

A TRULY AMAZING PROMISE

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Sometimes we just need to sit down in the quiet and think about some of the promises to us in the Word of God. The apostle Paul encouraged this when he wrote, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Timothy 4:15). One such promise appears in the book of James, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). May I share three brief observations from this promise for your edification?

First, the devil is a real being at whose feet we rightly may lay blame for many problems and heartaches we encounter in our lives. As you know, it is common when people face problems and heartaches to hear them blame God, but it is uncommon to hear them blame the devil. About the devil, the Bible says, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (1 Peter 5:8-9). The devil is not just described as a lion but as a roaring lion. A lion roars when he is hungry, and the devil is always "hungry" for the destruction he can cause to people's lives.

Second, James said, "Resist the devil." This is to me what is truly so amazing. For all his desire and drive, for all his prowess and power, the devil can be resisted. We've heard it a hundred times from those who have quit cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, profanity, pornography, and philandering. The Bible says it and observation shows it: the devil can be resisted! The sentence that precedes this promise holds the key: "submit yourselves therefore to God." Now, you have the most powerful and benevolent Being in the universe standing with you. Christians have Christ with them always (Matthew 28:20). He "will never leave you nor forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5). Do you know the next verse after that says, "So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me" (v. 6)? Paul is there quoting Psalm 118:6-7 which says, "The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me? The Lord taketh my part with them that help me: therefore shall I see my desire upon them that hate me."

Third, the devil won't just slip away; he will "flee" from you! Strong's concordance has the meaning of the word "flee" here as "apparently a primary verb; to run away (literally or figuratively); by implication, to shun; by analogy, to vanish." In order to receive such an impressive promise, surely we remain motivated to "resist the devil."