

How Jesus Used Scripture in His Greatest Battle

By Thomas Trask

If you are a follower of Jesus, it is very important for you to understand that you are in a battle, and that battle is against the forces of the devil and the powers of evil. These powers are very real. Jesus knew this as He encountered Satan.

Yet Jesus was victorious, and He left us with instructions to experience that same victory over Satan. In His greatest moment of battle, Jesus called upon the authority of the Word of God.

The account of how Jesus defeated Satan is found in Luke 4:1-14. It should first be noted that Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit before being tempted: “And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan” (Luke 4:1, KJV). We also read in verse 14, “Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee.”

This is a crucial lesson in the matter of spiritual warfare: We are no match for Satan, who, “as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (1 Peter 5:8, KJV). In this account, Jesus shows us that we cannot defeat Satan on our own. We must be filled with the power of the Spirit—just as Jesus was.

Confronting Dark Powers

Billy Graham has preached the gospel throughout the world and encountered many direct conflicts with the power of Satan. In his book, *Storm Warning*, Dr. Graham writes about a direct confrontation with the enemy during two of his crusades.

One night in Nuremberg, Germany, we were holding a crusade in the same stadium . . . Hitler used to stage his infamous rallies. It was difficult to sit in that place and hear in the echoes of memory the masses shouting "Sieg, Heil!" . . . One night, as I sat on the platform, Satan worshippers dressed in black assembled just outside the stadium doors. Using ancient, evil rites, they tried to put a hex on the meeting. The rumor of their presence spread, Christians prayed, and in answer to those prayers, nothing came of the incident.¹

Dr. Graham goes on to relate another incident, this time in Chicago, when 300 Satan worshippers tried to force their way into a youth night at McCormick Place. Instead of accepting the police offer to handle the intruders headed toward the stage, Dr. Graham interrupted the choir and encouraged the Christian youth to pray for the Satan worshippers, show love to them, sing to them, and gradually ease them back toward the doors.

Dr. Graham was blessed to watch hundreds of students begin praying, sharing their faith, and lovingly surrounding those who meant harm. God's Spirit began to move in the place and confound those who were intent on disruption.

Speaking Out the Truth

When it comes to defeating Satan, the power of the Word of God is far superior to this enemy of the soul. Jeremiah 23:29

(KJV) states, “Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?”

When Satan initially tried to tempt Jesus (Luke 4:3), Jesus spoke out loud to Satan by quoting Scripture. “It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God” (v. 4, KJV).

In the second temptation crafted by Satan, Jesus again gave us some wonderful words of instruction. First, He said, “Get thee behind me, Satan.” He used the principle also stated in James 4:7: “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” Then Jesus again quoted Scripture to Satan: “For it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Luke 4:8, KJV).

It is interesting to note in Jesus’ third temptation, Satan tried using Scripture (although wrested from context) to tempt Jesus. Again Jesus uses Scripture: “It is said, Thou shall not tempt the Lord thy God” (vs. 12, KJV). Christ’s victory over Satan came as a result of Jesus speaking out the truth of the Word of God.

When one speaks the Word of God out loud, it serves as a reminder of how powerful the Word is—and it changes not. The Scripture is true: “Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4, KJV). We are assured of winning the battle, for in Romans 8:37 (KJV) we read, “Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.”

So we are victorious!

¹Billy Graham, Storm Warning, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 147-149. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

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