Lesson 5

"A NEW FIGHT"

(A Change in My Adversity & Adversaries)

The Christian life is an abundant life, but not necessarily an easy life. It is a life with direction, but not without obstacles. It is a life of victory, but not without conflict. When you were saved, God called you to be a soldier (II Timothy 2:3-4), a wrestler (Ephesians 6:12), a fighter (II Timothy 4:7) -- not for physical man-to-man combat, but for spiritual battle.

In this lesson, you will learn about trials, tribulations, and temptations and how to conquer them.

WHO IS MY OPPONENT?

The Godly Christian has three basic opponents, who will (to one degree or another) seek to fight against him.

1. **Your opponent** is the _____ (I Peter 5:8).

2. How are you to resist this enemy?

   a. I Peter 5:6 - _____

   b. I Peter 5:7 - _____

   c. I Peter 5:9 - _____
   [For more help about resisting the devil, see: James 4:7-10.]

3. **Your opponent** is the _____ (John 16:33).
   [Note: "World" = Ungodly philosophies & attitudes; "Tribulation" = pressures or trouble]

4. Read Matthew 5:10-12. Sometimes Christians are persecuted by others. Why?

   Verse 10 - __

   Verse 11 - __

5. How should you treat those who oppose you? (Matthew 5:44)

   a. _____ b. _____ c. __

d. _____

[For more help about facing persecution in the world, see: John 15:18; Acts 5:41; Philippians 1:29; I Peter 4:12-14.]

6. **Your opponent** is the _____ (Galatians 5:16-17).

The "flesh" refers to your sin nature. The Bible calls this sin nature "the old man" - the old you (Ephesians 4:22-24). This old nature still lives inside of you, but so does a new nature.

7. What is this new nature called? (Galatians 5:16-17)__
[This is a reference to the Holy Spirit who lives in you - I Corinthians 6:19-20.]

A story is told of an Indian Chief who was saved. Soon after his conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ, he noticed that a battle raged inside of him. He approached the missionary who had led him to Christ and said that he felt as if two dogs were fighting inside of him. The white dog wanted him to do good, but the black dog wanted him to do evil. The missionary asked him, "Which one of them wins?" To which the Indian replied, "The one I feed the most."

You must feed your new nature (the Spiritual you) and starve the old nature in order for you to win. You feed the new man by reading the Word of God and by letting God's Spirit control you (v. 16).

WHAT AM I TO DO?

Read James 1:2-16 and answer these questions:

1. What should your attitude be toward the different kinds of temptations (trials and tests) that come into your life? (James 1:2)_____

2. God may allow problems to come into your life so that you can see how genuine your faith really is. When your faith is tried (or tested) you can be joyful because God is trying to produce what in your life? (verse 3)__

3. There is a reason for every trial you face. Sometimes you may not know why the problem is happening or what to do about it. What should you do at a time like that? (verse 5)

__

4. Some people make excuses for themselves by saying, "I couldn't help giving in to the temptation - the devil made me do it." or "God made me this way." The Bible, however, teaches that: Temptation does not come from whom?
(verse 13) _____
People are tempted because of whose lust or desires? (verse 14) _____

5. To have desires or appetites is not sinful. God gave you normal desires and appetites that are to be satisfied His way. Any time you satisfy an appetite in a way that is against God's Word, you have sinned.

For example: (Match the following words to the statements found below.)
--**Drugs** (Revelation 21:8; 22:15) --**Fornication and adultery** (I Corinthians 6:9, 15-20)
--**Drunkenness** (Ephesians 5:18; Proverbs 20:1, 23:29-31) --**Gluttony** (Proverbs 23:21)
--**Laziness** (Proverbs 6:6-22, 26:14)

a. Eating is not wrong (I Cor. 10;31; I Timothy 4:4), but is sin.

b. Being thirsty is not wrong (John 19:28), but __ is sin.

c. Sleeping is not wrong (Mark 4:38), but __ is sin.

d. "Good feelings" are not wrong (John 10:10), but __ are sin.

e. Sex in marriage is not wrong (Hebrews 13:5), but __ and _____are sin.

6. Temptation is not sin; yielding to it is. When you choose to "give in" and do something that you know is wrong -- at that moment, you have sinned. God describes the stages that come when someone "gives in" to sin and does not repent of it. Seriously look at the "life cycle" of sin (James 1:15):

a. What is conceived? _____

b. What is born? _____

c. What is the end? _____

SOME COMFORTING ASSURANCE

1. When we face difficult times, Who helps our weaknesses and prays for us? (Romans 8:26-27)

_____

2. When things seem to go wrong, even when you love God and are seeking to do right, what does God promise? (Romans 8:28)

__

3. Who is on your side? (Romans 8:31) __

4. When you are tempted, what does God always provide? (I Corinthians 10:13)

_____

5. If you are not sure whether something is right or wrong, ask yourself this question:

"If I do this, will I bring _____ to __ ?" (I Corinthians 10:31)

SOME WISE ADVICE

See Ephesians 6:10-18.

1. Where should you get your strength from? (verse 10) __

2. What kind of battle are you engaged in? (verse 12) __

3. Therefore, what should you put on? (verse 11, 13) __

4. List the spiritual pieces of "armor" that will help you fight your next spiritual battle:

_____ (verse 14) __
(verse 14)

_____ (verse 15) __
(verse 16)

_____ (verse 17) __
(verse 17)

_____ (verse 18)

5. In verse 17, one piece of the armor is called the "Word of God." See: Matthew 4:1-11). What phrase did Jesus repeat three times showing the power of the Bible over Satan? (Hint see verses 4, 7, 10)

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Scripture memory is an essential element of winning your spiritual battles. Are there areas of weakness in your life? If so, memorize verses that will help you in those areas. By doing this, you will be ready for your next fight.