

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION
PART 5h-THE CHRISTIAN'S ARMOR AND ARSENAL
"THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT"
EPHESIANS 6:17b; MATTHEW 4:1-11

INTRODUCTION

We have been warning you against the schemes, the wiles, or the methods of the devil. We have been telling you about the "armor" which God has provided for us to wear and/or use.

We have seen the belt of truth, which is knowing and obeying God's Word!

We have seen the breastplate of righteousness, which is recognizing our association with Christ in His death burial and resurrection! It is allowing Christ to live His life through us!

We have seen the boots of the readiness of the Gospel peace! We are to stand in peace as we focus on Christ, are filled with the Spirit and fellowship with God in prayer.

We have seen the shield of faith, which allows us to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked!

We have seen the helmet of salvation that reminds us of our victory over the penalty, power and presence of sin!

And today we see a piece of armor that doubles as both a defensive weapon and an offensive weapon—the sword of the Spirit, which when properly used allows us to resist temptation!

Ephesians 6:17 - "And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:"

The Roman Soldier's armor included a sword that was used in hand to hand combat! It was the most effective weapon of its day!

The Sword of the Spirit is that which is used to ward off temptation from Satan!

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The Word of God is that sword! The word "word" in this passage would refer to a specific saying.

Thus, when we use the word of God in fighting temptation, we are using *specific sayings* from God. We are confronting Satan with Scripture—God's Words!

As Christians we need to learn to use our swords. There is no better teacher than the Lord Jesus Christ. **Matthew 4:1-11** shows how He defeated temptation from Satan!

I. DIRECTION FROM THE SPIRIT! (Vs. 1)

When Jesus was tempted it was right after a time of great spiritual event in His life—His Baptism! **(Matthew 3:13-17)**

Satan will also try to tempt the Christian after times of great spiritual events or times of great spiritual success!

Salvation...

Baptism...

Service...

One key to Jesus' victory over temptation is that the Holy Spirit was guiding Him!

We all will face temptation, but **the least amount of temptation will be faced when the Spirit is in control of our lives!**

Galatians 5:16—“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.”

Galatians 5:25—“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”

DIRECTION FROM THE SPIRIT...

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II. DISTRACTIONS FROM SATAN!

If you will remember, Eve was tempted by Satan in three basic areas:
(Genesis 3:6).

Lust of The Flesh - *"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food."*

Lust of The Eyes - *"And that it was pleasant to the eyes."*

Pride of Life - *"And a tree to be desired to make one wise."*

The Bible reveals that the Believer is also tempted by Satan in three basic areas:

1 John 2:16—"For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

One of the ways that Jesus showed that He was qualified to be our Savior is that when He was tempted, He had victory in the same three areas of temptation!

Hebrews 4:15—"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

A. Lust Of The Flesh! (Vss. 2-3)

Jesus was hungry! Satan wanted Jesus to make bread.
Satan wanted Jesus to rely upon Himself, not His Father!

That would have been wrong for Jesus to do, because He would have disobeyed God's plan for His life, and He would have listened to Satan!

When we allow our desires to get out of hand and control us they become lusts!

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When we decide to satisfy our lusts rather than depend upon the LORD, we listen to Satan and thereby we do not fulfill God's plan for our lives! (Again, think about Eve!)

B. Pride Of Life! (Vss. 5-6)

If Jesus had listened to Satan, He would have tempted His Heavenly Father to take care of Him while He was doing something that was unwise (stupid)!

How do we as Christians tempt God?

Here are a few examples:

Some do dangerous things that are not at all safe, but expect God to protect them! (e.g. Snake handlers—Mark 16:18)

(Example—"God will provide"-boat, jet ski, helicopter)

Some foolishly spend money they don't have, and then expect God to pay their bills.

This is all pride—expecting **our priorities** to be more important than **God's plan** for our lives, and expecting God to care for us anyway!

C. Lust Of The Eyes Vss. 8-9

Here we see that Jesus was invited to receive "a kingdom without a cross" if he would only bow down to Satan!

He would have satisfied the lust of the eyes!

Our eyes see many things! But there are many things that our eyes see that are things we shouldn't have!

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When we give in to the lusts of our eyes, we do what we can to obtain what the eyes see! Or we fantasize through our eyes things which is wrong!

Many a man or woman has committed adultery with their eyes!
Many a man or woman has killed with their eyes!
Many a man or woman has stolen with their eyes!

DIRECTION FROM THE SPIRIT.
DISTRACTIONS FROM SATAN.

III. DECLARATIONS FROM SCRIPTURE!

A. There Is One Word To Obey! (Vs. 4)

Jesus pointed out that man is to live by every word that comes from God's mouth!

B. There Is One Way To Follow! (Vs. 7)

We are not to tempt God, but rather we are to obey Him!

C. There Is One Person To Worship! (Vss. 10-11)

When God is worshiped we will not bow down to Satan or anyone else!

Jesus quoted Scripture in order to have victory over temptation!
Don't you think that we should do the same!?

CONCLUSION

Hebrews 4:12:

The Word Of God Is Alive: Eternally!

1 Peter 1:23—says that the Word of God *"liveth and abideth for ever."*

1 Peter 1:25—*"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever."*

Matthew 24:35—*"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."*

The Word Of God Is Alive: *Eternally...Internally!*

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John 6:63—*"It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."*

The Word Of God Is Alive: *Eternally...Internally...Externally.*

The prophets of old said *"Thus saith the LORD. . ."*

Jesus said 3 times to Satan, *"It is written. . ."*

The Word Of God Is Powerful!

Jeremiah 23:29—*"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"*

Romans 1:16—*"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."*

It Is Powerful Enough To Accomplish God's Purpose!

Isaiah 55:11—*"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."*

It Is Powerful Enough To Help Us In Our Christian Warfare!

2 Corinthians 10:4-5-- *"(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 5Casting 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;"*

The Word Of God Is Sharper Than Any Two-Edged Sword!

It Is A Piercing Or Penetrating Sword!

It cuts into the immaterial part of a man—the heart!

It keeps on piercing for man's benefit!

It reaches man's spirit like nothing else can!

It cuts and changes from the inside out!

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It Is A Discerning Sword! (It judges)

It shows us our sin!

It judges our thoughts!

It judges our intents and motives!

Jesus is our example!

We are to take the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God!