

Msg #157 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface*

"How To Resist The Devil"

With Randy Smith

(269) 763-2114

Preparation Ministries, Inc

PO BOX 475 OLIVET, MI 49076

preparationministries@gmail.com

(Please feel free to call, or send messages)

Web Site: <http://www.preparationministries.net>

Broadcast Schedule

WOLY AM 1500 - Battle Creek, Sat. 10am - Sun. 9:30am

WLQV AM 1500 - Detroit, Sun. 10am

Also, Internet Stream - www.am1500wlqv.com

WFPM

99.5 FM in Battle Creek - Fri. 3:30pm

99.9 FM in Albion - Fri. 3:30pm

103.7 FM in Jackson - Fri. 3:30pm

Also, Internet Stream - www.wfpmradio.org

Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about resisting the Devil. James 4:7 says, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Now, if the Bible says something, it never says it for no reason. If God speaks, he isn't just twiddling his tongue for the sake of conversation. The Bible wasn't given to us just so we could ignore it. The Bible is the word of God, and it is the word of God that is important if we're ever going to establish any real kind of relationship with God at all. God's word is true, and therefore, as it says in John 8:32, the truth shall make you free.

Do you want to be free? Do you want to be able to escape the chains that Satan wants to bind you with? Do you want to live a Godly life? Do you want to resist the devil and have him flee? Well then, it's the scriptures which can do that for you. God does set us free, but it is only the truth which will set us free. The evil angels who left their first estate with God are bound with chains under eternal darkness. They don't have the least possibility of ever being set free. And that's because the truth will never come to them. They had the truth once, and they turned away from it. Satan and his angels rejected the word of God in order to attempt a kingdom of their own based on a different set of beliefs. Essentially, Satan said that God's word was not completely true. Some of it was, but not all of it. Essentially, the whole battle between good and evil is based on the single concept of whether or not God's word is absolutely 100% true. Of course, we Christians know that God's word is true. We know that Satan is a liar. But God's word is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. If you're a Christian, then your

whole life, from now throughout eternity, is based on this one absolutely rock hard principle that God's word is true, 100%.

Now, the Bible tells us that in order to get to heaven we must travel the narrow road and pass through the narrow gate. And, in order to do this, we will have to pick up our cross and follow Jesus to Calvary. However, there's a problem. In these last days Christians have been largely taught that we no longer have to take up our cross, but that we only have to carry the cross of Christ. There's a big difference. Jesus didn't say that we should carry his cross, but that we should take up our cross. He didn't say that we should walk wherever we wanted to walk, but that after we take up our cross we are to follow him.

It's not popular to tell Christians to go to Calvary. In the church today there's a tendency for preachers to tell the people that Jesus carried the cross for us and that because he carried it, we don't have to. But that's not what the Bible says. The Bible says that we are to die daily. Dying daily is a lot different than pigging out at the church potluck dinner or driving around in an expensive car. Dying daily is what the gospel of Jesus Christ is all about, but Christians are not being told that this is necessary. Sure, the preachers say that we must bear the cross of Christ, but there is little emphasis on carrying our own cross, and there is very little emphasis on dying daily. Of course, it's hard for a preacher to tell people to die daily when he's dressed in an expensive suit and drives a fancy car.

We are Christians, which means that we're supposed to be followers of Christ. If we are followers of Christ, then we will have to go where Jesus went. And if you really do take up your cross and follow him, then you're going to end up at Calvary just like he did. You're going to die daily in order to demonstrate to the world that this world is not your home and that this world is just a temporary place until such time as you receive your inheritance in the kingdom of God.

We're supposed to be just passing through this world. We weren't made to settle down. We are supposed to be sojourners. Sojourners are people who live in a foreign land for a short time until they can go home again. We want to go home again to be with Christ forever. We don't want to settle down. In spiritual symbolism this means that we live in tents instead of townhouses surrounded by city walls. The whole concept of the Bible implies that God's people are tent dwellers. We're just passing through this world in order to get to the next one.

Solomon put it as being "under the sun." As humans, we're not living in a spiritual world like heaven. We are physical human beings for a time, and all flesh and blood humans are created as physical beings. We're made to dwell underneath the sun, moon, and stars in this physical universe. It is God who is spirit, and it is God who dwells in the heavenly places. We humans have been born under the sun and will live our lives out under the sun in order that we might come to know God through his revelations to us. God will reveal himself to us as we live out our earthly lives under the sun and then one day when God knows that the earth has finally brought forth the harvest that he is expecting, then Jesus Christ will appear in the clouds of heaven and we who are sojourners under the sun in this foreign land of earth will rise to meet him in the air.

The rest of the world who have set themselves up in permanent dwellings will not rise to meet Jesus in the air. They will be earthbound by their own choice. They will have chosen earth as their eternal home, having rejected the call to be born again in spirit and to live with God forever and ever and ever.

Christians are being deceived into thinking that we can live a life of vanity and then, when Jesus comes, we can give up this current life and get a better one in heaven. That isn't true. The only way you get the better life in heaven when Jesus comes back is to give up this current life now. If you seek to live your life in the flesh, then you will not live in the spirit and you will not be ready when Jesus returns.

The ten virgins is a Bible parable which explains that in order to be ready to meet Jesus, we must have a sufficient supply of oil for our lamps. This means that we must have enough of the oil of God to keep our lamps lit long enough to gain entrance into the wedding feast when Jesus, the bridegroom, comes. In scripture, the oil signifies that which reveals. It is the two witnesses of God's word which supply the oil for the lamps, and these two witnesses are Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. And it is these two witnesses which enable God to reveal himself to his people.

Here, let me share something with you from Zechariah, chapter 4. This is interesting. In Zechariah 4, it talks about the golden lampstand and the two olive trees. The golden lampstand is a symbol which represents God's word. It is God's light to the world. God doesn't need light for himself. As God says, he dwells in the thick darkness. This is because God is his own light and he doesn't need light from any other source. However, God is the light which shines out of darkness and enables humans to see the truth. It is the lampstand which represents God's word. God's word must shine forth so that all the world can see who and what God really is. But the lampstand only represents God's spoken or written word. If you have been following our program in the last few weeks you might remember that God is a witness of himself, but that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are also witnesses of God's word. These three witnesses confirm the word of God. Zechariah, chapter 4, symbolically demonstrates the threefold witness of God's word by using the lampstand and the two olive trees.

It is the two olive trees which provide oil for the lamp. Now of course, no oil lamp can give light unless it has oil in it. The lamp itself can shed no light, but it is the instrument that is used to shed light. In the symbolism of scripture, the lampstand is the object which receives the oil, and when the oil and the lamps are combined, there is light. The oil burns in the lamp and together they shine light. When light comes, it illuminates everything, thereby revealing what exists.

If you shine a flashlight in the dark, you will see what is around you. It's the same thing for the lampstand which symbolizes God's word. The lampstand is God's word, and the two olive trees supply the oil which allows the lamp to shine forth, just as batteries allow the flashlight to shine light into the darkness. It is this concept of a three part witness which describes God in three persons. God is great enough to be just one God and can do all things. But in order to bring revelation to the people of earth he has revealed himself from three aspects. The first aspect is

the Father, which gives testimony of God from the initial aspect of the word being the authority of God. As the word goes forth from the Father, it is supposed to be obeyed, just as we would obey our earthly fathers. Then, Jesus Christ is the second witness to the word of God as the Son. As the Son of God, Jesus outwardly demonstrated the word of God for humans who can only see with physical eyes. Then the Holy Spirit of God also witnesses of the word of God by enabling Jesus to perform miracles. It is the performance of the miraculous which gives witness that whenever God's word goes forth it will not return void. When God speaks, his word bears fruit unto righteousness. This is the testimony of the Holy Spirit which confirmed God's word of authority through Jesus Christ.

In Zechariah 4, the lampstand is the word of God, and the two olive trees represent the two witnesses of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ adds another testimony to God's word by demonstrating it in the physical sense, and the Holy Spirit adds the third testimony to God's word by demonstrating it in the spiritual sense, then the three part testimony of God's word is confirmed. Zechariah 4:11-14 describes Zechariah asking what the two olive trees were. The angel answers him that the two olive trees which empty the golden oil into the lampstand are the two anointed ones which stand before the Lord of all the earth. This is also referred to in scripture by the two giant pillars on each side of the temple entrance into the Holy Place. These two giant pillars were called Jachin and Boaz. They stood before the Lord in the symbolism of the temple. God dwelled in the Most Holy Place, and before him stood the two giant pillars. These pillars were representative of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, the two anointed ones who stand before the Lord of all the earth.

Now, in addition to this symbolic reference, we can go to Revelation 11 and notice something even more interesting. Revelation 11 refers to not one, but two, golden lampstands. In Zechariah, chapter 4, there was only one lampstand, and this is because there was at that time only one testimony of God's spoken word. We call that initial testimony the Old Testament. It was the testament of God that first was given to the people of earth, and it was demonstrated through the Children of Israel and by the Covenant of the Law of Commandments. The Old Testament is God's word, but it was not the fulness of God's word that we now have through the revelation of the New Testament.

The golden lampstand of the word of God through the Old Testament, and the golden lampstand of the word of God through the New Testament, give a much greater understanding of God's word than was just demonstrated by the Old Testament of God. However, it was in the Old Testament, and still is in the New Testament, confirmed by the additional testimony of God's other two witnesses, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. These two witnesses, these two pillars of the temple, provide the illumination for the lamps. The lamp is God's word, both Old Testament and New Testament, but the oil for the lamps which bring the actual illumination is provided by the additional testimonies of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

It is by the word of God that we are set free. We can't be free unless the word of God dwells in our heart. However, unless the word of God is revealed to us, it is useless to us. We only benefit

from the word of God when we understand it, when we comprehend the truth of it. And this only comes to us when we receive the oil for our lamps. We can only remain in the light of God's word when we remain focused on Jesus Christ and when we are led by the Holy Spirit of God.

Romans 8:14 tells us that those who are sons of God are led by the Holy Spirit of God. The parable of the ten virgins helps us to understand that if you have the word of God in you, but the focus of your life ignores the life of Christ and you also do not allow the Holy Spirit of God to lead you, then your knowledge of God's word will be insufficient to keep you in the light, and you will lose your way in the darkness and be lost. You will no longer be a son of God.

It is the word of God that you must have in order to be set free. And, it is the continuing testimony of Jesus Christ and God's Spirit in your life that maintains your footing on the narrow path. The Bible clearly promises that the truth shall make us free, but it also tells us that if we lose the testimony of Christ and the testimony of the Holy Spirit, we will not understand the word of God and we will be lost. In these last days it is essential to maintain oil in our lamps. It is essential to maintain a relationship with Jesus Christ. And we can't have a long distance relationship with Christ, but we must be walking with him. We must be following him to Calvary. If you're on a different road than the road which goes to Calvary, then you aren't following Jesus.

Christians have such a hard time resisting the devil because they do not have a love of the truth. No, I'm sure many of you don't like to hear this. But if you love God, then you also love his word. And you love everything about God. And believe me, what you love, you reach out for. If you love the things of this world, you will reach out for those things. If you love God, you will reach out for him. What you like and what you don't like will determine your choices.

It is the word of God which gives us knowledge of God, and it is the additional testimony of Jesus and the additional testimony of the Holy Spirit within us which reveals God to us. When we come to know God well, then we love the things of God. It is the word of God which sets us free. However, if we don't have the word of God dwelling in our heart, then we will not love the things of God. When Satan comes to tempt you, you will give into him if he tempts you with things that you like. And, you will reject him if he tempts you with things that you don't like. This is why the Bible says that if we resist the devil he will flee from us.

Many times Christians complain that they have resisted the devil but he still won't flee. This implies that the word of God is not true. But the word of God is true. We can resist the devil, and when we do he will flee. The problem is not that God's word isn't true. The problem is that we're not truly resisting him. We are only partly resisting him.

Let me give you an example which I like to use all the time. If you hate brussels sprouts, and the devil tempts you to overindulge on brussels sprouts, you will resist the devil. He will have to go away somewhere else and tempt someone else to overindulge on brussels sprouts because he's

not going to get anywhere with you. The only thing the tempter will be successful in is when he tempts you with things you like. A hot fudge sundae might very well bring overindulgence, but if you hate something, the devil has no power over you.

This is exactly why the truth will make you free. When you love the word of God, God dwells within you. The word of God becomes precious to you. You love it. And, when you love the things of God, you begin to hate the things of this world. They pale in comparison to the heavenly things which await you eternally. Even in this current life the heavenly things of God are much more precious than even the most precious things on earth. At least, they should be.

You can resist the devil successfully if you really do hate the things he wants you to do. If you hate evil, you cannot be tempted to do it. Imagine Satan trying to tempt Jesus. We, of course, realize that it was impossible for Satan to be successful in tempting Jesus. Jesus had no love for the things of this world. There was nothing that Jesus wanted from this world. Satan is the prince of the power of the air. That means he is the prince over things that exist in the natural world but not in the spiritual realm. Satan is the prince over things of this world in the sense that he has the power to offer things of this world as a device for temptation. This is the only thing he had to offer Jesus. He couldn't offer heavenly things to Jesus, but only the glory of this present world. Jesus was the word of God. Therefore the word of God dwelled in Jesus and Jesus dwelled in the word of God. As the scripture says, Satan had nothing in Jesus with which he could find a foothold. Now, Satan was allowed to tempt Jesus, but Jesus defeated him at every turn by giving the word of God in answer. When it was time, Jesus said, "begone." That was the end of Satan because Jesus had no desire for anything that was offered.

It's the same thing for you. If you resist the devil, he will have to flee from you. However, the real key is for you to hate the things of this world. If you hate the things of this world, Satan won't be able to offer you anything that you like. So, the bottom line is this. Get into the word. Get into it and love it. Then your hatred of the things of this life will grow, and the temptations of Satan will weaken. You will yet be victorious, but only when the truth dwells solidly within you. It is then that you will have oil in your lamp, and it is then that your lamp will burn brightly. And, when your lamp burns brightly, you won't have to worry about falling off the narrow path.