacks from the very beginning?

Have you notice what led up to the original sin?

It was Eve distrusting, mistrusting, and doubting God's Word that led all of us into disaster.

Just as Satan's temptations targeted Eve's trusting God, so each of the fiery darts that come our way follow the same course. For a moment review with me how Eve was lured away from trusting God in Genesis 3:1-5.

## Doubt God's Word

v. 1a "Has God indeed said".

What Satan wants is for us to DOUBT GOD's Word.

We doubt God when we doubt His Word.

Satan wants us to believe that God's Word is just like any other book.

It is nice, helpful, but not absolute.

He wants us to question God's Word, avoid God's Word, neglect God's Word or whatever else it takes to get us out of regular contact with the Lord.

## **Doubt God's Goodness**

v. 1b “You shall not eat of every tree?”

What Satan wants is for us to DOUBT GOD's Goodness.

We doubt God when we doubt His Goodness.

Satan wants us to believe is that God is trying to hold out on us.

Or, He is robbing us of some good times.

Or, He is out of touch with our needs.

Or, He missed that disaster we just went through.

Or, He messed up on how He made us.

Or, He means well but doesn't quite have everything under control.

This is a direct attack on the character of God.

One of the great truths about our God is the moral attribute of God we know as His GOODNESS.

## **Doubt God's Authority**

v. 4 “You will not surely die”.

What Satan wants is for us to DOUBT GOD's Authority.

We doubt God when we doubt His Authority.

Satan wants us to believe is that God is not in charge – we are in charge.

Or, God isn't interested in our choices – we are in charge.

Or, God will not make us accountable for our deeds – we are in charge.

## **Doubt God's Plan**

v. 5 “your eyes will be opened”.

What Satan wants is for us to DOUBT GOD's Plan.

We doubt God when we doubt His Plan.

Satan wants us to believe is that there is a better way to immortality, an easier way to glory, a quicker way to happiness.

Again this is an attack upon the very Word of God.

God's Word is sufficient.

That is one of the characteristics God has given us about His Word.

What the sufficiency of the Word means is "that everything God wants to tell us about how we should think about a particular doctrinal issue or to do in a particular situation is to be found in Scripture."<sup>1</sup>

So God has a wonderful and perfect plan revealed in His Word.

Every time we open His Word we can hear His plan.

The question is not does God speak, it is, “Do we listen?”

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<sup>1</sup> Grudem, p. 130-31.

## God's Word (the Shield of Faith) Always Works: Just Try it

How do we resist the Devil?

Paul said the shield of faith extinguishes all the fiery darts.

Paul had experienced those flaming arrows extinguished.

Ephesians 6:16 (NKJV) above all, taking the shield of faith with which **you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one**

Jesus saw him flee.

Matthew 4:11 (NKJV) **Then the devil left Him**, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

James assures us he will flee.

James 4:7 (NKJV) Therefore submit to God. **Resist the devil and he will flee from you.**

John the final Scripture writer affirms even more of the same when he said we are overcomers in Christ.

1 John 4:4 (NKJV) You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because **He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.**

Jesus saw the devil flee.

James saw the devil flee.

Paul saw his fiery attacks extinguished.

Peter affirms we can resist the Devil.

John attests that God is greater than anything the Devil shoots at us.

It always works, just try it is God's promise.

## Satan Knows Where to Shoot

Satan also like to shoot us when we are down with all of the hard times life will send.

When we face illness, when we enter tragedy, and when we face persecution a whole new set of darts are used.

When facing trials, the Kingdom of Darkness shoots arrows that ignite doubts about God's Goodness. Or arrows that enflame fears about God's existence, or the reliability of His Word, or even whether He is even right or just.

We can see this up close in the Garden with Eve.

Satan shot her with the "Has God really said not to do that?" arrow.

Then he shot the "Is God really good if He keeps you from enjoying that?" arrow.

Then he shot the "God wouldn't really punish someone for that would He?" arrow.

We know the result, we all were plunged into sin.

Every temptation to sin always comes down to believing God's Word or believing Satan's lies. Which will you choose today?

We Face	God Says	Satan Says
Pain	Trust My Wisdom	God isn't really Good

Sorrow	Trust My Love	God doesn't really Care
Temptation	Trust My Timing	God doesn't understand your Needs
Loss	Trust My Presence	God's not strong enough to Protect you
Sickness	Trust My Power	God's not really in Control
Lust	Trust My Plans	God doesn't really want me Happy

So those are Satan's lies.

What are God's promises?

Here is a simple set of the big seven sins we face all through life.

## Extinguishing Satan's Lies

When Faced with...	Believe God's Word:
1. Besetting sins & habits	Romans 6:11-13 Likewise you also, <b>reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin</b> , but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>12</sup> Therefore <b>do not let sin reign</b> in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. <sup>13</sup> And <b>do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness</b> to sin, but <b>present yourselves to God</b> as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.; Colossians 3:5 Therefore <b>put to death</b> your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.; Titus 2:12 teaching us that, <b>denying ungodliness and worldly lusts</b> , we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,
2. Fear & Depression	Joshua 1:9 Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; <b>do not be afraid, nor be dismayed</b> , for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.; Psalm 71:14 (NIV) As for me, <b>I will always have hope</b> ; I will praise you more and more.
3. Words that hurt	Ps. 141:3 (NKJV) <b>Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth</b> ; Keep watch over the door of my lips; Col. 4:6 <b>Let your speech always be with grace</b> , seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.; James 1:19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be <b>swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath</b> ;
4. Sexual Lusts	Job 31:1 (NIV) "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a young woman; Gen 39:9b How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"
5. Pride	Jer. 9:23-24 (NKJV) Thus says the Lord: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, Let not the mighty man glory in his might, Nor let the rich man glory in his riches; <sup>24</sup> <b>But let him who glories glory in this</b> , That he understands and knows Me, That I am the Lord, exercising lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight," says the Lord.
6. Wasting Time	Ps 119:37 (NKJV) <b>Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things</b> , And revive me in Your way.
7. Materialism	Mt 6:19-20 (NKJV) <b>Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth</b> , where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; <sup>20</sup> <b>but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven</b> , where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.; 1 Cor. 3:14-15 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> <b>If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss</b> ; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire; 2 Cor. 5:10 (NKJV) For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, <b>that each one may receive the things done in the body</b> , according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

## We Do Not Face the Battle Alone

Did you notice that every reference to us as believers in in Ephesians 6:10-17 is in the plural?

The verbs and pronouns point to us together. We all face the same battles; but we all face them together.

The Lord is saying through Paul that we are not to look on spiritual warfare as something we face alone.

We can only win in community with other believers.

When we gather with believers we are to talk about God's Word, His promises, and His work in us. Why? Because of the combination of:

## **Our Words & Jesus' Power**

We were designed to operate best inside a Christ-shaped community of believers. The description of warfare is that it is a shared, personal battle. This is most pronounced as we look at the Shield of Faith. We must carry and use our own shield, but others around us can hold us our arms.

Just like Moses needed his arms held up by Aaron and Hur so that Joshua could lead Israel to win the battle (Exodus 17:8-16), so we need one another. How do other believers help us? By speaking faith-stirring, and hope-building words that feed our souls.

In two of the clearest passages in Hebrews, God calls each of us as believers to encourage those around us.

Hebrews 3:12-13 (NKJV) Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 **but exhort one another daily**, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Hebrews 10:24-25 (NKJV) And let us **consider one another in order to stir up love and good works**, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, **but exhorting one another, and so much the more** as you see the Day approaching.

Did you catch that?

As members of Christ's Body we are to be:

## **Connected, Communicating & Caring**

The Body of Christ is designed to be connected, communicating, and caring. We are to speak the truth to each other empowered by the Spirit of God. Our words can exhort, our words can encourage, and our words can correct. As John Piper likes to say—

"and the Holy Spirit breathes upon what is otherwise babbling to effect real devil-defying faith in our lives. This kind of speaking is a glorious staple of gospel-shaped community. And Satan wants you to have no part in it".

The spiritual battle raging around us is designed to isolate us.

Satan wants the swirl of battle to separate us from other believers who can challenge and encourage us with God's Word.

Then, we can get swallowed-up in the storms of our own soul.

Like a wolf picking off the weakest in the flock, Satan's plan is to separate us from the flock so he can devour us.

## **Stay Connected, Keep Communicating & Never Stop Caring**

Resist the temptation to isolation.

Break into someone's life with words from God's Word.

Reach out and see the wiles of the devil frustrated in their life, and yours.

When we speak God's Word there is power, not from us but from Him who is the Word.

Jesus has destroyed the power of the Devil (Heb. 2:14).

Jesus destroys every work of the Devil He is confronted with (1 John 3:8).

When we love Jesus, we love His family.

Church is the gathering of Christ's family.

Come. Speak the truths of the Gospel of Christ. Remind yourself and all around you that nothing and no one can snatch you or them (John 10:28-29); or separate you or them (Rom. 8:35-39), from Christ's love.

As believers, who walk in the Spirit as Paul said we are to do, we walk through life clothed in the protective gear God designed just for us; and we walk through life in community with those around us making sure they too are making it through the battle.

We are not alone. We are part of a family.

We help each other through the battles of life.