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LifeinJesus.net

‘How to Resist the Devil’
by
Katherine Hilditch

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Preface

Jesus states clearly that it is
Satan who does the bad stuff and God does only good.
This enables us to know
what to submit to because it is from God
and what to resist from Satan.

Understand more of what Satan is like
and how he works
and how we can resist him and see him flee from us

HOW TO RESIST THE DEVIL

Jesus made this black and white statement in John 10:10 – “*The thief only comes to steal, kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life, and may have it abundantly.*” The thief is the devil, therefore it isn’t God who makes bad things happen. God is all about giving life and giving it abundantly. It is the devil, called Satan, who does the bad stuff. God is good and does good. Satan is evil and does evil. James 4:7 says – ‘*Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*’ It’s important to be able to recognise what God is doing and what Satan is doing, so we can know what to submit to and what to resist.

My intention in writing this booklet is to give you information to tuck away in the back of your mind to help you recognise Satan’s work when necessary, so you can resist him. It isn’t to make you become fearful or to focus on Satan and always be looking for him. Isaiah 26:3 (KJV) says – ‘*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.*’

Who Satan Is

God didn’t create Satan. He created a beautiful, powerful angel called Lucifer. He is described in Ezekiel 28:12-15. One line says of him in Ezekiel 28:13 – ‘*You were in Eden, the garden of God.*’ And then in Ezekiel 28:15 – ‘*You were perfect in your ways from the day that you were created, until unrighteousness was found in you.*’ God didn’t send Satan into His perfect garden; He sent the angel Lucifer to minister to Adam and Eve. But Lucifer became consumed with jealousy and pride. Read how he started to think in Isaiah 14:12-14 culminating in Isaiah 14:14 – “*I will*

make myself like the Most High!" He rebelled against God and so became Satan. He then persuaded Adam and Eve to sin, bringing corruption into all the world and all people.

How Satan Works

Satan's focus isn't on non-believers – he already has influence in their lives. His target is born-again believers – those of us who have made Jesus our Lord and Saviour. Decide now not to be fearful about this. Instead, determine to be strong in Jesus, knowing that in Him you are safe. 1 John 4:4 says – '*greater is he who is in you (Jesus) than he who is in the world (Satan).*' If you're not born-again, turn to Jesus now. It's not about you being good enough – none of us are. It's about believing in what Jesus has done and won for you. Romans 10:9-10 says – '*if you will confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*'¹⁰ *For with the heart one believes resulting in righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made resulting in salvation.*' Believe it and say it and you will be saved.

His Only Method is Lies and deception

This is Satan's modus operandi. It's only when we fall for his lies that he can deceive us and then influence us. He may be causing problems in our lives, but that doesn't necessarily give him power over us. It's how we respond that is key. If we crumple in fear or believe God is behind the bad things, then Satan can build on that. Romans 6:16 says – '*Don't you know that when you present yourselves as servants and obey someone, you are the servants of whomever you obey, whether of sin to death, or of obedience to righteousness?*'

So how does Satan try to deceive us? He will try to make us doubt who God is, or who we are in Jesus, or the nature of our relationship with God through Jesus. He will try to make us doubt God's Word or our faith or any combination of all these things. When he spoke to Eve through a snake in the Garden of Eden, he managed to make her doubt God's good intentions when He told Adam not to eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Both she and Adam then ate the fruit and sin entered the world and everything became corrupted. Don't listen to his lies and you won't be deceived.

He Walks About Like a lion

1 Peter 5:8 says – *'Be sober and self-controlled. Be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.'* Notice the word 'like'. Satan isn't a roaring lion. He is just trying to make us believe he is, in order to make us afraid. And then notice the word 'may'. Satan cannot devour just anyone. He's looking for the people he may devour.

So who is vulnerable to his lies and deception? Who might believe them and so put themselves under his influence? It is believers who don't have a true understanding of God's true nature of love or of who they are in Jesus; who don't know all that Jesus won for them on the Cross and all that they have as a result; who don't know that they have God-given authority over Satan; who are fearful and/or feel guilty and condemned. Any of these can make us vulnerable to Satan's lies and deceptions.

If you think any of this applies to you, first of all refuse to fear. That just plays into Satan's hands. Don't give him the satisfaction. Instead, thank God that you realise where you need to deepen your understanding and settle the truth deeper in your heart. Get into the Bible and build yourself up in the truth. None of us

understand everything or have plumbed the depths of God's love or of our relationship with him. But when we make the truth our focus instead of our feelings or experiences or fears, we aren't vulnerable to Satan's lies.

He Tempts

Know straightaway that God never tempts or tests us. James 1:13-14 says – *'Let no man say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God," for God can't be tempted by evil, and he himself tempts no one.'*¹⁴ *'But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own lust and enticed.'* Satan tempted Eve and she gave in. He also tempted Jesus and He did not give in. He tried to make Jesus doubt if He really was the Son of God and tried to get Him to prove it by spectacular means instead of by following God's plan of salvation through the Cross. Each time Satan tempted Jesus, He resisted him by quoting God's Word until, after three attempts, Satan gave up and left Him.

1 Corinthians 10:13 says – *'No temptation has taken you except what is common to man. God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able, but will with the temptation also make the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.'* This is a wonderful verse of assurance. Satan doesn't have any new temptations. He just wraps the same old ones up in different paper to make them appealing to a particular person. And as a born-again believer, God has made it possible for you to always say no to temptation, however difficult it may seem. God won't let it get to the point where you have no choice. So when you're tempted to believe Satan's lies, say no in the confidence that God is on your side and that you are always able to resist. Thank You Lord.

He Works through People

We need to be aware that Satan can work through people. When Peter tried to tell Jesus that He would not have to be killed, Jesus said to him in Matthew 16:23 – *“Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men.”* Satan had inspired Peter to try and persuade Jesus that He wouldn’t have to die, so although Jesus was speaking to Peter, He was addressing Satan.

He Uses Demons

Satan is limited. He can’t read your thoughts and he can’t be in more than one place at a time, so he uses demons to do his work. We talk about Satan doing things and saying things, but the vast majority of the time, it is a demon doing his work.

Demons will pretend to be big, powerful, scary beings to frighten us, but I’ve heard them better described as little things with big mouths. Know that they cannot impact you if you don’t cooperate with them. They cannot stand against the name of Jesus spoken with authority by a true believer.

Jesus Has Won the Victory

1 John 3:8 says – *‘To this end the Son of God was revealed: that he might destroy the works of the devil.’* Jesus defeated Satan on the Cross and He reassures us in John 16:33 – *“In the world you have trouble; but cheer up! I have overcome the world.”* As we stand with Jesus, we’re on the side that has already won. We have the victory. 1 Corinthians 15:57 says – *‘But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.’* This is good news. Believe it and act on it and you will prove it is true.

We Have Authority and Power

Know that Jesus has given you both power and authority to overcome Satan. Matthew 10:1 says – ‘*He called to himself his twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out.*’ We receive power from God when we are baptised in the Holy Spirit. (To find out more about this, read my booklet ‘Power and Authority’).

God instructs us to resist the devil and we are able to do so in the name of Jesus and then he will flee from us. If we decide not to believe this or ignore it, then he won’t flee from us because we won’t be standing against him. We need to use our God-given authority and power in faith and we will see the victory. This is a promise of God.

Submit to God

When Satan tries to mess things up, the human reaction is to speak negative words and worry or panic. But James 4:7 tells us a much better way to respond – ‘*Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*’ We need to make being subject to God, or submitting to Him, a way of life, and then we will be able to resist the devil when necessary and see him flee from us.

2 Thessalonians 3:3 says – ‘*the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one.*’ This doesn’t mean we can just be passive and expect God to sort everything out. No, we are told to resist the devil, but we can do so knowing that God will guard us as we submit to Him and use our God-given authority. Let’s look at some ways we can submit to God.

Know the Truth

Knowing and believing God's truth in His Word means we are submitting to who He is and what He says. In John 8:32 Jesus says – “*You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.*”

Know God's true nature of love, all that Jesus has won for you and who you are in Him. God is on your side and Jesus has won complete victory over anything and everything that would come against you. And, as a born-again believer, you have a personal love relationship with God your Father, as His beloved child.

When you were born-again, God gave you a brand-new perfect spirit which is just like Jesus. 2 Corinthians 5:17 says – ‘*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new.*’ We now need to bring our thinking into line with our new perfect spirit.

Romans 12:2 says – ‘*Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*’ In order to change our thinking, we have to get into God's Word and make it the basis of what we believe and how we live. Don't judge the Bible by your experiences, instead, judge your experiences by what the Bible says. Speak it out loud to build yourself up in faith. Romans 10:17 says – ‘*faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*’

Trust God

Trusting God means believing He knows best and choosing to submit to His ways in His Word. In Jeremiah 29:11 God says – “*For I know the thoughts that I think towards you,” says the LORD, “thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you hope and a future.*” God's plans for us are good ones and when we submit to them we will never be disappointed.

Obey the Word

Obeying God means acknowledging that He is the One to submit to. 1 John 2:3-5 says – ‘*This is how we know that we know him: if we keep his commandments.*’⁴ *One who says, “I know him,” and doesn’t keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth isn’t in him.*⁵ *But God’s love has most certainly been perfected in whoever keeps his word.*’ Truly loving God results in obedience.

Have Faith

Hebrews 11:6 says – ‘*Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to him.*’ Being passive plays into Satan’s hands. But as we live in faith, we are submitting to God – to who He is and what His Word says. For God’s Word to work in our life, we have to believe it. Hebrews 4:2 says – ‘*the word they heard didn’t profit them, because it wasn’t mixed with faith by those who heard.*’ It is our faith in Jesus and in the victory that He has won that overcomes Satan. 1 John 5:4 says – ‘*This is the victory that has overcome the world: your faith.*’

Refuse to fear

When we fear, we aren’t submitting to God because we are not trusting Him and His Word. God tells us many times in His Word not to be afraid. That means it’s possible, even though it’s often difficult. Take hold of those fearful thoughts and replace them with God’s truth. Speak it out loud, remember His promises, sing praise songs. And be reassured by 2 Timothy 1:7 – ‘*For God didn’t give us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control.*’ Speak God’s Word to yourself and over yourself. And know that you are loved by God. You are His beloved and His love is perfect. 1 John 4:18 tells us that – ‘*perfect love casts out fear.*’ Focus on His infinite, unconditional love for you and fear will have to go. Hallelujah!

Live in the Light

Colossians 1:12-14 says – ‘*giving thanks to the Father, who made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,¹³ who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of his love,¹⁴ in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.*’ This is wonderful news. We are no longer in Satan’s kingdom under the power of darkness. As born-again believers, God has brought us out of darkness and into the light of Jesus’ kingdom. But do we live according to the light? We can live in one place but in our thinking and emotions be somewhere else. Living in the light is choosing to live according to God’s Word and so submitting to it. You can’t shovel darkness out of a room. The only way to get rid of it is to turn the light on. If you feel you’re still living in darkness, don’t focus on the darkness, but turn on the light of God’s truth. Put all your attention on that and the darkness will go. Turn the light on and keep it on.

Keep Your Focus on Jesus

Don’t focus on Satan and his works, but keep your eyes on Jesus. Paul went through terrible persecution and hardship, but he decided it wasn’t going to stop him or get him down. He walked through it all with his eyes fixed on Jesus so he could declare in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 – ‘*We are pressed on every side, yet not crushed; perplexed, yet not to despair; ⁹pursued, yet not forsaken; struck down, yet not destroyed.*’ He decided how he was going to react to all the things Satan threw at him and disciplined his thinking to follow his decision. The result was victory in the face of defeat.

All these aspects of submitting to God can be summed up in focusing on God’s truth in His Word, believing it and living it out.

Resist the Devil

We have looked at how Satan works and the victory that Jesus has won over him and how to submit to God. Now we can look at how we can resist him. Remember James 4:7 says – ‘*Be subject therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*’ God has done His part – He has defeated the devil for us. Now He tells us what our part is. The Greek word translated ‘resist’ means to actively fight against. This is the opposite of passivity. We have to resist Satan when he tries to come against us. This is really important. God doesn’t tell us to pray and ask Him to get rid of the devil for us – He tells us we need to do it and then Satan will flee from us, not from God. He’s already fled from God when Jesus defeated him.

So how do we resist the devil and see him flee? 1 Timothy 6:12 tells us to – ‘*Fight the good fight of faith.*’ As born-again believers, God has given us His gift of faith. It isn’t human faith that we have to try and drum up – it’s God’s faith that He has freely given us. That’s exciting. The question isn’t whether we have enough faith, but whether we use it. If you are doubting, go back through the previous sections on submitting to God and allow the truth to build you up in faith. Thank God for His faith within you and determine to go forward standing confidently in it, no matter what you feel, knowing Jesus has given you both the power and the authority to overcome Satan every time.

Stand Firm

Ephesians 6:10-13 says – ‘*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might.* ¹¹*Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.* ¹²*For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the*

principalities, against the powers, against the world's rulers of the darkness of this age, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³*Therefore put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.'*

I've underlined the three times the word 'stand' or 'withstand' appear in these verses. Paul is making a very important point. In everything we do, we need to make sure we are standing firm in our faith in all that we know of God's truth. Whatever Satan tries to throw at you or at someone you love, decide now in advance, that nothing will make you doubt the truth that you know in God's Word. Determine that you're not going to crumple or run away – you're going to stand. Jesus tells a story of a wise man who built his house on a solid rock. He says in Matthew 7:25 – *"The rain came down, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it didn't fall, for it was founded on the rock."* Build your life on the firm foundation of the truth of God's Word and decide that you're not going to move from it, and you will be able to stand strong even in the middle of trouble.

Wear the Armour

God has provided His armour for us to wear. Notice that this passage starts with the word 'stand' again.

Ephesians 6:14-17 says – *'Stand therefore, having the utility belt of truth buckled around your waist, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and having fitted your feet with the preparation of the Good News of peace, ¹⁶above all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation,'*

Wear the **belt of truth**. Surround yourself with God's truth so it can hold you together.

Wear the **breastplate of righteousness**. Know that you are right with God because He has given you a brand-new spirit which Ephesians 4:24 says – '*has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.*'

Wear the **shoes of the preparation of the Good News of peace**. If we know we are saved by the good news of the Gospel of Jesus and that, as a result, God is at peace with us, then we are prepared to face Satan's tactics confidently.

Hold and use the **shield of faith**. It's when we use our faith that we are able to stop Satan's arrows of lies and deception from penetrating our minds and hearts.

Wear the **helmet of salvation**. Know that you know that you know you are saved and refuse to doubt it, no matter what Satan whispers to you. Keep your mind focused on God's truth.

Use the Sword

Ephesians 6:17 finishes by telling us to take – '*the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*' God's Word is our weapon to use against Satan and it has infinite power when we put our faith in it. When Satan was tempting Jesus, He quoted the Word each time until Satan gave up. There is no better weapon to use than the one Jesus used. 1 Timothy 6:12 says – '*Fight the good fight of faith.*' To fight we need a weapon and we have the best – God's Word. So let's use it. Always choose the truth of God's Word, no matter what Satan tries to tell you. Speak it out when Satan is trying to tempt you or whisper lies to you and deceive you and they will fall powerless to the ground.

Deal With Negative Thoughts and Words

We all know that Satan can whisper negative thoughts in our ear in his attempt to steal, kill and destroy. But the more you know of the truth, the quicker you will realise what's happening and the sooner you will be able to resist him by turning away from those thoughts and focusing on God's truth instead. This is what 2 Corinthians 10:5 means – *'throwing down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.'* You might think you can't control your thoughts, but God's Word says you can. Romans 12:2 says – *'Don't be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the good, well-pleasing, and perfect will of God.'* Instead of focusing on negative thoughts, turn your mind to God's truth and speak it out loud to build your faith up.

We also know that other people can speak to us or about us negatively. Isaiah 54:17 says – *'No weapon that is formed against you will prevail; and you will condemn every tongue that rises against you in judgement.'* The first part of this verse is great but we need to do the second part in order for the first to become reality in our lives. God isn't going to condemn those words for us – it's our job to do that and then no weapon that is formed against us will prevail. Don't condemn the person who has spoken, but condemn their words in the name of Jesus. Do it out loud. Say something like, "I reject those words in the name of Jesus." If you can't do it in their presence, then do it as soon as you can. The longer you leave it, the more difficult it can be to stop the weapon formed against you from hurting you. But it is always possible. Remember that God will always help you as you step out to follow His Word.

Speak with Authority

Jesus has given you His authority so let it show in how you speak. When you condemn negative words spoken against you, do so with a voice of authority. When you speak God's Word out, do so with confidence and faith. When you address Satan, do so in the name of Jesus in a voice that expects obedience. In Mark 11:22-23 Jesus says "*Have faith in God. ²³ For most certainly I tell you, whoever may tell this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' and doesn't doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is happening, he shall have whatever he says.*" Jesus talks about speaking three times here – I've underlined them. It's when we speak in faith, using our God-given authority that we have the victory.

Praise God

Psalm 8:2 says – '*From the lips of babes and infants you have established strength, because of your adversaries, that you might silence the enemy and the avenger.*' God has given us strength to silence the devil. When Jesus quotes this verse in Matthew 21:16 He replaces the word 'strength' with 'praise'. He says – '*Out of the mouth of children and nursing babies, you have perfected praise.*' Our God-given strength is therefore praise. Satan hates us praising God and cannot stay around it. But remember that he doesn't know what we're thinking, so it's when we praise God out loud that he is silenced. Praise is a strong, powerful weapon with which we can resist the devil.

Paul & Silas were thrown in prison in Philippi for preaching the Gospel. See what happened in Acts 16:26 when they were praising God in the night – '*Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken;*

and immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were loosened.' Praise is powerful. If we make it a way of life, we are quickly able to silence Satan when he tries to lie to us and deceive us and tempt us.

Cast Out Demons

In Mark 16:17 Jesus says – *"These signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons;"* He was talking about believers – that's you and me. Do you believe it? It's Jesus who is speaking so it is true. We need to decide to believe what He says, rather than what we feel or what our experience tells us.

Notice that we can cast demons out, but only if we do it in the name of Jesus in faith. He doesn't tell us to pray asking God to do it for us. He tells us we are to do it. If you ever find yourself in a situation where a demon is obviously working through someone and they are willing, use your God-given authority and command it to come out in the name of Jesus. A demon can make a big fuss, but remember, it is actually a little thing with a big mouth. Notice that we are to command it to come out. Don't politely ask it or beg it or try and persuade it. You are the one with authority. You don't need to shout, but speak in a way that demands obedience.

If there doesn't seem to be progress and the demon is making a noise, demand it to be quiet in the name of Jesus. Reassure the person and ask a Christian you trust who has experience in this area to minister with you. But know that ultimately Satan cannot win when confronted by a Christian who is submitted to God and who uses their authority. 1 Corinthians 15:57 – *'But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.'*

Live Free

In John 8:31-32 Jesus says – “*If you remain in my word, then you are truly my disciples. ³²You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.*” Freedom is what Jesus wants for us in every way, including freedom from Satan’s influence. God’s Word is a weapon to use when Satan is trying to deceive us, but it is also the rock on which to build our life – it is Jesus Himself. When we stand on the truth no matter what, we are resisting the enemy and living in true freedom. Galatians 5:1 says – ‘*Stand firm therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free.*’ When Satan sees that we know, understand and believe the Word and are standing firm on it, he’ll think twice about coming against us. None of us do it perfectly all the time, but what we do sends a clear message that there’s no point messing with me.

Going Forward

I said at the beginning that by the end of reading this booklet, my desire is that you won’t be feeling fearful about Satan, but confident in Jesus. Tuck the information you’ve read at the back of your mind so God can remind you of it if you need it. But live your life focused on God’s truth, on all Jesus has won for you, on who you are as a result and on your wonderful love relationship with God your Father.

Don’t go looking for demons or wondering what the devil is doing. That’s what he wants you to do. Fix your eyes on Jesus and live in the freedom he’s won for you and be thankful, knowing you are able to resist Satan if necessary. 2 Corinthians 2:14 says – ‘*Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and reveals through us the sweet aroma of his knowledge in every place.*’

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*Be subject therefore to God.
Resist the devil,
and he will flee from you.*

(James 4:7)



Katherine Hilditch has been teaching in local churches for many years. In 2013 she wrote her first booklet and since then has written many more. She created her website to make all the booklets freely available to everyone. They can be read online or printed out. Katherine's threefold purpose is to help people understand more about Jesus and all He has done and won for them, to encourage them to go deeper in their relationship with God and to provide material to help them share their faith with others. To read her story and find all the booklets go to –

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