When Under Attack



(How to Defeat the Devil)
Selected Scriptures
6/9/02

Introduction: All of us will face emotional, physical, & spiritual attacks by our adversary.

**** What do we do when under Satanic attack?***

I. ***<u>Before</u> Satanic Attack***
Make sure you are Fully Prepared for Battle

A. **Be Spiritually <u>Alert</u>** (I Peter 5:8)

B. **Be Spiritually <u>Armed</u>** (Ephesians 6:10-18)

II. ***<u>During</u> Satanic Attack***
Make Biblical Decisions to Counter the Attack

A. **<u>Request</u> God's <u>Deliverance</u>** (Matthew 6:13)

B. **<u>Recite</u> Appropriate Bible <u>Promises</u> & <u>Principles</u>** (Matthew 4:1-11)

C. **<u>Rally</u> together with the <u>People</u> of God in the <u>Local Church</u>**
(Compare I Cor. 5:4-5; Heb.10:24-25)

D. **<u>Resist</u> the <u>Devil</u>**

1. **Resist the Attacker by <u>Humbly Submitting</u> to God** (James 4:6-7)

2. **Resist the Attacker by <u>Persisting</u> in What You Know to be <u>God's Truth</u>** (I Peter 5:9; Rev.12:11a)

3. **Resist the Attacker by <u>Not Fearing the Loss</u> of what He may Try to Take from You** (Rev.12:11b)

D. **<u>Rely</u> Upon the <u>Power of Christ</u>** (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

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Today, we are in a battle, but we cannot see the enemy. We are in a war, but we do not fire guns or missiles. We fight on a continual basis, but often do not realize it.

I Peter 5:8
Our Adversary the Devil

Satan is a spirit being. A personal being, not a mere force of evil. "Satan" is not merely the devil with the "D" missing (i.e. "evil"). He is a wicked angel with intellect (mt. 4:1-11; II Cor. 2:11 - "devices"), emotion (Rev. 12:17), a will (II Tim. 2:26) (He can think, feel hatred and anger, and choose to oppose God and godliness).

For example, demons are said to "believe (rationally) . . . and tremble (emotionally)" (James 2:19).

Satan is not a mere influence. 174 times in the Bible a personal pronoun is used in addressing him. He is referred to as "he," never "it."

As a personal being, He speaks (Mt. 4), travels from place to place (I Pet. 5:8), expresses anger (Rev. 12:17), is proud (I Tim. 3:6; Is. 14:12-14), etc.

We can learn a great deal about who Satan is by looking at the different names, titles, and representations of him throughout Scripture:

*SATAN (Zech. 3:1; Mt. 4:10; Rev. 12:9, 20:2), used 52 times, comes from the Hebrew word "satan" meaning adversary or opposer.

*DEVIL (Mt. 4:1, 13:39; Eph. 4:27; Rev. 12:9, 20:2), used 35 times, comes from the Greek word "diabolos" meaning slanderer, accuser.

*LUCIFER (*s. 14:12) means son of the morning, shining one, or light bearer. Even though this describes him before his fall, Satan currently "transforms himself into an angel of light" to deceive the world (II Cor. 11:14).

*ANOINTED CHERUB (Ezek. 28:14) indicates that he had one of the highest (if not the highest) ranking of all the angels.

*EVIL ONE (Mt. 13:19, 38; Jn. 17:15; Eph. 6:16; I Jn. 5:18, 19) describes him as the personification of evil.

*RULER OF THIS WORLD (Jn. 12:31, 14:30, 16:11) refers to his power over the evil world system of men and demons.

*GOD OF THIS AGE (II Cor. 4:4) is used in reference to his power to blind the minds of the world to the gospel.

*PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR (Eph. 2:2) describes his pervasive spiritual influence.

*SERPENT (Gen. 3:1; II Cor. 11:3; Rev. 12:9, 20:2) portrays his deceit and craftiness.

*DRAGON (Rev. 12:3, 7, 9) indicates his fierce nature and power to destroy.

*ACCUSER (Rev. 12:10).

*TEMPTER (Mt. 4:3; I Thes. 3:5)

*DECEIVER (Rev. 12:9; 20:3).

*MURDERER (Jn. 8:44)

*LIAR (Jn. 8:44).

*SINNER (I Jn. 3:8).

*BEELZEBUB, RULER OF THE DEMONS (Mt. 10:25, 12:24, 27; Mk. 3:22; Lk. 11:15), literally translated means lord of the flies, the lord of filth.

*BELIAL (II Cor. 6:15) means worthless or wicked.

*ROARING LION (I Pet. 5:8) describes him as hungry and on the prowl to devour Christians.

*ENEMY (Mt. 13:39

*THE WICKED ONE

Paul wrote to the Corinthians: *"...For we are not ignorant of his devices"* (II Cor. 2:11).
"Devices" = Planned out schemes; the wicked plots of Satan.

What are Satan's devices?

I. His Devices Toward the Unsaved

1. Satan causes evil persons to pervert the Gospel of Christ.
(Acts 13:10; Gal. 1:7)

2. Satan hinders the gospel from being understood and believed.
(Mt. 13:19; II Cor. 4:4)

3. Satan puts thoughts of wickedness in the hearts of unbelievers to oppose Christ.
(Jn. 13:2; Jn. 8:44; Acts 19:23-34; Jer. 17:9)

4. Satan actively energizes unbelievers to oppose Christ and Christians.
(Eph. 2:2; Jn. 6:70; Jn. 13:27; Rev. 13:2)

5. Satan seeks to keep all men unconscious (blinded) to the truth.
(II Cor. 4:3-4; II Tim. 2:25b-26; I Jn. 5:19; Lk. 11:21-22)

II. The Devil's Devices toward the saved:

1. Satan sows tares among the wheat (Mt. 13:38; II Cor.11:13)

2. Satan seduces people out of a Godly lifestyle through idleness
(I Tim.5:11-15)
3. Satan seeks to intimidate believers by persecution (Rev.2:10)

4. Satan prompts believers to live independently of God (I Chron.21:1)

5. Satan encourages people to live hypocritically to impress others
(Acts 5:3)

6. Satan physically afflicts to discourage service and devotion to God (Job 2:7; II Cor.11:7)

7. Satan seeks any "dirt" he can get to belittle Christianity (Rev.12:10;
I Tim.3:7; 5:14 cp. Titus 2:5-10)

8. Satan throws obstacles in the path of believers to hinder or thwart their efforts (I Th.2:18; Rom.15:22; Acts 16:16-18)

9. Satan seeks to disturb the unity of the church by creating discord and division (James 3:14-16)

10. Satan paralyzes the spiritual lives of those who are living in sin, and are outside of the fellowship of a local church (I Cor.5:5)

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"Adversary" - One who stands against another. This legal term was used to describe an opponent in a lawsuit (mt. 5:25).

It describes someone who is out to get you for all you're worth.

Satan is the enemy of all people, especially those who belong to God.

Satan, who brings accusations against us constantly (Rev. 12:10), is seeking the fall of your character and the reproach of your testimony.

In short, he's out for your destruction.

"Devil" - slanderer (*diabolos* - to cast in between) Satan is seeking tot throw anything he can in between you and God, and you and others so as to divide and conquer. One way a lion hunts is to seek an animal that has been cut off from the pack, all alone, vulnerable, etc.).

"As a <u>roaring</u> lion" - Why the roar?

1. To <u>intimidate</u> (strike the heart with fear)

2. Reveals the lion's <u>hunger</u>

"Walketh about" - prowling around (Job 1:7 - *"And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."*; cp. 2:2).

Satan, unlike God, is not omnipresent; he is on the move - swiftly soaring from place to place, country to country, city to city - zealously seeking someone who is without the protection of God (Eph. 6:13ff).

"Devour" - to swallow down; to eat up

He devours people by leading them into anything that will hurt them spiritually.

One's faith in God's Word is the key point of his attack. If their faith is shaken, everything else will crumble on top.

Satan wants to devour you and those related to you, your family and friends.

Perhaps a pre-requisite to the points I will give for overcoming Satan would be the need for *"humility"* (note previous context - v. 5-6).

If God is not for you, you don't have a chance! God resists the proud.

Before you will receive the alertness, strength, and patience needed to deal with the foe, you must have the humility to see your need for such.

Those who thing they are "above" destruction are the surest candidates for it (I Cor. 10:12 - *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."*)

What Peter is calling for is a mental alertness, or a spiritual watchfulness so that we will not be caught off guard, by surprise or unsuspectingly by the enemy.

"Be sober" - be clear-headed, with nothing clouding your mind. Be serious and sensible about the potential dangers that surround you in the spiritual war you are engaged in (Eph. 6:12).

"The better we know God's Word, the keener our spiritual senses will be to detect Satan at work."

Be rid of anything that would dull your spiritual sensitivity.

What "intoxicants" hurt your spiritual sobriety?

--drugs and alcohol (mind-altering chemicals)
--worldly amusements (preoccupations)
--fleshly pleasures (lusts)
--spiritual apathy (laziness)

One lesson we can learn from the animal realm is the acute sense of danger felt by the deer, gazelle, etc., when a predator comes near (their keen sense of smell, their perceptive eye, their attentive ear makes them quite a challenge to the beasts of the forest).

"Be vigilant" - be watchful, awake
--Don't go to sleep
--Beware of spiritual drowsiness (those whose minds drift off when reading the Bible, hearing the Bible, or praying reveal a lack of desire for spiritual things and are prime "game" for the lion -- A fall may be around the corner)

As when driving a car late at night, we must fight against the temptation tot go to sleep (tragedy awaits if we succumb).

EX: How Peter fell asleep in the garden, and this led to his denial (Lk. 22).

B. Be Spiritually <u>Armed</u> (Ephesians 6:10-18)

V. 10
"Be strong" - lit. be empowered (passive). Allow yourself to be endued with divine ability. Yield to the power that God alone gives.
Those who are "strong" in themselves usually are proud and independent and usually don't tap into the strength of God.

V. 11
"The whole armor" - the <u>complete</u> armor; the <u>full</u> armor (planoplian).
Having on <u>every</u> piece of armor that God commands is vitally important.
While most Christians would not dream of dressing immodestly or of leaving their house naked; many do so every day. Dressed physically but naked spiritually.

"Wiles" = schemes; crafty plots; deceitful tactics and maneuvers.

"The <u>whole</u> armor" - the complete, or full armor
(ILLUS: in football, every essential bit of protective padding is needed)
If <u>one</u> piece is missing, Satan will attack that area of vulnerability; he looks for unprotected areas of our lives, for "chinks" in our armor.

Satan has much experience (6 - 12,000 years) in knowing how to make men fall. None of us could match his intelligence. By ourselves we are no match for him.

V. 12
Our battle is not physical but spiritual. An unseen yet real conflict that is raging all around us.
"Principalities" - high rulers
"powers" - authorities
"rulers" - lit. world rulers of this (present) darkness (kosmos & kratoras).
"Spiritual wickedness in high places" - the spiritual armies of evil in the heavenlies; a reference to the demonic spirits that soar through the universe.

Three truths:

1. We can only be strong <u>in the Lord</u> (v. 10)
2. By ourselves, we are <u>no match for Satan</u> (v. 11)
3. Spiritual battles require spiritual weapons (v. 12).

Verse 12 could be describing different ranks of demonic forces (in ascending order from the least powerful to the most).

V. 13
"Wherefore" = because of the spiritual demonic armies hovering over and about us.
"Withstand" = to stand against (antistanai); to resist; to withstand is the opposite of remaining passive or of giving in to the devil; or being defeated by Him.
The only formula for getting rid of the devil is (not magical phrases or verbal formulas) but by <u>resisting</u> him (I Pet. 5:8-9; Ja. 4:7).

"the evil day" - there are specific days when Satanic activity, temptation, etc. will reach each one of us. We need to be ready for those "days of evil."

"And having done all, to stand" - After accomplishing great victories, after working hard and doing all that was right and godly, there is a tendency to become complacent, to savor the past triumphs. And then, in such times, having stood, there is a tendency toward a great fall.

"Take unto you" - this imperative requires our volition; it's a choice of our will; we must make a decisive decision to take up the virtues He mentions. It's not automatic. Otherwise, the imperative would be meaningless.

"The evil day" - a particular day when Satan's fury is aimed personally at you. There may come into you life an evil day like no other. It will be too late then to put on the armor. The time to be ready for war is before the battle starts. Before the missiles fly. Before the guns fire.

V. 14
"Stand" - stand firm, maintain your ground without budging or giving up any won territory to the Devil.

In verses 14-16, God gives a series of participles which unfold how we are to stand.

God is saying, *"Stand!"* Now here's how. . .

Seven pieces of armor to overcome Satan:

1) BE TRUTHFUL

V. 14
"Truth" -

Believe the truth
Tell the truth
Live the truth

Satan is opposite of truth; he is a liar (jn. 8). Overcome him with the truth.

Nothing is as powerful as the truth, and yet nothing is so rare. Perhaps this is what makes a man of truth so mighty. A man of truth does not wear the hypocrite's mask, nor does he have to back himself out of corners by lying to cover up lies. This chronic lying only digs a deeper and deeper pit for the one enslaved to such deception.

A liar plays right into the hands of the Father of lies, Satan.

Satan will take you down the path of deceit and hypocrisy unless you defeat him by always telling and living the truth.

2) DO RIGHT

V. 14

"Righteousness" - Do Right - hymn

Chest plate covers vital organs.

NOTE: Righteousness is not merely abstaining from what is wrong, but it is positively doing what is right.

A man is not righteous simply because he does not do wrong, but because he does what is right. Righteousness should be our # 1 priority in life (Mt. 6:33 - *"Seek ye first...His righteousness..."*).

How will righteousness help you defeat Satan's attacks?

1. A righteous man's prayers get answered (James 5)

2. A righteous man's life is not cluttered with obstacles to make him stumble

3. A righteous man's life is pleasing to God and God will come to his rescue (when God isn't helping a person, it is because that person is not right with God).

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right" (Eph. 6:1) --So that you will have a: --good life --long life

"It's never right to do wrong to do right."
"The end never justifies the means"
If the end is righteous, then the means to that end should also be righteous.

3) SPREAD THE GOSPEL

V. 15
"Feet" - cp. Is. 52:7 - "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

Rom. 10:15
"Preparation" - readiness
"Be ready always" (I Pet. 3:15).
Our "feet" are that which move us forward into battle.

The victorious Christian life is not a stagnant one, not a "sterile" one, not an uninvolved one. It is taking the offensive for God. It is a life of being busy for God. Busy about His work. God's work for you and me is His Great Commission -- *"To preach the gospel to every creature"* (Mk. 16:15; Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8).

In order to conquer Satan we need to be busy "going with the Gospel." Our feet need to be bringing us to lost sinners in need of salvation.

How does witnessing (evangelism) keep us from Satan's attacks?

1) It keeps us from idleness (*"Idle hands are the devil's workshop")*

"An idle life parked at a 'red light' is a green light for Satan to come and side-swipe us."

Some of the most troublesome, disgruntled church members are those who are doing nothing in terms of evangelism.

2) It keeps us fulfilled and joy-filled (*"...fruit, that your joy may be full"*)

Depression comes when the focus of our lives is self. However, when the focus of our lives is others (when we are compassionately concerned for others and their need), depression flees.

4) BELIEVE GOD'S PROMISES

The hymn writer said: "I want to live above the world though Satan's darts at me are hurled; though some may dwell where these abound, my prayer, my aim is higher ground."

A shield is a defensive weapon; it is used to deflect the flaming arrows of the wicked one.

As Satan aims and fires his arrows of:

"Fear" - we deflect with God's promise *"Be not afraid, for I am with thee"*
"Loneliness" - we deflect with God's promise of *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."*
Discouragement" - we deflect with God's promise of *"Your labor is not in vain in the Lord"*
"Trials and tribulation" - we deflect with God's promise of *"All things work together for good"*
"Persecution" - we deflect with God's promise of *"When you pass through the waters I will be with you..."*
"Sexual lust" - we deflect with God's promise of *"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man..."*

"Faith" is the victory that overcomes the world (I Jn. 4).

5) BE CONFIDENT IN YOUR SALVATION

One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to assure us regarding our salvation. *"The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God"* (Rom. 8).

When we grieve Him because of sin (Eph. 4) or quench Him because of unbelief (I Th. 5), we forfeit His ministry of convincing our spirit that we belong to God.

Satan plagues the mind; he torments the spirit of the one who lives in continual doubt of his salvation.

Paul said, *"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."*

6) KNOW THE SCRIPTURE

V. 17

"Sword of the Spirit" - Heb. 4:12; Rev. 19:15

The sword of the Spirit is not:

--new revelation from some self-appointed prophet
--psychiatry or secular psychology
--visions, dreams, or speaking in tongues

The weapon He uses to convict, rebuke, encourage the hearts of men is His inscripturated oracles, the Bible (Heb. 4:12 - *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.")*

The Word of God defensively fights off false doctrine (Satanic distortions of God's truth).

It also defensively fights off temptations (Mt. 4 - *"It is written").*

7) PRAY CONTINUALLY

In war times, one of the greatest tactics is to cut the lines of communication; to cut the telegraph wires; to jam and scramble the messages; to sabotage the phone lines.

Don't let Satan cut off your communication to the "Captain of the Lord's Host."

II. *During Satanic Attack*
Make Biblical Decisions to Counter the Attack

A. **Request God's Deliverance** (Matthew 6:13)

"Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil"

a. The Greek word "temptation" can be translated "test" or "temptation" James 1:13 says that God is not even remotely connected with tempting anyone to do evil. So the word "temptation" must be understood as a test (from God's point of view) that might lead to a temptation (from Satan's point of view)

b. We know that trials (tests) are a means for our growing (Ja. 1:2-3), but we should have no desire to be in a place where even the possibility of sin is increased.

This prayer is just pious hypocrisy if we go deliberately into situations which we know are enticements to sin. This prayer will cause us to search our bookshelves, judge the music we listen to, and dictate the company we keep.

c. What we are to pray is this: "Lord, don't ever lead us into a trial that will present such a temptation that we will not be able to resist it." *"God is faithful . . ."* I Cor. 10:13.

d. What we need to pray is: "God, guard our eyes, ears, mouth, feet, hands, so that whatever we see, hear, say, or do, or wherever we go, we will be protected from sin."

e. ***"Evil"*** -- "the evil" in Greek. A reference to "the evil one" - Satan. Jesus prayed that we would be kept from the evil (one) - Jn. 17:15.

f. We (in ourselves) are inadequate to battle evil, we need God to deliver (rescue) us.

*Our prayer: "God, guard my eyes, ears, mouth, feet, hands, and heart so that I will be protected from sin.

B. Recite Appropriate Bible Promises & Principles (Matthew 4:1-11)

THE PURPOSE OF TESTING (v. 1-2)

Jesus was "led up" by the Holy Spirit into this confrontation. Why the set up? From God's perspective it was a test to prove Christ's righteousness. From Satan's, it was a temptation to get Him to sin.

NOTE: God allows Satan to tempt (ex. Job); but Satan is like a dog on a leash--he can only go so far.

Why does God test?

- TO TEACH

  God tested Israel to reveal her heart and teach her dependence (Dt. 8:2-3).

  God tested Christ to prove His sinlessness (to demonstrate Christ's righteous character after the Father's declaration in chapter 3).

- TO MATURE

  Time spent in battle with temptation is not a waste when God is glorified, the believer edified, and Satan mortified!

THE TIME OF TESTING (v. 1-2)

The Tempter came at just the right time (at a suitable "season" - Luke 4:13).

- SATAN TEMPTED AFTER VICTORY

  Mk. 1:12 - Immediately after Christ's baptism/anointing/hailing as "The Beloved Son" in whom the Father was "well-pleased."

  Cp. Israel's temptation - right after redemption from Egypt (Ex. 15).

  "Let him who thinks he stands . . ." (I Cor. 10:12).

- SATAN TEMPTED AT CHRIST'S WEAKEST MOMENT

  1. Jesus faced bad circumstances - wilderness ("the Judean desert"), hot barren, dry.

2. Jesus was hungry because He had fasted forty days prior to testing.

Hunger makes one physically weak and tends to cause one`s attention to move from spiritual to physical.

*Contrast Adam's fall in perfect circumstances with Christ's victory (the second Adam) in the worst.
We can't blame circumstances!

THE CONFLICT OF TESTING (v. 3-10)

Satan tempts in the areas of:

lust of the flesh
lust of the eyes
pride of life
(I John 2:16)

Note Christ's response:

1) He did not ignore the temptation (took positive action to overcome it).

2) He did not defend Himself. He could have said, "Satan, this feat is no problem for me, but I refuse to obey you."

3) He did not reason with Satan.

Note Christ's Weapon: The Word of God

1) This shows the Bible's authority.

2) This shows the Bible's continuing relevancy.

The verse was originally stated some 1,400 years ago, yet still was useful.

3) This shows the Bible`s varied applicability.

Was originally given to Israel, and now is used against Satan.

4) This shows the Bible's suitability - to handle needs of all occasions.

5) This shows the Bible's inspiration - "God-breathed" (II Tim. 3:16); "every word" (v. 4)

NOTE: Though Christ's words while on earth had equal authority with the written Word--He appealed to the written Word!
How much more should we?

The verse Christ used was Deut. 8:3.
(Read and explain Dt. 8:1-3)
God's supernatural feeding of Israel with "manna," teaches the principle that life is not sustained merely by physical means, but by spiritual, supernatural provision.

Mt. 4:11 - Results of victory = "Then the devil leaveth him . . ." (cp. Ja. 4:7).

In every temptation Jesus ignored the bait (NOTE: not the temptation situation) and responded with principle! He did not say: "I think, I know, I feel, I believe" but rather "It is written."

(NOTE: Jesus quoted an often over-looked O.T. book - Deut.)

APPLI: How many verses from Deut. can you quote? (this book is often hidden and overlooked by Christians)

APPLI: This lesson shows the need for Bible memorization.

NOTE: 1) All quoted verses must correspond to context; otherwise when you think you are waving a sharp double-edged sword, you are only waving imitation plastic.

2) Christ's quotation were not just to take the defensive (to silence Satan) but the offensive (to give Himself authority for His position and conduct).

C. Rally together with the People of God in the Local Church
(Compare I Cor. 5:4-5; Heb.10:24-25)

"Deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh" - When someone is dis-fellowshipped with, he/she is placed outside of the protective umbrella of the local church.

The sanctifying protection of God (because of that person's close association with God's people) is removed.

EX: An unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife (I Cor. 7:14).

EX: God would not destroy Sodom if even ten righteous people were in it (Gen. 18:32). God would not destroy Sodom until the only righteous man, Lot, was removed (Gen. 19:16; II Pet. 2:7-8).

EX: God blessed Potiphar because of Joseph's presence in the home (Gen. 39:5).

The goal of church discipline is correction and conversion.

"That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" - The person's lifestyle demonstrates that he may be a non-believer. By allowing him to remain in fellowship, he will deceive himself into thinking he's okay. By expelling him, his conscience may be smitten with conviction and guilt. He then will be in the domain of Satan where God will allow demonic forces to afflict him with a view to get his attention, show him his lostness, and reveal to him his need of salvation.

When a person is dismissed from a church's fellowship, God may get his attention, as he is outside of the umbrella of the protection of the church and will feel the loneliness; the onslaught of Satanic oppression, etc. (cp. I Tim. 1:20).

"The destruction of the flesh" would happen from sickness due to the sin (cp. James 5) and this may be effective in God getting the attention of the person, perhaps showing him his need of Christ for salvation.

See Hebrews 10:24-25

After the exhortation of V. 24, the question now is: "How can we provoke one another?" "In what setting does this mutual encouragement take place?"

Answer: In the assembly (v. 25)

When a believer becomes lax in his assembling with God's people, other believers are to speak to him about it and provoke him to do what is right.

A. We have an important WARNING to assemble (v. 25a)

"Forsake" = to leave behind; to neglect something or forget about it.

Just as Christ will never abandon His bride (Heb. 13:5), so we should never abandon our brothers.

To forsake the assembly is to be inconsiderate of others (Note: the participle "not forsaking" is modifying the verb consider [v. 24]).

"The assembling" = the gathering together ("epi-sunagoga"). This word points to a specific gathering; and an organized gathering.

"As the manner of some is" - Skipping church is not merely a contemporary problem, but has been a frustration to pastors throughout church history.

"Manner" = habit or custom, a pattern of life

"Of some" = thank God not every believer has this problem; just "some"

The best habit any believer could have is to be faithful to at least each of the main services of their church.

B. We have an important REASON to assemble (v. 25b)

"Exhorting" - a word intended to convey the opposite of forsaking. Rather than forsaking one another, we should be exhorting one another.

The main purpose of church is exhortation! That is, encouragement and comfort that comes from the public preaching of God's Word!

There is strength in knowing we are not alone. We have the greatest support group available! We are a co-dependent and unified body!

C. We have an important TIME to assemble (v. 25c)

"An so much the more" = And all the more

The Lord is telling us that assembling will be all the more important, as ye see the day approaching.

What is meant by the phrase "the Day?"

ANSWER: "The Day of the Lord"

The phrase "the day" is a technical phrase when it occurs without an antecedent, pointing to a most momentous Day; a great and awesome Day; a vitally important Day - namely, The Day of Christ's return (Rapture) and the wrath of God which follows.

"The Day" = the Day of Christ's return (SEE: heb. 10:37)

SEE: II Thes. 2:1-3. Two definite signs that will transpire before the Day of Christ are:

1) Apostasy (v. 3a; cp. I Tim. 4:1_

> II Tim. 3:1-4 - "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God"

2) Antichrist's appearance (v. 3b)

If there was ever a time when assembling together was important, it is today! The day is approaching! Apostasy is on the horizon; the greatest onslaught of the devil's deceit and destruction is yet ahead. You need to learn God's Word! Be faithful to its proclamation. Arm yourself for what lies ahead!

D. Resist the Devil

1. Resist the Attacker by Humbly Submitting to God (James 4:6-7)

Resist (take a stand against) Satan (v. 7b)

Instead of giving in to the world's system which is controlled by "the prince and power of the air", the "god of this world" -- God exhorts us to stand in opposition to Satan.

"He will flee from you" - We have God's promise that victory is possible (cp. Christ's victory - Mt. 4:1-11) if we stand with firm confidence in God's promise and with the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:12-17).

When Satan sees that he has been defeated, he like an embarrassed coward will run away and vanish.

Draw near to God (v. 8a)

Worldliness is what separated you from God, and now you must return.

True repentance will be evidenced by a desire to get as close to God as possible. God will favorably respond ("draw nigh to you") but you must make the first move (cp. Prodigal Son - Lk. 15:20)

2. Resist the Attacker by Persisting in What You Know to be God's Truth (I Peter 5:9; Rev.12:11a)

Just as Satan will oppose the elect nation of Israel in the future, he opposes God's elect church today (Eph. 6:10ff).

The devil is out to destroy the church. But there is a source of victory!

"Overcame" = conquered

Satan is a defeated foe only by means of:

1)The blood of Christ (our only means of salvation - Rev. 7:14)

2)The Word of our testimony (our only means of sanctification - Eph. 5:26; Jn. 15:3, 17:17)

3)The sacrifice of the believer (our surrender - James 4:7; Eph. 6:10ff)

3. Resist the Attacker by <u>Not Fearing the Loss</u> of what He may Try to Take from You (Rev.12:11b)

"Loved not their lives unto the death" - "He who loves his life shall lose it . . ." (Mt. 16:25)

Death because of their faith in Christ and His Word (cp. Rev. 1:9, 6:9, 20:4) (no doubt the martyrdoms described will take place upon the orders of the Antichrist (Rev. 6:9).

"Greater is He that is in you than he (Satan) that is in the world" (I Jn. 4:4).

D. <u>Rely</u> Upon the <u>Power of Christ</u> (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)

2 Cor. 12:7-10
And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. [8] For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. [9] And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.