

What the Bible Says About

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

As Christians, we are called to discern daily about what is pleasing to God. What can I, as an adopted child of the Most High, do/say/pray today to give Him the glory He so richly deserves? After all, He is the Author and Perfecter of Life itself and the Creator of all things good. His mercy is unmatched and His love is unparalleled. To Believers, God IS love...

But how often do we think about what is pleasing to the Enemy- the one who comes to steal our joy, kill our dreams and destroy our souls (**John 10:10**)? As Christians, we are also called to be very aware of his schemes (**2 Corinthians 2:11**). We can be equipped to readily avoid the Enemy's traps and snares --- but only if we're aware of what they are.

Some questions, a type of Spiritual checklist, to discern upon include the following: Are we familiar with Spiritual Warfare? Are we donning the Armor of God (**1**) as we begin each new day (**Ephesians 6:10-20**)? Are we praying the Weapon Verse (**Isaiah 54:17**) with regularity and not just petitioning God conditionally when our backs are against the wall (*Oh, please God...please provide me with finances to keep my electricity and heat on- I'll never go to the casino or dog track ever again*)? Remember, when we're talking with God, our prayers don't need to be memorized or done in a certain order for Him to receive them. He already knows why we're praying. He wants to hear our heart, not a rote prayer. We can talk with Him as we would anyone else we're having a conversation with. Nothing we say- or how we say it- is going to surprise Him.

Most of us are aware of the different types of sins that are *especially* pleasing to the Enemy- pride, envy, lack of forgiveness (**2**), forbidden pleasures, etc. But how often are they talked about, if ever, in our homes or churches? By *not* talking about them and not praying against their existence, we're allowing them to creep into our lives, giving them a foothold. Pretending the Evil One is not real does not mean he doesn't exist. It certainly doesn't end the daily war we are in. In our ignorance, it accomplishes the opposite. It hand delivers to the Enemy yet another weapon to use against us.

THE ENEMY IS REAL

Unfortunately, even some present day followers of Christ tend to live in two extremes: 1) as though Satan doesn't exist OR 2) as though he's bigger than God. Neither is correct. Satan does exist. Just ask Jesus about that time He spent 40 days and 40 nights in the desert (**Matthew 4:1-11**, **Mark 1:12-13**, **Luke 4:1-13**). If you believe in Jesus, you believe in Satan. He's a created being who used to experience the paradise of God. For one defining moment, he averted his eyes from God's glory and rejoiced in his own (**Ezekiel 28:12-15**). In that, he rebelled, deceiving a third of the angels in God's Kingdom (**Revelation 12:4**). After being thrown out of Heaven (**Revelation 12:7-9**), he's waged war ever since.

A Christian not believing in Satan is akin to a Ford Motor Company employee not believing in the 1965 Mustang pony car. It's unconscionable. Why? The **Holy Bible** (3) - the living, breathing Word of **Jesus Christ** (4) - tells us that Satan is real. Account after account in the Scriptures describe to us the reality of the evil one and the ways in which he is able to enter our lives and create havoc. If you're a Christian, you believe in the Bible. If you believe in the Bible, you believe Satan is real.

Ignoring the existence of Satan discounts the entire purpose of Christ's **Crucifixion** (5) and His glorious **Resurrection** (6). For if there were no evil, there would have been nothing for our Savior to save us from. Hence, there would have been no crucifixion, no resurrection, nothing. You wouldn't be reading this right now. For without evil, there would have been no need to write about something that doesn't exist.

Here's the problem. Present day society, in general, discounts the existence of Satan. This faction even includes some Christian communities. Shhh, talking about Satan is too alarming... It's inconvenient to think about... It's too heavy a topic to discuss... It's scary... Here's another favorite Get-Out of-Believing-in-the-Enemy reason: the Bible was written a long time ago and it needs to be "updated."

Those who neglect acknowledging the presence or capabilities of Satan will soon no longer feel the need for The Savior. For if there is no evil, we need no saving from it. We can live life on our own. The Good News is chock full of warnings about this as well. What was written long ago by God-inspired mortal men (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**) is coming to fruition present day. People are turning away from God.

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Not only people are turning away from God, countries that were forged upon Christian beliefs are now peeling away at those layers which made them a strong society. The result, to any who have eyes to see and ears to hear ([Isaiah 6:10](#), [Jeremiah 5:21](#), [Ezekiel 12:2](#), [Matthew 13:15](#), [Acts 28:27](#), [Romans 11:8](#)), is predictable and the proof is in the pudding. When we remove God from our life or society, we lose favor with Him. This doesn't mean He doesn't love us any less. This isn't judging, blasphemy or heresy. It's the Truth of the Holy Scriptures. So many people with weak faith today have been conditioned by non-believers that it's "wrong" to speak of God, Jesus Christ and/or the Holy Spirit in the presence of those who are non-believers. They don't want to "offend" anyone. That's complete nonsense because, at the expense of "not offending" someone else (their words), you're offending God. None other than the Holy Spirit-filled, much beloved, modern day Evangelist, Billy Graham, once exhorted, "Our society strives to avoid any possibility of offending anyone- except God." Boom.

THE SPIRITUAL BATTLE FOR YOUR SOUL IS REAL

The King of Liars will come after any portion of your life that is bearing fruit or giving glory to God. It could be your marriage, your relationship with family members, your place of work, school, recreational activities and/or even your Church. Many Christians mistakenly think that Satan is incapable of penetrating a Church body. What are churches filled with? Imperfect sinners and broken people- and they (we) certainly don't magically stop being a sinner or broken when they (we) cross over the sidewalk and onto Church property. Have you ever witnessed spirits of pride, selfishness, haughtiness, unfriendliness or similar during Church meetings or gatherings? That's not God's handiwork.

Have you ever noticed that, as soon as you begin a new Ministry, your life seems to come under attack? The more we try to advance the Kingdom of God here on Earth, the more Satan is going to try to stop us. He doesn't bother us when we're sitting in our cozy recliner while binge watching the latest and greatest zombie series. Chances are, he won't do much with us if our "relationship" with Jesus involves sitting in the same Church pew once a week for 59 minutes and nothing else, either. Why? We're exactly where the King of Liars wants us to be- comfortable doing little or nothing for his nemesis, Jesus Christ.

If we're not doing something for Christ, we're doing it for Satan. There's no real in-between here. But, unless we realize that there's an ongoing battle for our soul raging around us, we probably won't be inclined to do much about it. That puts our fate into the hands of others- some of whom may have an indifferent take on where we spend eternity. So what's the solution? Do nothing or...Prepare for Battle!

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SPIRITUAL WARFARE: IDENTIFYING THE ENEMY & HOW HE WORKS

Any Warrior whose armor is no longer shiny will tell you that the most effective method of defeating your enemy is to first a) know who your enemy is and b) understand what makes your enemy tick while c) never underestimating them. Accordingly, we must acknowledge that Satan is the most formidable of foes. After all, he slithered his way into Eden and tricked two perfectly and wonderfully made creations into believing his lies. What makes us think we're not susceptible to his schemes? That thought, in and of itself, is the handiwork of the enemy.

In our own strength, we would surely succumb to Satan's treachery. He's been around forever, is a fallen Angel and is more familiar with the Holy Scriptures than any mortal man. He doesn't come to us looking all reddish with a pitchfork, horns and a pointy tail. If he did, he'd be easy to spot and repel from advancing upon us. Instead, Satan normally approaches us as an angel of light (**2 Corinthians 11:14**). Does this mean that everything we find appealing to us is evil? Absolutely not. This is exactly why it's so crucial to be reading, studying and sharing our Bible each and every day. **Hebrews 5:14** exhorts that we need to be eating solid food (the Word of Christ) so that we are properly trained to distinguish good from evil. It's not always crystal clear, is it? If it was, we wouldn't make some of the choices we make.

There's no escaping our imperfections. We're born into Sin. **James 1:14-15** shares that temptation does not come primarily from the outside, but that it originates in our own sinful hearts. Here's the Good News: if we lean on God, we can limit our transgressions against Him and our fellow man while doing all things that give Him glory (**Philippians 4:13**).

WHO ARE WE FIGHTING? WHO IS CAUSING US GRIEF?

To understand who our real enemy is remains front and center in our battle of good versus evil. We're not fighting the cantankerous co-worker at the factory or the belligerent stranger in the supermarket or the crazy driver tailgating us. Nope. We are fighting evil. The Word of God tells us it's right here in our midst. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (**Ephesians 6:12**).

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A FEW BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF SATAN AT WORK

The Fall in the Garden: Did God Really Say That? ([Genesis 3:1-24](#)).

Satan Challenges God to Give Up His Servant Job ([Job 1:1-22](#)).

Christ's 21 Day Battle with the Prince of Persia ([Daniel 10:1-21](#)).

Judas Agrees to Betray Jesus ([Matthew 26:14-16](#), [Mark 14:10-11](#), [Luke 22:1-6](#), [John 13:18-30](#)).

DIFFERENT WAYS SATAN TRIES TO RUIN YOUR DAY, WEEK, LIFE

He may slander God to you in order to cast doubt on God's goodness and shipwreck your faith ([Genesis 3:4-5](#)).

He may tempt you to deceive others in order to create, or maintain, the impression of being more spiritual ([Acts 5:3](#); [John 8:44](#)).

He may corrupt your mind and steer you away from the simplicity of Christ and His gospel ([2 Corinthians 11:3](#)).

He may hinder your gospel witness and steal it from unsuspecting hearts ([1 Thessalonians 2:18](#); [Matthew 13:19](#)).

He may wrestle against you, fighting against your progress in Christ ([Ephesians 6:12](#)).

He may tempt you to commit sexual immorality against your spouse as a result of neglecting the intimacy of the marriage bed ([1 Corinthians 7:5-6](#)).

He may harass you with some form of fleshly affliction ([2 Corinthians 12:7](#)).

He may blind the spiritual eyes of your unsaved family, friends, and neighbors so that they may not see the glory of Jesus in the gospel ([2 Corinthians 4:4](#)).

He may keep your unsaved acquaintances in bondage to sins that hinder them from coming to God ([Galatians 4:8](#)).

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He may afflict you with a physical disease (**Luke 13:11; Job 2:7**).

He may murder you (**Psalms 106:37; John 8:44**).

So as to deceive and create disunity, he may plant counterfeit Christians within your assembly of believers (**Matthew 13:38-39; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15**).

He may cause you to be friendly to false doctrine and its teachers (**2 Timothy 4:1-3**).

He may persecute you for your godliness (**Matthew 5:11, 2 Timothy 3:12**).

He may tempt you to do evil (**Matthew 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 3:5**).

He is – at this moment – prowling about seeking to capture and destroy you, chiefly through pride (**1 Peter 5:6-8**).

He will put you in prison to test you (**Revelation 2:10**).

He may ask God for permission to sift you out for concentrated attack and temptation (**Luke 22:31**).

He may use the power of suggestion to move you away from the will of God (**Matthew 16:21-23**).

He may try to cripple your effectiveness through confusion, discouragement, and despair (**2 Corinthians 4:8-9**).

REPAIR THE BREACH: HOW TO REPEL THE ENEMY'S ATTACKS

Once the Enemy gains a foothold in our lives- whether it's through people, places or things- how do we jettison him from our midst? Can we do it on our own or is there some other manner in which to make Satan leave us alone? As even demons believe and shudder at the fact there is only one God (**James 2:19**), the only correct answer is to submit to God and the devil will flee (**James 4:7-10**).

We can only defeat Satan under the authority of Jesus Christ. Even the ever powerful Archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses (**Jude 1:9-10**), did not himself dare to condemn him for slander but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" He battled under the Flag of the Most High.

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Account after account in Holy Scripture shares how we can repair The Breach between God and Man. It all leads to giving Him the glory He richly deserves. God makes the way for us. Since we understand and accept that Satan is real and we are powerless to defeat him on our own authority, how can we claim Victory over him? Suggestions listed below are based upon the eternally solid Holy Scriptures.

Seek First the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33)

Are we placing anything in our lives ahead of God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit? Having our priorities straight makes the path straight for Christ to come to our rescue.

Prayer- Daily, Hourly or By the Minute

Prayer is the most power weapon on Earth, in the Heavenlies and anywhere else in Creation. Why? Because it invites the fullness of God into whatever situation you're praying Him into. There's even more Good News. He's bringing His Legions of Angels to help you with whatever burden you are currently experiencing. For suggestions and Scripture verses on prayer, please explore our website page on **Prayer (7)**.

Be Obedient to God and the Enemy Will Flee (James 4:7)

This is a big one. We must first submit ourselves to God before anything else. By doing so, we are surrendering to the Most High and allowing Him to wage war against the Enemy for us. Why would we ever want to do what the Author and Perfecter of Life said He'll take care of for us?

Scriptural Accounts of Obedience

- a) Joshua Defeats the Amalekites (Exodus 17:8-15)
- b) Gideon Defeats the Midianites (Judges 7:1-25)
- c) David Defeats Goliath in the Name of the Lord Almighty (1 Samuel 17:1-58)

Just Like God, Satan Uses Anyone to Advance His Causes

The king of liars can get inside the head of any mortal man who is not wearing his Helmet of Salvation (see **Full Armor of God (1)**). Even the great Peter fell prey to Satan more than once, as he denied Christ three times, just as Christ previously told him he would. In Matthew 16:23, Peter is allowing pride and/or allegiance to Christ get in the way of a teachable moment- and Christ lets him have it. As Jesus is explaining to His Disciples how He will suffer many things in the near future, Peter says, "Never, Lord! This shall never happen to you!" This raises the ire of the Son of Man, who turns to Peter and declares, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns." Boom. If Peter can fall while in Christ's physical presence, who are we to think we're exempt from the Evil One's schemes?

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Put on the Full Armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-20)

Followers of Christ know that the prince of this world (John 14:30) is waiting to wreak havoc on our lives from the moment we open our eyes in the morning, if not sooner. One way to defend ourselves daily and take our stand against the devil's schemes is to put on the **Full Armor of God** (1). Physically going through the motions of dressing ourselves with this battle tested armor when we are about to start our day- every day- is a reminder that there is a war going on in the Heavens for our soul. It is paramount that we act to protect it. Nobody else can if we don't. Our efforts, or lack thereof, have eternal consequences.

Fear the Lord and Seek His Wisdom and Understanding (Proverbs 1:7)

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction. The great and wise Solomon, King of Israel from 970 to 931 BC, is a tremendous example for this topic. His sojourn through the Scriptures includes mountain top victories and valley traveled trials, experienced as a result of his allegiance to God as well as his backsliding away from God. 2 Chronicles 1:1-17 and 1 Kings 3:1-15 both give the account where Solomon asks God not for wealth, possessions, honor, or death of his enemies, but for the gift of Wisdom/Discernment. God is very pleased that Solomon asks for these gifts and bestows them unto him. In addition, God rewards Solomon with the wealth and honor he did not ask for. As the journey of Solomon unfolds throughout multiple Old Testament books, we read of a faithful servant who turns his back on these aforementioned gifts from God and, instead, opts for gifts that are pleasing to his flesh. He had 700 wives and 300 concubines and he permitted his foreign wives to import their national deities, building temples to Ashtoreth and Milcom. 1 Kings 11:4 discloses that "As Solomon grew old, his wives turned his heart after other gods, and his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of David his father had been." It is because of Solomon's actions that the Kingdom of Israel (see "Avoid Disobedience to God" below) was split into two separate entities and later conquered by enemies raised up by none other than the Lord Himself.

The lesson to be learned from Solomon's biblical accounts is that the possession of great wisdom and discernment are no use to God or us if we do not employ them for God's glory and good purpose.

Avoid Disobedience to God

King Solomon, the third ruler of the United Kingdom of Israel (*following Saul and David*), is generally accepted as the wisest of men who faithfully served the LORD. However, it was his disobedience (8) against God that led to the tearing apart of the Twelve Tribes of Israel (9), which were subsequently conquered by adversaries raised up by the LORD (1 Kings 11:14-43).

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Subsequent to the death of King Solomon, Israel was split into two regions. The Northern Kingdom of Israel included the Tribes of Issachar, Zebulun, Reuben, Simeon, Gad, Ephraim, Manasseh, Dan, Asher and Naphtali. The Southern Kingdom of Judah included only the Tribes of Judah and Benjamin. According to **1 Kings 11:30-34**, it was because of these sins that "the Lord punishes Solomon by removing 10 of the 12 Tribes of Israel from the Israelites. This fulfilled what God said would happen in **1 Kings 9:6-9** if Solomon turned away from him.

Stop Pouring New Wine Into Old Wineskins (Matthew 9:17)

If you keep doing what you're doing, you're going to keep getting what you're getting. That's the definition of insanity. If you're seeking different results, employ different tactics. Don't expect new wine to taste refreshing when you're still using the same ol' wineskins.

Belief that God Can Vanquish the Enemy

Isaiah 58:12 prophesies that "Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins and will raise up the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls, Restorer of Streets with Dwellings." Both Old Testament (**Isaiah 40:3**, **Malachi 3:1**) and New Testament (**Matthew 3:3**, **Mark 1:3**, **Luke 3:4**, and **John 1:23**) accounts exhort us to make straight the path of/prepare the way for Jesus. Are we doing this on a daily basis in our personal lives? As born again believers of the Most High, we are assured of our Eternal Salvation, as He has already won the Victory for us. However, this does not mean we will not encounter evil or hardships in our lives. In order for us to have authority over Satan, we must invite Christ into our lives and into our homes and into our schools and into our workplaces. Only then do we effectively put our gift of Free Will (control) and the ways of the world to the side and allow Him to vanquish the Enemy on our behalf!

Iron Sharpens Iron (Proverbs 27:17)

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." There is mutual benefit in the rubbing of two iron blades together; the edges become sharper, making the knives more efficient in their task to cut and slice. Likewise, the Word of God is a "sharper than any double-edged sword" (**Hebrews 4:12**), and it is with this that we are to sharpen one another – in times of meeting, fellowship, or any other interaction. (d)

Encourage One Another Daily (1 Thessalonians 5:11)

This Scripture calls on us to plant seeds of encouragement (**10**) along our journey. "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." Sharing a kind word with someone may give them that one missing piece to propels them through a difficult time.

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Believe In and Speak the Truth (John 14:6)

Jesus said, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." Jesus is Truth. If we stand in Him, we cannot fail.

Believe that Satan is the Father of Lies (John 8:44)

Jesus shared that Satan is a big, fat liar. Jesus said this about him while speaking to those who had believed in Him: "You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies." Satan's native tongue is deceit, meaning the most effective manner in which to combat his untruth is to surround ourselves, our families, and our minds with the Truth of Jesus Christ.

Do Not Speak Lightly of The Enemy (Jude 8; 2 Peter 2:10)

Any mortal man who has underestimated Satan (or any enemy) assuredly paid a price for doing so. We are not to take him lightly. We are to treat him as the ultimate enemy, for that is exactly what he is. Although Satan is pure evil, we must respect the ability he has to kill our souls, steal our joy and destroy our lives (John 10:10).

Soberly Standing Firm and Resisting Him (Ephesians 4:27; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8)

Stopping the Evil One at the door cuts him off from turning your house upside down with your family in it. Don't give him a foothold! To resist his tempting ways, we must remain sober and alert.

Do Not Remain Ignorant of the Devil's Schemes (2 Corinthians 2:11, Ephesians 6:11)

The Enemy comes to us in ways that are appealing to us, not repulsive or detestable. He also sends into our midst those who act like apostles and ambassadors for Christ, but are really angels of the darkness. Therefore, we must be prayed up so that we may discern upon our thoughts and who planted them in our minds. That's where the Helmet of Salvation plays a crucial role.

Make a Godly Choice Not to Fear (2 Timothy 2:1-7, Hebrews 13:6, Romans 8:15, 1 John 4:18)

Account after account in the Scriptures exhort us to "be not afraid." In fact, it was the first command of the Risen Christ (Matthew 28:8-10). We are beautifully and wonderfully made (Psalms 139:14). The spirit of unhealthy fear is from the Evil One.

Tell The Storm How Big Your God Is (Matthew 8:23-27, Mark 4:35-41, Luke 8:22-25)

We're going to have chaos, persecutions and sufferings in our lives. Dissension and upheaval are works of the Enemy. How we respond is the key. Do we fight back in our own power OR do we turn it over to the King of kings to care of as He sees fit? The Scripture accounts above share about Jesus and His Disciples in a boat out on a lake during a furious storm. The Disciples were running about the boat as if their hair was ablaze, afraid and fearful of drowning. What was Jesus doing? Sleeping through it all. The Disciples frantically called on Him, so He woke up and calmed the waves and the storm. Jesus is the Original Storm Chaser. He can do that in our lives as well, if we call on Him as the Disciples did.

The Jericho Strategy (Joshua 6:1-27)

Reclaim What Is Yours! March around your home, workplace or where ever the enemy has gained a foothold in your life. Blow the Trumpets!

Be Transformed (Romans 12:2)

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Don't Be a Control Freak: Let Jesus Be in Charge (Matthew 14:22-36)

A stark reminder of who is (and should be) in charge, this Scripture account is a profound example of how things turn out when we place unconditional Faith in Jesus Christ as opposed to when we try to overcome obstacles on our own. When Peter was operating under the authority of Christ, he effortlessly walked on the water; when he became afraid, he started to sink. The moral of the story is that when we try to control the situation in our power, we fail. When we turn it over to Christ (and don't take it back), He guides us with His unparalleled perfection- a true example of Hebrews 11:1.

Praise and Worship

Is the Joy of the Lord alive in your Church? Do you know you're at a Celebration? The Enemy loves a dead Church service (and they do exist) but he hates Praise and Worship that has life. Why? Because we are giving glory and honor to his immortal adversary, the Author and Creator of Life Himself (Zechariah 3:1-2; Job 2; Matthew 4:1-11; 1 Corinthians 10:21; Revelation 20:10). The king of liars cannot stand it when believers gather together for corporate times of praise to God, our Father (2 Chronicles 5:13-14; Acts 2:1-4).

Dig Into the Word Before the World Digs Into You

Regularly seek out and attend Bible Studies ([11](#)) and Prayer Gatherings ([12](#)), where ever you can find a Holy Spirit charged group- it doesn't have to be at "my Church"; listen to podcasts using earbuds while doing household chores, etc; Host a small faith sharing group in your home; read, study and apply the Scriptures in every day life- home, work, school & recreation.

INTERNAL FOOTNOTES:

- (1) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/armor-of-god>
- (2) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/forgiveness>
- (3) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-good-news>
- (4) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/jesus-christ>
- (5) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/obituary-of-jesus>
- (6) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/resurrection-of-jesus>
- (7) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/prayer>
- (8) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/disobedience>
- (9) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/twelve-tribes-of-israel>
- (10) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/encouragement>
- (11) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/bible-studies>
- (12) <http://www.downriverdisciples.com/prayer-groups>

EXTERNAL RESOURCES:

- (a) <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/Ministry-spiritual-Five-Ways-to-Overcome-a-Spiritual-Attack>
- (b) <http://counselingoneanother.com/2012/02/13/20-ways-satan-may-seek-to-destroy-you/>
- (c) <http://counselingoneanother.com/2013/07/16/12-more-ways-satan-may-try-to-destroy-you/>
- (d) <https://www.gotquestions.org/iron-sharpens-iron.html>

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