

:: summary

If you are at all familiar with Medieval warfare, which is a given for fans of The Lord of the Rings and/or Game of Thrones, you are probably familiar with the use of flaming arrows - deadly distractions that set fire to anything they pierce. This is a strong visual metaphor that describes the way satan, our real and spiritual enemy, continuously attacks and tries to destroy every human being who has been made in God's image. Satan hates God and opposes Him in every way, and if you are living for God, you can expect opposition.

:: discussion

While we don't need to live in fear of satan, seeing the devil in burnt toast, as the saying goes, we should be aware that our enemy never rests, working against us day and night, as God tells us in Revelation 12:10.

In your life with God so far, what flaming arrows or weapons has satan used in his attacks against you?

Read 2 Corinthians 11:14-15

Your enemy is a deceiver, who, by the very nature of deceit, will try to persuade and impair your judgment using false appearances, half-truths, and lies to lead you astray. The verb deceive is derived from a Latin word that literally means "to ensnare," as in a hunter trapping and capturing prey. Satan and his servants are deceitful, masquerading as light and righteous men, which at times can make it difficult to distinguish God's voice from the voice of your enemy who wants to mislead and trap you.

How can we distinguish satan's voice from God's voice, so that we don't fall into one of satan's traps?

Read James 4:7-8

Last week, we looked at verse 7 with an emphasis on what it means to resist the devil, who has no authority in your life you don't give him. You make choices and satan exploits the bad ones, which is why it is so important to pay attention to the first half of his command: submit yourselves to God. Verse 8 goes on to explain more specifically what that looks like in practice.

Based on context clues from these verses, what does it mean to "wash your hands" and "purify your hearts" and how can you do that in your life with God?

Read Revelation 12:10

Satan is an accuser who is continuously bringing charges against you and every other child of God, as a prosecutor in court who uses slander and any other means to condemn you before God. However, God's absolute power, authority and grace expressed in Jesus' sacrificial death has removed your guilt and condemnation before God, and you can stand before Him as sons and daughters with the assurance that God is on our side and He will have the final victory over satan who has been hurled down in defeat.

How does the reality of satan's active accusations against you and the real hope found in God's grace and power shape your understanding of what it means to stand your ground against satan?

If you have accepted God's grace by putting your faith in Jesus and you serve God with your life, you have two guarantees: opposition from satan and victory in God's power. So be alert and rest assured – your spiritual enemy will attack you from all sides, but satan's weapons used against you will not prevail and you will be victorious in your battles against satan. Stand your ground and resist him in God's power, using the armor and weapons God has given you in His Word, in prayer and praising God in all circumstances, and satan will flee.

