

...ER & BIBLE BAND TOPICS
**CHRISTIAN CONCEPTS FOR
GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT**



FALL QUARTER 2023 | SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER • NOVEMBER



THE PRESENCE OF ADVERSARIES



Background Reading:

Psalm 74:10; Isaiah 50:8;
Matthew 5:26; 1 Peter 5:8

Devotional Reading:

Luke 18:1-8



Central Verse

“For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.”

1 Corinthians 16:9, KJV

“Because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.”

1 Corinthians 16:9, NIV

Key Terms

Resilience—an ability to recover from or adjust easily to misfortune or change.

Catalyst—an agent that provokes or speeds meaningful change or action: a person or event that quickly causes change or action.

Vigilant—alertly watchful especially to avoid danger.

Introduction

The dictionary says that adversity means difficulties; misfortune: It is a state or instance of serious or continued difficulty or misfortune. Every believer that lives and works for God at one time or another must go through some type of misfortune or must deal with some type of adversity. But he can feel assured that God will go with him, and He will never leave him.

It is wonderful to know that before you encounter the adversary you have been made aware that you will meet up with him. This allows the believer to prepare for his meeting with him. It is nothing like being prepared for an attack. Jesus said, “These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33).

Discussion

When most people are faced with a crisis or are attacked by their adversary, they have no thoughts about things working out for their good. So, many times difficult moments, crises, challenges, or adverse conditions become the catalyst for positive changes or growth. Struggles are often catalyst that causes a person to become resilient and experience great growth in their walk with God.

The Word of the Lord lets the believer know that when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them (Job 1:6). The believer must be prepared for the appearance of the devil. Peter tells the believer to be vigilant: because his adversary the devil is a roaring lion, walking about, seeking who he may devour. Believers, whether we admit it or not, we are in a fight, and have the responsibility to fight the good fight, for our loved ones, our nation, and for the future of our future generations. The believers have the choice of whether they will live in peace or live in pain. Though the adversary is present and may be walking around, the decision is up to the believer concerning his status.

Jesus gave the believer power over all the powers of this world, and this includes the adversary. The adversary will try to stop or block everything positive that a believer tries to implement, but he must know that Satan's power is limited.

Sometimes the believer needs to thank God for adversaries, because they can have positive effects on their lives, and they come to make him a stronger believer. Adversaries can help increase a believer's empathy which is the ability to identify with the challenges that other people face and to see those challenges from their perspective. When believers see their brothers overtaken in a fault, when he is spiritual, they can restore that brother, seeing himself in that situation. His empathy with him allows him to humble himself and ask himself questions about how he would react if he was in a similar situation. Sometimes, believers are so caught up in themselves that they never see what their brothers or other believers are going through. They need a reality check.

Adversaries can sometimes help a believer enhance his spiritual strength and gain spiritual growth. Sometimes having adversaries helps the believers to take a good look at their life and helps them to decide to be better than they were. Believers must always look at situations from a positive aspect

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and not from a negative standpoint. When a believer overcomes one adversary, it gives him confidence that he can stand against other adversaries. One victory gives confidence that another victory can be won.

Paul had many experiences after he gave his life completely to God for ministry. On his Missionary journey to Ephesus, he knew that God had opened a door for him to minister and he had decided to stay there until Pentecost. But he was aware that many people would resist and oppose him as he imparted the Gospel there. God does not want His children ignorant concerning the plots of the devil.

He told the Saints to look out for Timotheus when he arrived so that he would not have to be fearful as he did the work of the Lord. Believers must try to be at peace with all they do in the work of the Lord. God did not want Timothy fearful, even knowing that adversaries were around him. Believers must remember they have power, love, and a sound mind, for God has not given them a spirit of fear. Sometimes, the believer will find himself crying out to God as David did in Psalm seventy-four when adversaries seem to linger and have an upper hand. For David asked God, how long would the adversary reproach Him? How long would the enemy show his disapproval or displeasure and blaspheme God's name?

The believer must remember that Satan is not timid, nor fearful. He must also remember that he, (the believer) has power over the enemies of God. Some things God waits for the believers to do.

Conclusion

Jesus talked about the woman who went to the unjust judge and asked him to avenge her of her adversary. This judge did not fear God, nor did he have any regard for man. After thinking about the woman and her situation, the judge decided he would rather take care of the adversary rather than be troubled by the woman.

Jesus asked His disciples; do you hear what this corrupt judge said and what he did for the woman? Jesus let them know that God is righteous, and He cares about His children. That if they continue to cry out for His help, He will certainly help them.

When there are adversaries around and you need help, be persistent and allow your faith to be released and receive your deliverance.

Questions

1. Why are adversaries among the saints?
2. Can any good things come from adversaries being present among the saints?
3. How can adversaries be defeated?

Essential Thought

Adversaries can be defeated through the power that God has given to believers.