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The Grace of Resistance

1343-A
Series: Angels

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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The Grace of Resistance

It may be one of the real keys to victorious Christian living. It has to do with your minute-by-minute victory in the battle against the enemy. Let's call it the "grace of resistance". It is grace because we do not, apart from God, have the power to withstand Satan; but it also involves resistance. Unless we make a deliberate choice to resist, God will not be free to exercise that grace.

It is, in reality, an exercise in appropriation. We are in the midst of an horrendous war, a war between Satan and God, The war is for control of our souls. Satan's desire is to destroy our walk with God and our testimony. He would, if he could, destroy our very relationship with God; but he can't. God's desire is to use *even Satan's foul intent* to make us into His likeness and to deepen our walk with Him. So the battle rages. The choices are ours. The power is His. The outcome, spiritually, revolves around our choices.

We have been walking these past few lessons through the treacherous territory known as Satan's domain. We have been walking carefully, lest we focus too much on the enemy himself, for he is a defeated foe. He does, however, still have some life left in him; and the Scripture indicates that, like a sleeping giant, he will thrash about in the last days *as though he still had a chance to win the war*. He doesn't, but you won't be able to tell it by his behavior. He is not about to surrender. He will not give up peacefully. As this age draws to a close, he will fire all of the ammunition at his disposal until his supply of bullets and bombs is gone. He will use every trick in his evil arsenal.

But God will give His children additional grace. Paul reminded us:

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

(1 Corinthians 10:13)

The way of escape will never be taken away. The grace of resistance will always be there. So, as we continue our look at what these demons do all day, we will hopefully be only the more

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encouraged; because the more clearly we see their tactics, the more quickly we can appropriate that magnificent grace that leads us to the way of escape and beyond.

We have been looking at Satan's character and behavior by looking at the names Scripture uses to describe him. Names, remember, in God's Word, denote character, and Satan's names are incredibly descriptive of who he is. We learned in our last study that he is basically known as "the tempter". That is his occupation. That is his nature. *That is what he does because that is who he is.* When Jesus was confronted by the enemy in the wilderness, we read that "the tempter came" and tempted the Master.

But *as* the tempter, he wears a myriad of disguises. Those disguises demonstrate his character as they represent his tactics. He is described in John, chapter 8, as "the murderer". In fact, he was a murderer from the beginning. Every murder in history was inspired by him. God is the author of life, and until Satan led man into sin, there was no death. In the same passage, his name is revealed as "the liar". We were told that "he abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him." In other words, every time we lie, we are reflecting the image of him in whom there is no truth. When we bend the truth or ignore the truth, we deny the One who is the Truth, Jesus Christ. We also learned that he is "the seed snatcher". One of his roles is to take the seed of the Word of God, which has been sown in the heart, and try to keep it from bearing fruit. He will do anything to accomplish that, even if it means pouring more seed on top of the old seed, until neither has the time or the soil necessary to produce fruit.

Finally, we learned that his name is "boxer" or "striker". He is described by Paul as "one who buffets" the believer. To "buffet" means to strike at or to beat upon, blow after blow, without giving time for the one being beaten to recover. He loves to hit you, then while you are trying to get up from the canvas, to beat you down again, hoping that with each blow, you will become weaker and weaker, less able even to rise to your feet and stand. So he buffeted Eve in the garden, Job in his misery, Jesus in the wilderness. One lie after another, one temptation after another, one blow after another aimed to snuff out their spiritual lights. He knows when we are weak, and he loves to find where our weaknesses are, so he can hit us there again.

Today, we continue our look at his tactics, and we hope to

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come to some conclusions about *the grace of resistance*. To do that, we must look at another of the names given him and his evil buddies in the Bible and, thus, be warned about additional disguises he wears.

HE IS THE HINDERER.

We read this description from the pen of Paul in I Thessalonians 2,

But we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoured the more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

Wherefore we would have come unto you, even I Paul, once and again; but Satan hindered us. (I Thessalonians 2: 1,18)

There are four basic Greek words used in the New Testament to describe this word “hinder”. All of them are descriptive, but the one used here has special meaning. Here are the words and how they are used:

The first is *anakoptw* ανακοπτω {an-ak-op'-to} It means: to beat back, to check (as in the course of a ship)

It is used in Galatians 5:7 this way:

Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? (Galatians 5:7)

In other words, “You were doing well. What happened that your ship veered off course? What contrary winds blew against the sails and threw you off course?”

The second usage is *koluw* κολυω {ko-loo'-o}, meaning:

- 1) to hinder, prevent, forbid
- 2) to withhold a thing from anyone
- 3) to deny or refuse one a thing

It is found in Luke 11:52 and Acts 8:36.

Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered. (Luke 11:52)

And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? (Acts 8:36)

In other words, what was or is standing in your way? What is hindering you from being baptized? What gave these lawyers the

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right to stand in the way of those who were seeking truth?

The third word is *ekkoptw* εκκοπτω {ek-kop'-to} It means:

1) to cut out, cut off (as you would a tree)

You will find it used in I Peter 3:7, where it says:

Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered. (I Peter 3:7)

In other words, a husband, by not honoring his wife as the weaker vessel and as a joint-heir in the kingdom, can literally cut off his own prayer life as a husbandman would cut off the limb of a tree. It becomes totally ineffective.

But the fourth usage is the one used in the passage we are looking at. *Egkoptw* εγκοπτω {eng-kop'-to} meaning: to cut into, to impede one's course by cutting off his way.

It is also used in Romans 15:22 this way:

Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation:

But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand.

For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you.

But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you;

Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.

But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. (Romans 15:20-25)

Paul was saying that his goal was to go where others had not already gone, and in order to obey that conviction, he was *hindered* or prevented from seeing them up until now. Now he was finished where he was, and the hindrance was removed.

In all of these cases, however, the meaning is similar. A *hindrance* is something placed in the way of another that causes that person to have to veer off or be moved off the course they were on. God can alter that course to protect us, and Satan can bring things to bear in our lives that become obstacles in the roadway.

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As we go around those obstacles, we can lose our bearings and miss God's plan. Paul had a deep desire to return to the church at Thessalonica, but it was Satan who hindered him.

How does Satan hinder you? What tactics does he use? Using these verses, and others in Scripture, let's look for clues.

1- Satan will try to hinder you from finishing on course. If he cannot keep your life from blossoming or your ministry from prospering, he will hide behind a tree and let your success begin to go to your head, and then he will throw something in your path to tempt you to make a decision or a choice that will alter your direction *ever so slightly*. Usually, it will not be a major change in direction. He likes to tempt us to make *small compromises, convincing us that God shouldn't mind*. Then, when there are no obvious repercussions, he throws another pebble in the way, and as we step around it, we alter our course *just a little more*. And ever so slowly, our philosophy, our theology, and our concepts of absolutes veer from that which are clear convictions to that which we have the right to pass through a grid of experience. Once we begin to make choices based on experience rather than Scripture, he has us. We will end up shipwrecked and may not even know it. So often churches, Christian organizations, mission ventures, and other endeavors begin so on target and end up with their power weakened and their course run aground. Sometimes, he hinders by tempting us to take moral absolutes for granted, and through moral compromise, we are taken out of the race. How many begin well and end up on the sidelines. It is why Paul was so concerned that he said,

But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. (I Corinthians 9:27)

FINISHING WELL!

Are you looking down the road?
Can you see around the bend?
Will the final gun still find
You are running at the end?

Satan knows you've shed some weights,
He has seen you pick up speed;
He has also planted there,
Seeds of anger, seeds of greed.

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His great goal, as life goes on
Isn't what your past can tell,
What he longs to do, dear friend,
Is see that you don't finish well!

His great goal, as life goes on
As you're nearer heaven's call
Is, before the final gun,
Just to see you slip and fall.

His desire, mark it well,
Is for God on that great day
Filled with grief, to have to cry,
"You became a castaway!"

May we rather, on that day,
As the devil rots in hell
Gently hear the Master say,
"Child of mine, you finished well!"

2- Satan will try to keep you from fulfilling ministry responsibilities. Paul said that again and again he tried to make it to Thessalonica to see those in the church there. He had a great desire to see them and to minister to them. He got his plane tickets. He made his reservation with Avis for a rental chariot. But every time he was about to head for the airport, something happened. Seemingly unexplainable things happened, and he had to delay the trip, postpone the trip, finally cancel the trip. Paul blamed it on Satan. Now Paul was a realist. When God was responsible for something, he admitted it. When Paul was responsible, he took the heat. This time, however, he blamed it on Satan. He knew the needs in Thessalonica, and he felt a clear call from God to go there. But each time, the enemy pulled a fast one, and Paul didn't get to go.

Now, remember these things, lest you be confused or discouraged.

a) Satan did not outsmart God. Not in a trillion years. God knew what was happening, and worked it together for good.

b) It does not mean that it was not God's will for Paul to go. It means that God had an alternate plan and used it for His glory. His alternate plan may well have been for Paul to have to write a letter instead. That letter would not only allow Paul to communicate on paper what he wanted to say in person, but it would leave a

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legacy of God's Word for us that includes rich instruction and exhortation on how to minister, on the glory of tribulation, on moral purity, and on the Master's coming again.

c) Paul's relationship with the Thessalonians was not damaged, but made sweeter. Read I Thessalonians 2:17-20 again. Paul ends the passage by crying out:

For what is our hope, or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?

For you are our glory and joy. (I Thessalonians 2:19,20)

So Satan did hinder Paul from making the trip, but he did not prevent God from accomplishing His purposes. That is what we believers have so much trouble understanding. Satan's ploys, even when they succeed, cannot overpower the sovereignty of God. Chapter three (the next verse) begins:

Therefore when we could endure it no longer, we thought it best to be left behind at Athens alone;

And we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith,

So that no man may be disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this.

For indeed when we were with you, we kept telling you in advance that we were going to suffer affliction; and so it came to pass, as you know.

For this reason, when I could endure it no longer, I also sent to find out about your faith, for fear that the tempter might have tempted you, and our labor should be in vain.

(I Thessalonians 3:1-5 NAS)

Paul was suffering, but he had forewarned the Thessalonians that this would happen, so the very thing Satan used to keep Paul from making the trip only helped to confirm the validity of Paul's insight. Not only that, but Paul's inability to make the journey allowed Timothy to go, thus giving him ministry opportunities, building a relationship that could go on, whether Paul was in prison or even no longer alive. God didn't miss a beat. What Satan did on the surface was to keep Paul at home. Instead of removing the obstacle, God allowed Satan a minor victory, and used it to accomplish things far beyond what even Paul could have accomplished had he gone when he wanted to. What an incredible God we have.

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Now think about your own experience. Think of the times when Satan seemed to have won a major victory by preventing you from working in Bible School or teaching that class or attending that Bible Study or even getting that training you so desperately needed. You were so discouraged. To you, God was defeated in His attempt to use you for His glory. But God's purposes were not thwarted. If you cooperated and remained in fellowship, God used even what seemed like a defeat to teach you patience, to allow someone else to be used and trained, to grant you extra humility by seeing that others could do what you were sent to do. He is sovereign. Satan wins some victories. Sometimes it is because we give ground and let him, and sometimes it is because he outsmarts us. But *he never outsmarts God*. And remember Romans 8 which says:

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28 NAS)

This verse was written by the same man who penned these words:

...but Satan hindered us. (I Thessalonians 2:18b)

So many times, Satan seems to hinder us from doing what, at least to us, appeared to be God's best. We get discouraged, and the enemy whispers to us, "See, God can't use you anymore. You let Him down."

Don't listen to him. He is a liar and a deceiver. Even if Satan hindered you, God will work it together for good. Check your motives and your method of determining God's will to see if you need to learn anything from this experience, but also remember that Satan may have hindered you because God allowed it. He may have wanted you to be willing to do that thing or go to that place; but once you were willing, He may have given Satan the freedom to hinder you, to further amplify the glory of the sovereignty of God. In either case, don't spend too much time in self-reflection or remorse. Ask God to reveal anything He wants you to learn; learn it, and move on. Satan is trying to *hinder you*, not just from that place or that thing, but from remaining committed to God's will. He's trying to divert you. Don't give him the privilege. Praise God and press on.

3- Satan will try to hinder your prayer life. Perhaps more than anything else in your life, your power in prayer is the one thing that Satan wants to discourage or divert. Virtually everything

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else you do is related to spiritual warfare. But prayer, Beloved, *is spiritual warfare*. Think about the life of Christ. He preached. He taught. He healed. He fed. He served. He loved. Never, however, did sweat drops of blood fall from His precious brow until that moment when, locked in heart-to-heart combat with the prince of this world, the Master faced the most serious warfare of His life. Satan wanted to circumvent the Cross. Jesus wanted the Father's will to be done. And so a battle ensued. The battle was won on the Cross; but, in reality, it was won in Gethsemane, when Jesus yielded to His Father's will, *no matter the cost*. As He prayed, His very soul hung in the balance. Hence, He literally prayed His heart out. He prayed on many other occasions, and all were cloaked with incredible meaning and truth. But this prayer was a prayer of conflict. The principalities and powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world, had encompassed Him and were pressing upon Him with power and intensity none of us have ever experienced. That's real prayer. Saying words that begin, "Our Father", and end "In Jesus' Name" doesn't necessarily constitute prayer.

I am convinced that only a very small handful of God's children really understand what prayer is all about, and only a smaller handful both understand *and* are willing to pay the price to pray as Jesus did. I am also convinced that this silent majority will be welcomed into Heaven with a kind of reward most of us will not receive, and will have a familiarity in their relationship with Christ most of us will not have, because they spent their lives doing the very thing we will all be doing in heaven—being with God.

In I Peter 3, the apostle was trying to put practical feet to the concept of submission and love in the marriage relationship. Wives were to honor and submit to their husbands, so that even without a word spoken, their very lives would draw them to Christ. Likewise, the passage continues, you husbands dwell with your wives in a spirit of wisdom, honoring them for the role they play in God's scheme of things, equal in spirituality, submissive in rank, in order to demonstrate the role of the church to Christ.

If you don't, Peter warned, your prayer life will be hindered. You will say words, but God will not honor those words because you will be playing games spiritually, approaching God's throne with authority, while denying the responsibility that authority allows you. God will have none of that, and your prayers will be hindered. They will be cut off at the pass. They won't make it to the heart of God.

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4- Satan hinders you by allowing “weariness” to cloud your spiritual eyesight and cause you to try to walk in the flesh. The word “weary” is used over and over in Scripture. It is used as a verb, when men “weary God” as in Malachi 2, where we read:

Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied *him*? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil *is* good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where *is* the God of judgment? (Malachi 2:17)

We can “wear God down” and weary Him by pretending that evil is anything less than it is, or by asking where God is in the light of the evil in the world. In the New Testament, that word “weary” is used primarily to denote that kind of frustration that accompanies becoming tired and worn out and discouraged because of all the good things we are doing. Satan loves to hinder the believer by taking his mind off of the strength of God long enough to focus on how physically and emotionally tired he or she is of ministering or praying or studying.

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all *men*, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

(Galatians 6:7-10)

Don't be deceived or misled. God isn't fooled. The things done in the Spirit will reap spiritual rewards. The things done in the flesh will become corrupt and decay. So don't be “weary in well-doing”. There will be a time of reaping that will make this time of weariness seem like a blessing. Don't look at your day-timer and listen to the voice of the stranger as he whispers, “You just don't get any time for yourself.”

We get weary because we forget that “*In due season we shall reap, if we faint not.*” That word “faint” carries with it serious repercussions. To faint is to lose heart and give up; to stop appropriating that incredible power that raised Christ from the dead; to stop allowing our very weakness to become a springboard for the strength of God; to stop keeping us aware of what it means to “die daily” so Christ can live through us. The word used in

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this passage translated “weary” is the word, *ekkakew* εκκακew {ek-kak-eh'-o} or *egkakeo* {eng-kak-eh'-o} It means to be utterly spiritless, to be wearied out, exhausted. Satan wants us to be so busy “doing” we stop “being” renewed in the spirit of our minds, and begin to lose ourselves in the very process of activities until our spirits sag and our physical exhaustion covers over the preciousness of our relationship with Christ. A similar word is used in Matthew 11:28

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and
I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)

That word translated “labour” is the word *kopiaw* κοπιaw {kop-ee-ah'-o} meaning: to grow weary, tired, exhausted (with toil or burdens or grief); to labour with wearisome effort, to toil.

Jesus was well aware of the weariness God’s servants would encounter. He knew that the burdens would be heavy and the load hard to bear. The whole secret of the Christian life was wrapped up in this simple warning. Jesus warned us not to focus on the labor, but to come to Him; to throw the weight of our burdens on Him; to let Him do the toiling as we do the choosing. His promise was not one of removal, but of rest. He didn’t say, “Come unto Me all you who are weary, and I’ll take you out of the battle”. He said, “Come unto Me and I’ll give you rest in the midst of the battle. What a difference.

Thus, Paul could counsel us in I Corinthians 15:58:

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable,
always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye
know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

One of Satan’s greatest tools is to get us weary in well doing. He wants us to get so tired that we allow the tentacles of self-pity to wrap us in their deadly grasp and our prayers of praise turn to “woe is me”. We focus on our works instead of on God’s grace; on our weariness, instead of God’s power; on our labors, rather than on His indwelling Spirit. We talk about our accomplishments instead of His, and before long, a defeated spirit overwhelms us; and a defeated spirit is not of the Holy Spirit, for He has never been defeated and never will be. Watch for it. Satan will use physical illness, spiritual warfare, emotional discouragement, relational rejections and so many other things to trigger a wearied spirit. And a world, seeking arms in which to rest, sees instead, a group of agitated, frustrated, wearied Christians, *talking about*

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the rest of God while living as though God has them on a treadmill and won't turn the motor off. No wonder they don't want what we have. They don't need another way to become weary. They have enough of that.

Probably at no time in history has the church appeared to be more weary than it is today. Instead of being overwhelmingly in love with the lover of our soul, until His very power flows through us, captivating a lost and weary world; we walk around as though *if anyone asks us to do one more thing, we'll explode.* We have been so swept into the pressure cooker of our age, where everything is measured in seconds, rather than in days, that the clocks of our spirits seem to run hours behind the reality of this fast-moving world. And before long, we're just plain weary.

Dear God, deliver us from Satan's grasp. Help us to be set free from the cloud of depression that hovers over the church, as though God is beating us to death and we can't take anymore. Lead us to the freedom that exists in His arms, the power that exists in His Spirit's control, the rest that exists when we stop doing; and let Him be the energizing force in our lives.

In other words, "Dear God, grant us the 'grace of resistance'. Grant us the grace to see Satan's hindering work as it creeps into our worlds, and let us, as we recognize his tactics for what they are, learn to choose to resist his evil wiles, knowing full well that the power to do so rests in Christ; while the choice to do so rests with us."

Just how does this "grace of resistance" work? I believe that there are three steps:

1- Recognize that the enemy is indeed trying to hinder you.
He does it in many ways.

- a) He tries to divert us from finishing the course.
- b) He tries to keep us from fulfilling ministry responsibilities.
- c) He tries to hinder our prayer lives.
- d) He tries to get us to be weary in well-doing.

Learn how he works. Don't be afraid of him. He's mostly bluff, but if the bluff works, that's all he needs to be. Learn to meditate on verses of Scripture that remind you when Satan is hiding behind his cloak of religiosity, trying to hinder you from completing the race as planned.

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2- Once you see him “hindering” you, stop what you are doing. Take a day off, or a few days off and drink once more at the fountain of God’s grace.

3- As you do, meditate on James 4:6-10.

But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double minded.

Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness.

Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.

Three things stand out in that verse:

a) The key to victory is humility. If you have become self-centered in your walk with God, if you have become *in any way enamored with your own spirituality*, the grace of resistance is not available to you, *because God will be resisting you*. But to the humble, *He gives more grace*. That’s your key. Fall down before God and humble yourself. The battle is not yours, it’s God’s; and the power is not yours, it’s God’s. Therefore, what have you to either boast about or complain about?

b) Learn that resisting Satan involves drawing closer to God. It isn’t your job to fight Satan, it is God’s. You draw near to God, and He will take care of Satan. Draw near to God, and He’ll draw nearer to you. Sing “Nearer My God to Thee” as you pour your heart out to Him. What do you do to draw nearer to God? You “cleanse your hands and purify your hearts”, until your double-mindedness is cleansed and gone. You take sin seriously. You mourn over it. You weep over it. Your laughter turns to mourning; your joy to heaviness. You become so aware of your sin that you collapse into His arms and plead for forgiveness.

c) When you do that, His grace abounds. He gives you more grace and tells you to *choose now to resist the devil, and he will flee from you*. The grace is His; the choice is yours. It isn’t, however, a casual, flippant kind of appropriation of power. It is a kind of power that comes from cleansing, confessing, repenting, and humbling.

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As you crawl up into God for His Holy Spirit to infuse you with His holiness, something incredible happens. Satan's hindering activity becomes a full-screen expression of God's wonderful sovereignty, and the very things Satan tries to use to hinder us, become God's polishing cloths of glory.

The very things Satan means for evil, become catalysts to draw us nearer to God, where, as we humble ourselves and draw near, God gives us the power both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He gives us the strength to choose and the might to resist Satan's hindering tactics until, instead of being drawn away into uselessness and despair, we have been drawn further into the arms of Jesus, there to experience an understanding of His love that we otherwise never would have known.

And what will Satan do then? *He will flee from us.* For his hindering only led to the grace of resistance. And the grace of resistance led to the heart of God.

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Oh, the grace of resistance,
What a gift so divine;
A gift that is yours,
A gift that is mine.

The enemy toils day and night
Trying to hinder; but try as he might,
The more he attacks us to lead us astray,
The more grace God offers, (provided we pray);

And gazing in awe at God's precious face,
His power o'er takes us; *He gives us more grace.*
His life-changing power in us, our God frees
From *the grace of resistance*, the enemy flees.

The way of escape!
Oh, dear God, it *is* true...
You draw nearer to us
When we draw nearer to You!

For Focus and Application

1- We have learned that God cannot be tempted, nor can He tempt any man. Satan, however, is given certain freedoms, and as he tempts us, we can be drawn into sin. God has given us a promise in I Corinthians 10:13 that gives us real hope. What is that promise? How can you appropriate it when you are being lured by Satan into disobedience?

2- In I Thessalonians 2:17-18, Paul was opening up his heart to the Thessalonians. He wanted to come see them, but something had kept him from it. What was that something? Look up “hinder” in your dictionary. Cross reference it in a concordance. If Satan can “hinder” you, how can you tell when it is his ploys that are intruding into your life?

3- Satan does not want us to finish the course well. Paul was aware of that. In I Corinthians 9:27, he expressed his concern about his own life at the end of the race. Memorize that passage. What things does Satan do to lead us off course gradually?

4- How can you explain Satan’s success in keeping Paul from going to Thessalonica? Did Satan outsmart God? Was it not God’s will? Did it destroy Paul’s relationship with the Thessalonians? Read I Thessalonians 3:1-5. How did God take Satan’s “success” and turn it for His glory?

5- In I Peter 3, we are told that a man’s prayer life can be “hindered”. What does that mean? What causes it? How does Satan enter into the picture?

6- Galatians 6:9 is another good memory verse. Have you become “weary in well-doing”? What tricks does Satan use to get us “weary”? Why is Matthew 11:28 a good verse to add to Galatians 6:9? What does the word “labour” in that verse mean?

7- Meditate on James 4:6-10. What does verse 6 say hinders God’s grace from flowing into our lives? What is the relationship between humility and submit in that passage?

8- Why do we sometimes misunderstand what it means to “draw nigh to God”? What does the rest of verse 8 teach us about how to do that?

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(09.11.18)