

Mt. Lebanon Church

Sermon

8.6.2023

Please look up and read all verses in their entirety. I have only written partial verses.

Make your own notes, write down other scriptures that you run across while studying, write down questions that you may have or comments as well. Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you that he would have you to see through the study of God's word.

Resisting The Devil

James 4: 7

Resistance is our defensive against the desires of the flesh. Resisting, or withstanding the temptation of worldly desires can be achieved, when we use Gods word as an effective way to expose and defeat every thought of disobedience in our heart and in our mind. Often time, we will struggle to stand firm in our faith, and it is in those times that we must allow the Holy Spirit to lead us into the reality of becoming aware of the presence of the worldly deceptiveness that we are facing in our lives. Resisting must be accompanied by submission to God, because without obedience, and submission to Gods word, we will not have the strength in Christ Jesus to overcome the divisions in our life. These divisions come when we choose the friendship of the world over a relationship with God. Let us never think that we have the ability to resist, without humbly submitting our lives unto God. We submit to Gods word, as we humble ourselves in obedience to Christ, for Christ is the living word, and we yield to his promises that are revealed unto us through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 10: 5 – 6,....casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, and having a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled....

Gods will for our lives as Christians, is to bring our hearts in line with his Son, Christ, and to place every thought under the authority of Christ, in obedience to his word, by the leadership of his spirit. Therefore, we must stop looking to our own self-righteous understanding, and we must stop following the worldly philosophy of man, if we want to overcome the presence of the temptations that we are allowing to become an authority in our life, an authority that hinders the will of God. Our spiritual strength comes when we identify and eliminate those thoughts in our minds that we have allowed to take the place of the presence of God within us. The more are thoughts are centered on Christ, the less we will focus on ourselves and the fleshly desires of the soul, and in this resistance is the key.

James 4: 7,....submit yourselves therefore to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you....

Mankind has two choices, either to allow sin to rule and reign in their mortal bodies, which means giving into the fleshly desires of the old nature, or we can consider the choice to die to the old nature and live to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. In order to overcome sinful temptation and turn down lustful desires so that we might choose to live for God, we then must learn to submit unto him, and resist the devil.

Romans 6: 11 – 12,....reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God....let not sin reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof....but yield yourselves unto God....as instruments of righteousness unto God....

1 Peter 5: 6 – 7,....humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God....casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you....

Before we can mature and grow in our faith and in spiritual maturity, we must humble ourselves in the presence of God, and also in the presence of those in the body of Christ. This means trusting, and accepting Gods will in our lives, no matter what the circumstance. It is far better to humble ourselves to God, and in the sight of God, than to reach the point in our life where we have to be humbled by an almighty God. Reacting with pride instead of responding with humility means losing our ability to resist.

Let us read on:

1 Peter 5: 8 – 9,....be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, whom resist steadfast in faith...

Our hope, our faith, is in Christ alone. When we abide in Christ, as we stand firm in his righteousness, we are enabled by Christ to resist the devil, because Satan cannot accuse us before Christ when we are abiding in Christ. Now there will be many times when we are being tempted and tried, but Gods promise to us through his word is that he also is faithful unto us, in that he will not allow us to be tempted beyond what we are able to bear.

1 Corinthians 10: 12 – 13,....wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall....there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it....

The way of escape starts with each of us, and it begins with resisting. We will not have to escape that which we did not get ourselves into in the first place. This is why Paul stated, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. Where does temptation begin, it begins in the thoughts of our mind. Remember, the fall of man started with the thoughts of Eve when Satan presented the question unto her:

Genesis 3: 1 – 5,....hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

Eve's curiosity of the temptation kept her from resisting the cunningness, and cleverness of the devil, when by his deception enticed her to question Gods power and authority.

Let us go back to:

2 Corinthians 10: 3 – 6,....for though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh....for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds....

These weapons are described in Ephesians chapter six, starting with verse ten, which speaks of the whole armour of God.

Then he goes on to say as we read earlier:

2 Corinthians 10: 4 – 6,....casting down every imagination, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bring into captivity every thought to obedience in Christ, and having a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled....

Every notion that comes from without and then is conceived as a thought within, we must choose to allow the Holy Spirit to take captive so that our obedient submission to God will overcome our natural instinct to argue, and to perceive that this worldly notion is according to the will of God, and that we should act upon it. We cannot control the thoughts that enter into the mind, but we do make the choice whether or not we act upon those thoughts. Centering our focus upon thoughts of disobedience will bring sinfulness into our lives.

James 1: 12 – 15,....blessed is the man that endureth temptation....let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man, but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed....then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death....

Temptation comes by the enticements of the world and the inner lustful desires of the flesh. If we give into temptation we sin, but if we resist, then God will use those temptations and desires for our greater good, and his greater glory. The word of God gives unto us many promises, which are step by step instructions to guide us into the pathway of righteousness so that we might live godly lives in Christ. Whether we yield to temptation or resist temptation, it is a matter of choice, and each one of us are responsible for the choices in which we make in our life, and also for the consequences of those choices that follow, no matter if they are blessings unto Gods eternal kingdom, or judgement unto Gods eternal wrath. Therefore, let us continue to submit unto God and resist the devil, so that he will flee from us, and so that we might glorify God.

Let us Pray.

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