

Resist the Devil

James 4:7b

3/12/2000

The book of James, chapter four. We will begin reading together verse 1, and we will read down through verse 7. James, chapter four, verses 1 through 7.

“From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God. Do ye think that the scripture saith in vain, The spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy? But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.”

Now James has been rebuking his readers for a number of grievous sins that he listed in verses 1 through 5. He rebuked them for wars and fightings and killings among themselves. He rebuked them for prayerlessness. He rebuked them for ungodly and unsanctified desires. And he rebuked them for their worldliness. In verse 6, he then told them that the means to *overcome* these sins is the grace of God. It is grace, which is the unmerited gift of the application of Christ’s redemptive work, that would enable them to overcome these sins. However, in order to receive this grace, there is something they must avoid and there is something they must cultivate.

We saw from verse 6 that they must avoid pride: Wherefore, God *resists* the proud. And so to have an inordinate selfesteem, in which we think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, with the result that we view God and others with contempt and indifference, will cut off the reception of any help from God. On the other hand, if we are to receive grace, we must cultivate humility. And so to *lower* ourselves in our own selfesteem, so that we see ourselves as dependent, sinful, and needy people, with the result that we esteem God and others *better* than ourselves and are *thankful* to them for their ministry in our lives, this will open up the flow of the grace of God to us.

Now the question naturally arises then, How do I repudiate pride, which cuts off the grace of God, and cultivate humility, which *obtains* the grace of God? Well the answer to that question is given in the following verses, in verses 7 through 9, and we have been considering them together. Last Lord’s Day evening, we saw that the first step in gaining humility and repudiating pride was to submit ourselves to God. Those who submit themselves to God are those who place themselves *under* the authority of God, thus *lowering* themselves in relationship to Him.

The second step, which we want to consider together this evening, is given in the second half of verse 7. Not only are we told to submit ourselves therefore to God, furthermore we are told to *resist* the Devil and *he will flee from you*. And so we are not to submit ourselves universally. There is in fact *someone* that we are to *rebel* against, and rebel against him vigorously, and that is the Devil. And so we are to submit ourselves to God, but we are to *rebel against* and *resist* the

Devil. The problem that *we* have is all too often we resist *God* and we *submit* to the *Devil*. And so it is imperative that we get this straight and that we rebel against Satan while submitting ourselves to God.

Now the Devil of course is a great promoter of pride. Indeed, it is this particular sin which caused his own fall, which caused the fall of mankind, and which causes the fall of many today. The fall of Satan was caused by pride. In Isaiah 14, verses 12 through 15, it says, “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.”

And so the cause of Satan’s fall was his selfexaltation in relationship to God to where he exalted himself *against* God and began to *view* God with contempt, and the result of course was his casting out of heaven.

The fall of mankind was *also* caused by *pride*. In Genesis 3, verses 4 through 6, it is precisely this to which Satan appeals in his temptation of Eve. “And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” And so it was in response to this temptation to pride, to be as God and to exalt herself against God, that caused her then to take the fruit and to eat it and to give to her husband.

Furthermore, the fall of many people is caused by pride. In First Timothy 3, and verse 6, speaking of the qualifications for church officers, it says he is not to be a novice, “lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” And so the condemnation of the Devil was *caused* by his pride and many a novice falls into the sin of pride as well.

So therefore, in resisting the Devil, we are to be resisting pride. For he is a great source of provocation and temptation to pride, and pride is one of the *chief weapons* in provoking the very sins that James lists in verses 1 through 5. After all, why do people fight and war with each other and kill each other? Why are they prayerless? Why do they have ungodly desires? Why do they care for the ways and admiration of the world? Well the answer to all of those questions is because of *pride*. It is pride that puts us in competition with other people and causes us to fight and war with them. It is pride that causes us to think, *We* don’t need to pray; we can produce whatever we want by our own efforts. It is pride that causes us to have *ungodly* desires and to think that we do not need to submit ourselves to God or His will or ways. And it is pride that causes us to desire the admiration and approval of the *ungodly*.

The great lust that resides within us, which James speaks of here in verses 1 through 5, is the lust to be like God, in His sovereignty, in His possessions, and in His worship and admiration. And it is precisely the *desire* for these things that causes us then to oppress others and to envy others,

and to seek the approval of people who are ungodly. This is exactly what was occurring in the lives of those to whom James was writing.

Now in order, then, to combat this propensity we have towards pride—this lust that rises up within us—our passage sets before us two truths that we want to consider together: First of all, the duty to be performed, and secondly, the promise to be embraced. In the first place then this evening, let us consider together the *duty* to be performed.

The duty to be performed is very simply stated. It says, “Resist the devil.” That is the *duty* to be performed. The word “resist” here means to stand against. It means to oppose, to confront, to fight against. Here is someone who is trying to do something, and here is someone else who is standing in the way of its accomplishment and does *everything* within his power to stop it.

Perhaps one of the most familiar illustrations of this would be a lineman on a football team. The defense is trying to drive in and tackle the quarterback, and the offense is trying to defend against that attack and resist those men from breaking through the line, and they do everything they can to get in their way and to impede their progress, and indeed, to push them backwards, the other direction. And this is the picture of what it means here to resist.

So we then resist Satan by striving to thwart his work by fighting against it every step of the way with a *principled* resistance so that when he pushes one way, we not only refuse to *go* that way, *we push back*. That’s what it means to resist.

Well how then do we actually resist the Devil? First of all, we resist the Devil by unmasking the danger and destructiveness of the pride that he tempts us to fall into—by unmasking the danger and the destructiveness of the pride that he tempts us to fall into. Now one of the things we know about the Devil is that he is a deceiver. In John 8:44, we are told he is a liar from the beginning. And so the Devil is a deceiver and always attempts to *conceal* the true danger and destructiveness of *sin*, while at the same time *lying* about its beliefs and blessings, and by deceiving people, entices them to fall into the particular sin that he is tempting them with. By exposing this deception, then, we can resist the Devil by *robbing* him of one of his most valuable weapons, that of *deceit*. When we see the true nature and consequences of sin, we are much less likely to commit it. And so we can resist the Devil, then, by unmasking the danger and destructiveness of the pride that he tempts us to fall into.

Consider together with me for a moment the *danger* of pride. Now one of the reasons why people so easily indulge the sin of pride is because they don’t think it’s a very *dangerous* thing to fool around with. In fact, it is exceptionally dangerous. And the reason why pride is such a dangerous sin is because it is a sin that is particularly *hateful* to God, and of all sins, provokes His resistance *to* us.

For example, in Psalm chapter 12, and in verse 3, it says, “The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things.” In other words, the Lord will cut off from His

blessing, from His help, from answering prayers, from every sort of assistance and goodness, He will cut off from those who are proud those blessings.

In Proverbs 15, and verse 25, He says, “The Lord will destroy the house of the proud.” And so those who are filled with pride are people who are also filled with domestic strife. Anytime you see domestic strife in a home, pride is always at the root of it, and pride is what is *destroying* it.

In Proverbs 16, and verse 5, it says, “Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished.” That is, even if a proud person is joined together with a humble person, God will *single* out that proud person as someone who is an abomination to Him, and will suffer the rejection and the judgment of all of those who God abominates.

In Jeremiah, chapter 50, verses 31 through 32, God says, “Behold, I am against thee, O thou most proud, saith the Lord God of hosts: for thy day is come, the time that I will visit thee. And the most proud shall stumble and fall, and none shall raise him up: and I will kindle a fire in his cities, and it shall devour all round about him.”

In Malachi, chapter 4, and verse 1, God says, “[B]ehold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.” Leviticus 26, verses 19 through 20, says, “And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass: and your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.”

So this, then, is the danger of pride. It causes God to cut us off. It causes Him to destroy our homes. It causes us to be an abomination to Him. It causes Him to be *against* us, and causes us to stumble and fall. It will cause us to be burned *up* in the Day of Judgment if we do not repent of it, and it will bring upon us economic destruction.

Now when you think about all the negative dangers of pride, it is something you want to get as far away from as you possibly *can*. It is something you want to utterly forsake, and one of the ways in which you resist the Devil in his temptations to work through your pride is to remind yourself how *dangerous* this sin is fool *around* with, and how it turns God against us in a way that no other sin does, and causes Him to *set* Himself against us, because pride is ultimately an attack upon God Himself. All other sins are against God’s law, or they are against God’s people. But *this* sin is an attack upon God Himself.

But notice, not only the *danger* of pride, but also the *destructiveness* of pride. This sin not only puts us in great *danger* in relationship to God, but also brings great destructiveness in our lives. First of all, it brings destructiveness to *ourselves*. Proverbs 11, and verse 2, says, “When pride cometh, then cometh shame.” Proverbs 16:18 says, “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” Proverbs 29:23 says, “A man’s pride shall bring him *low*.”

And so pride is destructive to ourselves *in* that it brings shame to us; it brings destruction and falling to us; and it brings humiliation and *abasement* to us. You remember that God says everyone who exalts himself shall be abased. And there is no shame, there is no destruction and falling, there is no humiliation and abasement like that of the proud person.

But not only is it destructive to ourselves, it is destructive to others as well. Proverbs 28, and verse 25, says, “He that is of a proud heart stirreth up strife.” Any time you see strife, and we certainly see it in this description of these sins that James lists here, we can see that it is caused by pride. Whence come wars and fightings among you? Well, Proverbs 28:25 says it comes from a man of a proud heart who is stirring up strife. Notice how proud people treat others. They treat them with contempt and with indifference and with harmfulness. In Psalm 119, and verse 51, the psalmist says, “The proud have had me greatly in derision.” They speak evil of him, they slander him, they mock him, they curse him, his name is a byword among them. He is the object of their verbal destruction. In verse 69, he says, “The proud have forged a lie against me.” It is the nature of proud people that they *lie* about those that they are trying to gain superiority *over*. In verse 78, “Let the proud be ashamed; for they dealt perversely with me without a cause.”

And so it is the nature of proud people that not only do they *deride* others, not only do they *lie* about them, but they deal *perversely* with them; that is, they *oppress* them for no reason whatsoever. In verse 85, it says, “The proud have digged pits for me, which are not after thy law.” And so their whole purpose is to bring *others down* in order that they might build themselves up. In Psalm 140, and in verse 5, it says, “The proud have hid a snare for me, and cords; they have spread a net by the wayside; they have set gins [traps] for me.” And so it is the nature of proud people that they are constantly engaged in destructive behavior towards others. In Proverbs 13, and verse 10, it says, “Only by pride cometh contention.”

And so does this not sound like the wars and the fightings and the killings that James has described—strife, derision, lying, dealing perversely, digging pits, setting snares and nets, and having contention? All of those things are caused by pride. And so pride is very destructive because it always seeks to tear down others in order to build self up. What is pride? It is an excessive selfesteem, which causes a person to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, with the result that he’s trying to constantly set himself above *others*. And as a result of that process, he is constantly destroying relationships. Pride destroys relationships because it cannot *bear* to see other people blessed, or to see them succeed, because that, then, is a threat to his own *superiority*. So he’s always in competition with others, having to always be better than them and never is willing to allow someone else to triumph over him.

Secondly, it destroys relationships because it cannot admit that it is ever wrong, or receive counsel or advice from others because that would be a *lowering* of itself from its exalted selfimage. Proverbs 8, and verse 13, should be a verse that is constantly in our mind when we recognize the danger and destructiveness of pride. It says, “The fear of the Lord is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward [perverse] mouth, do I hate.” And *they* all go *together*. A perverse mouth, evil behavior, pride and arrogancy—they all are of a fabric. They’re

all woven together. So therefore, when tempted to pride, remind yourself of its danger, remind yourself of its destructiveness to yourself and to others, and you will thereby be *resisting* the Devil.

And so this, then, is how we resist the Devil. We do so by unmasking the danger and destructiveness of the pride that he tempts us to fall into, in seeing that danger and destructiveness. In meditating upon it, we are *resisting* his *temptations* through *deceit* to draw us *into* it.

But secondly, we resist the Devil, not only by unmasking the danger and destructiveness of the pride he tempts us to fall *into*, but also by consciously developing humility in our *lives*. This is where we push back. You see, the first point is the Devil is pushing us. He's pushing us into pride, and we unmask his deceitfulness. We unmask the danger and the destructiveness of the pride that *he* is presenting as something desirable and *good*. But having exposed and stopped his rush upon us, now we must start *pushing back*. And how do we push back? By consciously developing humility in our lives.

It is not enough to know of the danger and destructiveness of the pride the Devil tempts us to fall into. We must also *actively resist* him by striving to cultivate the opposite positive *virtue*, namely *humility*. And this is a general principle in all of spiritual warfare with the Devil. Not only must we stop doing wrong and resist the doing of wrong, but we must also cultivate the opposite positive virtue and start doing *right*. The Bible tells us, not only are we to stop lying, we're to start telling the *truth*. Not only are we to stop corrupt communication, we're to start speaking things which are good to edifying. Not only are we supposed to stop *stealing*, but we're supposed to start working and earning money and *giving* to others. And so the Scripture goes on.

Now how is it that we can cultivate the opposite positive virtue, namely, humility? Well I would suggest to you two simple steps. First of all, we need to cultivate a proper *attitude* of humility. We need to cultivate a proper *attitude* of humility. There must be on our part a constant reminding of ourselves of who we *really* are and what it is that we really deserve from God and from others.

Who are we really? The answer is, we are sinners who deserve nothing more than the judgment of hell. In First Timothy 1, and verse 15, the man who could have easily exalted himself to the pinnacle of the church had this to say about himself. He said, in First Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I *am chief*." The more Paul grew in humility, the greater *sinner* he saw himself. And this is something that is often troubling to true, humble believers, is as they progress in their Christian life, they feel like they're doing worse and worse and worse, as time goes on, because they see themselves as more and more and more *sinful*—because as they become aware of God's character, as they become aware of more of His law and of its requirements and demands, and of God's perfection and holiness, and they become more acquainted with their own depravity and sinfulness—the *vistas* of their own sinfulnesses open up for them very broadly and very greatly.

In fact, it is a sign of increasing maturity to recognize oneself increasingly as a *sinner*, to where Paul, towards the end of his life in writing this letter to Timothy, is saying, You know, I used to

think I was a sinner back then when I persecuted Christians, but now as a *saved* person, having accomplished all this work for the Lord, and all this maturity and *growth* in grace, now I'm *really* a sinner. And this was not just a false, melodramatic statement, it was a genuine expression of the *humility* of his heart that he saw himself as the chief of sinners. Therefore, he was not in a position to be exalting himself over or looking down upon others for their imperfections and for their struggles. Jacob had this attitude when he said, in Genesis 32:10, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou has shewed unto thy servant." And so our attitude before God needs to be that we are *sinful*. Our attitude before God needs to be that we are *unworthy* of *any* blessing that we get from *anybody*.

You know, oftentimes, men are unhappy because their wife didn't do this, or didn't do that. Well, you don't deserve *anything* from your wife. And you need to be grateful for *whatever* you get. And same way, with wives. They think, Well why didn't my husband do *this*, and why didn't he do *that*? Well, be grateful for what he *does* do. You're not worthy of the *least* of his mercies. And you men are not worthy of the least of the mercies of your *wives*. And so whatever you get, be grateful for it, and have an attitude of *thankfulness*, esteeming the other *better* than yourself, instead of rising up as some kind of a demanding, selfrighteous lord who feels you are *owed* this and that, and 72 other things.

And that brings me to my second point. Not only can we develop humility by cultivating a proper *attitude* of humility, also we can do so by cultivating a proper *behavior* of humility—a proper *behavior* of humility. Now attitudes are impossible to maintain if they are not followed through with *conduct* that is congruent *with* them.

In Luke, chapter 22, verses 24 through 27, it says of the disciples, "And there was also a strife among them." Now stop right there. Why do you supposed there was strife among them? Because of pride, right? I mean, isn't that what we've just been studying? By *pride* comes contention—and there was a strife among them, sure enough, which of them should be accounted the *greatest*,—selfexaltation, lifting up of oneself, viewing others as *beneath* oneself and with contempt.

And Jesus "said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them." He's saying, This is how the unsaved people act. They're the ones who want to go around being the greatest, "and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But *ye shall not be so*." That is, Don't act like the unsaved people, who are always trying to build themselves up and be the greatest. "[H]e that is greatest among *you*, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat?" This is how the world accounts who's great. In the world's eyes, the person who's *being* served, he's the great one. And the person who's serving, well, he's the scum. He says, "but I am among you as he that serveth."

And so in God's economy, everything works backwards from the world's economy. And the way in which we cultivate a proper *behavior* of humility is simply by going around, striving to be a *servant* to other people. There is nothing that builds humility like *serving other people*. And that's the reason why Jesus had to go through this little episode with His disciples on several

occasions. You remember on another occasion, in John chapter 13, He had to wash their feet to teach them a lesson.

And so if you would be the greatest in your home, strive to be the greatest servant. You husbands, be a *servant* to your wives, instead of a demanding lord and master. And you will find yourself *esteemed*, honored, and *willingly* submitted to when those that you have authority over recognize that you are serving *their* best interests, not your own. Selfish, proud, and selfexalting people always wonder why folks don't follow them and admire them, and want to do what they want them to do. The reason why they don't do that is because they recognize that they're just there to *use* us.

But when people see that you're there to serve them—and is this not what draws out your loyalty and love to Jesus, is that He came to serve you and to meet your need, and to put your needs ahead of His own? And you men, is this not what will draw out the love of your wives to yourself—when you act like Jesus and seek to serve your family and put their needs ahead of your own? How do we cultivate humility? By cultivating a proper attitude, recognizing that we are the *chief* of sinners, that we are not worthy of the *least* of God's mercies, and secondly, by striving to become a servant to others.

And that brings us to our second major point this evening. Having seen the duty to be performed—resist the Devil. In the second place, let us consider together the promise to be embraced—the promise to be embraced. Now the promise to be embraced if we perform the duty is that the *Devil will flee from you*. That is, he'll run away like a scalded cat. The Devil may tempt us for a season, but he cannot bear stout resistance, and when met with it, he will always depart to seek easier prey elsewhere. That is not to say he will never come back again. But it is to say that his attacks will not be continuous, and they will *not* be *unremitting*. He is a *defeated* foe, and he *must* withdraw when he is met with godly resistance.

And of course the great example of that is the temptation of our Lord Jesus in Matthew, chapter 4. In verse 1 it says, "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil." Now do you suppose He was *never* tempted of the Devil before this time? No, I'm sure He was tempted of the Devil *many* times prior to this occasion. However, this was a new episode of temptation, showing that prior to this there had been a hiatus. There had been a period in which he *hadn't* been tempting Him.

And then of course, we know about the temptation of 40 days and then the three appeals of the temptations to Christ. And at the conclusion of it, it says, "Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him," in Matthew 4:11. And in the parallel passage in Luke chapter 4, it says then the devil leaveth him "for a season." Now the point is this, is that the temptations from the Devil come and the temptations from the Devil go. Were they continuous, we would probably get tired after a while of resisting, and give in. But God is gracious, and He says, If you resist, eventually you will triumph.

Now these temptations may be shorter or longer. In Jesus' situation, there were three temptations that came boom, boom, boom against Him. But then it was *over*. And so it is, the Devil will come to us with temptations. Perhaps for a day he will *plague* us to a great degree. But as we resist him, he will *flee* from us, and we shall have a period of respite. And it does not mean, as I said, that he *will not* come back, but there are seasons of deliverance and seasons of rest. If we are assaulted, we have at our disposal the means of victory. The battle is *temporary*, and he can never overcome us without our consent.

There is a parallel passage to our passage in James found in First Peter 5, verses 8 through 10. In this passage it says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast in the faith." That is, use the faith, the body of truth that God has given to us, like Jesus did, to unmask the deceptions and the lies of the Devil, as we used the faith, the Scriptures, the word of God just now in our sermon to unmask the *danger* and the *destructiveness* of pride. And in so doing, it says, "whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." Others experience the same thing.

Now notice verse 10 of First Peter 5, "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a *while*, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." And what he's saying here is that this roaring lion who is walking about seeking whom he may devour, he *attacks* us, and under those attacks we are suffering, but how long are we suffering? Well our text says for a "while." The word literally means "puny." It means a *brief, short*, period of time. A "while" is not six months or ten years. A "while" is a very short period of time. And this is why Paul can say to the Romans, in chapter 16, and in verse 20, "the God of peace *shall bruise Satan* under your feet *shortly*."

And so if you will just hang on by your teeth and toenails, resisting the Devil with all of your might, know that rescue will come very *quickly*. In a short amount of time, God will bruise Satan under your feet, you will triumph over him. In the triumph of our Lord Jesus, he will flee from you.

So whether it be evil *thoughts*, or whether it be desires for *revenge*, or whether it be the *temptation* to use one's *tongue inappropriately*, whether it be thoughts of *hatred* or *murder* or *covetousness*, or a desire for the things of the *world*—you fight that hard, tooth and nail. *Unmask* it with the Scriptures. Expose it for what it is. Work at cultivating the opposite positive virtue, and before long, the temptation's *gone*. That's what it means to resist the *Devil*. That's how you not only stop the attack, but push back.

We have a wonderful promise in Deuteronomy 33, and verse 27. It says, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms: and *he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee*." That's a great comfort to know that as we're fighting, whose arms are we falling back into during that fight but the arms of the everlasting God, who is our refuge? And He then takes our enemy and He *pushes* him away. And this is the reason why the psalmist can say in Psalm 44 and verse 5, "Through *thee* will we push down our enemies: through thy name will we tread

them under that rise up against us.” And so in all these things, Romans 8:37 says, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

And so this battle with the Devil is not a battle that is unwinnable. It is *eminently* winnable. He is a defeated foe in the person of our Savior, and he can be defeated under our feet if we will but *resist* him; we will find that very shortly those temptations will flee away. Now perhaps they will come again, but in the meantime, we can be gathering together through the means of grace, spiritual strength so that we are *ready* when the next episode comes, with Gospel preparation, in order to face and fight again. Well, thank the Lord that He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Shall we pray together?

Our Father, we thank you that Jesus has crushed the serpent’s head. And thank you, Father, that we, through Him, can overcome him by the word of our testimony and by the blood of the Lamb, and by loving not our lives to the death. Father, we ask that you might help us to put on, then, the whole armor of God that we might be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Help us then, Father, to use the truth of Christ’s righteousness for us, and the sword of the spirit, and the gospel of peace, and the helmet of salvation. All of these things, Father, may we use them in spiritual warfare to defeat the evil one. Father, may his fiery darts find no residence within us, but may they be repudiated and cast back upon him so that he flees before his own darts.

Thank you, Father, for the way in which you triumph over the Devil through your people. And with the very thing that Paul could have been prone to, which was pride, you used the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to keep him *from* it. And so you used the Devil himself to defeat pride in one of your servants. Thank you, Father, for your ability to use even the works of your enemy to bless your people.

And our Lord, we ask that you might help us to be strong and to persevere in resistance until we triumph. Thank you, Father, that there are periods of triumph and periods of rest. And may we use them, not to slumber and sleep, but to watch and pray so that when the new temptation comes, and it is the hour of darkness, and in the hour of Satan, we will be ready and triumph again. In Jesus’ name we ask it. Amen.