

Power Over the Power of the Enemy

Luke 10:17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. 18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. 19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

I'd like to focus on just part of verse 19: "I give unto you power ... over all the power of the enemy." I find it interesting that, in this passage, two different Greek words were both translated as "power". I am aware of at least two different types of power => ability and authority. In this verse, considering the words of the original language, a more meaningful translation would be, "I give you authority... over all the ability of the enemy."

We know that the enemy is the host of evil angels, led by satan. We also know that angels are a higher order of being and have been studying humans for ~6,000 years. Because of this, for me to try to battle against angels, would be total foolishness, because their abilities far surpass my abilities.

However, when I submit my will to God's will("not my will, but thy will be done"-Jesus. "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"-Saul), in times of temptation, God gives me authority over the ability of the enemy. James well-illustrated this principle:

James 4:6 But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble(dead to self). 7 Submit yourselves therefore to God (then we will have authority to...). Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Draw nigh to God(more submission), and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded(Repentance). 9 Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness(introspection). 10 Humble yourselves(death of self) in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up(Victory in Jesus!).

A friend has also illustrated this principle for us when she, in Jesus' name, demands satan to leave her home. When she is in submission to God, He gives her authority over the ability of the enemy.

What I know by many years of experience is that when I submit myself to God, like Peter sinking in the sea, and Saul struck blind by the glory of Jesus, the temptation immediately leaves my mind -- every time. One might ask, "But Sid, how does the temptation just vanish?" In times past, I would probably say that God just takes it away. And, of course that is true, but it doesn't well-answer the question.

Because of my recent studies, I will now say that my God sent angels that excel in strength to overpower the enemy who was giving me that temptation, for we know that tempting humans is one of the enemy's primary jobs. To further support this idea, I will say that when I am absolutely surrendered to God, the last thing I want to do is to sin against Him. But, my ability utterly fails when fighting against the ability of the enemy. It is impossible for me to resist. Jesus knew this about His own humanity(Jn5:19,31; 8:28) and He knew it about us too(Jn15:5). So, in our surrendered condition, the promise of 1Cor 10:13 is fulfilled -- God will not allow the enemy to continue harassing me -- or you.

Now, I must say that once-surrendered, does not mean always-surrendered any more that once-saved means always-saved. My point is that temptation could resume at any time, requiring repeated absolute surrender. Sadly, this is the point at which many fail. Persistence in using our will-power to submit to God, rather than to fight(ability vs. ability) the temptation results in less frequency and less intensity of temptation on any particular sin that easily besets us. According to James, Paul, and Peter, surrendered temptations are one of God's methods to change our character to be more like Jesus -- to have the mind of Christ :-)

James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; 3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. 4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Romans 5:3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

1 Peter 1:7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:

1 Peter 4:12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: 13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

1 Peter 5:10 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.

The authority, given to us by Jesus through our cooperation, always trumps the ability of the enemy and I am eternally grateful to our Father and His "beloved" Son.