

# Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

Vol. XXII

June 24, 2012

No. 26

## How Is Your Resistance?

(Jerry Fite)

A lot of resistance is taking place around us. Electronic “resistors” dissipate electrical energy in circuits. Retaining ponds slow down and therefore resist the sudden rush of rain water. “Resistance training” builds stronger muscles to benefit the athlete, while *bacterium, resistant to antibiotics*, is a constant health threat.

While there is resistance in the world around us, there should be a resistance occurring within us. We are instructed to “*Be subject therefore unto God and resist the devil and he will flee from you*” (James 4:7).

In withstanding the devil, you first have a clear understanding where your allegiance lies. You submit to God. It is not about me, or my desires that come to the forefront in resisting the devil. If so, the devil will probably win. He did with Eve as she contemplated the forbidden fruit (Genesis 3:6). But you are under God and are ready to submit to His will and His desires for you. The effort to withstand is encouraged by focusing in on the result

of such effort. The devil will flee in that the temptation will fail. Submit and resist is God’s prescription for spiritual victory.

Jesus shows us the way to resist the devil. Submitting to God is made practical by recalling what is written in the Scriptures when facing temptation offered by the devil. Three different temptations are presented, and each time Jesus counters with “*it is written...*” (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10) Being familiar with the Scriptures to the extent of recalling them from memory is essential in effective resistance. Having a broad understanding of God’s word equips one to know when the harmony of the Scripture is being violated by the devil. Like Jesus, we can counter the devil’s improper use of Scripture with “*again it is written...*” At the point of the sword of the Spirit, the devil “*leaveth him*”, just as James claims he will do in our moment of resistance (Matthew 4:11).

The devil will try to defeat us through persecution. That is the reality we must face as Christians (2 Timothy 3:12). But we do

not have to let the devil defeat us with such discouragement. Instead, “*withstand stedfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world*” (1 Peter 5:9). Trusting in God, He will “*perfect, establish, strengthen you*” as you withstand the spiritual adversary (1 Peter 5:10).

In your submission to God and His Will, you may have to confront your peers. Paul did. When Peter was playing the hypocrite and not “*walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel*”, Paul “*resisted him to the face, because he stood condemned*” (Galatians 2:11, 14). Like leaven, hypocrisy was spreading, carrying away even Barnabas. For the sake of the souls of his fellow believers, and the truth of the Gospel, Paul resisted Peter to his face. It is one thing to be on board with resisting the devil, but when the devil is winning through your friends, are you willing to resist them? We must! Clothed in God’s armor, withstand so you can stand victoriously with God (Ephesians 6:13).