

Are You “Word” Focused or “Problem” Focused?

Part 5

“I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one” (1 John 2:14)

1. The word “wicked” in the above passage is in relation to Satan. It comes from the Greek word “*poneros*” and among many things means, “bringing toils, annoyances, perils; of a time full of peril to Christian faith and steadfastness; causing pain and trouble” (StudyLight.org).
 - a. While so many people, including Christians, blame God for the pain and trouble in this world, the Bible lays the blame at the feet of God's enemy, Satan, the wicked one. All that is wicked and evil has its source in Satan, the evil one. This includes:
 - Sickness and disease (Deut. 7:15; Luke 13:16; Acts 10:38 - interestingly enough, *poneros* can also mean "in a physical sense: diseased or blind")
 - Financial distress (Prov. 10:15; Luke 16:22-25)
 - Accidents (Luke 13:3-5)
 - Marriage issues (1 Cor. 7:5)
 - Natural disasters (Job 1:12, 16, 18-19; Mark 4:37-40)
 - All criminal acts to include murder (Job 1:17; John 8:44, 10:10)
 - Persecution of God's people (Rev. 2:10; 1 Pet. 5:8-9)
 - Blinding people to the truth about God and salvation (Luke 8:12; 2 Cor. 4:4)
 - Hindering answers to prayer (Daniel 10:12-14)
 - Enticing people to sin and keeping them in bondage to it (Gen. 3:1-7; Matt. 4:3; 6:13; 1 Thess. 3:5; 1 John 3:8)
 - Exercising a negative influence on this world's political systems (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
 - b. These are all of the works that Jesus came to rescue us from. Therefore, God is not the reason for the pain and trouble that we encounter in this world. He is the deliver and rescuer from it.
 - c. “...and ye have overcome the wicked one” This is the “language of faith. Faith sees the victory that God has given as a “present tense fact” and not something to be put off for the future.
 - d. Satan attempts to trick us into putting off all victories until the future. That way he can continue to beat on us. However, when we claim our victory as a “now” victory we will see Satan’s works in our lives defeated much sooner.

2. Gideon and the Struggle to Focus on the Word:

a. Judges 6:11-16

b. Notice two statements made by God concerning Gideon that were definite statements of faith:

1) *The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour (v. 12)*

2) *Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? (v. 14)*

c. Even more interesting is when we read Judges 6:14 from a literal translation:

1) *And Yahweh turns unto him and said, 'Go in this--your power; and you have saved Israel out of the hand of Midian--have not I sent you.. (Concordant Literal Version)*

2) *And Jehovah turneth unto him and saith, 'Go in this—thy power; and thou hast saved Israel out of the hand of Midian—have not I sent thee.' (Young's Literal Translation)*

3) "Save" is the Hebrew word *yasha'* which means, "to be saved (in battle), be victorious; to save, deliver, to save from moral troubles, to give victory to" (studylight.org)

d. Now check out Judges 6:16 in these same literal translations:

1) *And Jehovah saith unto him, 'Because I am with thee -- thou hast smitten the Midianites as one man.' (v. 16; Young's Literal Translation)*

2) *And Yahweh said unto him, 'Because I am with you--you have smitten the Midianites as one man. (v. 16; Concordant Literal Translation)*

3) These literal translations only make sense to the one who understands how faith works (see Mark 11:24; Heb. 11:1; 2 Cor. 5:7; 1 John 5:14-15). God sees future victories as present facts and wants Gideon (and us) to see them that way. He gives Gideon His Word in this respect as He does for us today.

3. Gideon was acting like everything but a mighty man of valor. He was showing no might but cowardice and weakness and a complaining spirit.

- a. Gideon was focusing on the problems that he was facing rather than the promise of God.

1)Gideon, like many of us, did not realize that the problem was spiritual. Israel was enslaved to the demons behind the idols they worshipped. In order for Gideon to walk in the victory that already belonged to him over the problem, he needed to close every open door that Satan and demons had – Judges 6:25-27.

2)“More severe than their physical oppression by the Midianites is their enslavement to the spiritual forces of the land. The terms used in Judges 6:25, [the Hebrew is give], ‘to tear down,’ and [the Hebrew is give], ‘to pull down,’ are terms which refer to the destruction of pagan worship objects in holy war (Exodus 23:24; 34:13; Deut. 7:5; Judg 2:2), which also point back to the promise that an angel or the Lord himself would drive out the enemies from before Israel (Exod 23:23; 34:13). **The charge to destroy the pagan worship place in his own family tells Gideon that before any complaints about the lack of divine intervention in war, he has to fulfill the conditions specified in that promise.**” (Barna Magyarosi, *Holy War and Cosmic Conflict in the Old Testament*, pp. 206, 207; emphasis are mine)

- b. The lesson for us here is that if we want to see the visible, tangible victory over our problems (physical healing, finances, freedom from sinful habits, etc.) then we must first meet the conditions of God’s Word, focus on the Word, and then “tear down” the satanic forces that are hindering us – 2 Cor. 10:3-5.
- c. *And it came to pass the same night, that the Lord said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have **delivered it into thine hand.*** (Judges 7:9)
- d. Once again, God reaffirms His present tense promise to Gideon before any action has been taken or any visible manifestation of the victory is seen. This promise is similar to God’s promise to Joshua in Joshua 6:2.
- e. Judge 7:12-15
- f. “[Hebrew word given] ‘to give into one’s hand,’ with the verb in performative perfect, expresses the idea that God has already performed a transaction of giving the enemy to the Israelites at that time, so that defeat of the enemy is assured.” (Barna Magyarosi, *Holy War and Cosmic Conflict in the Old Testament*, p. 214)
- g. Gideon was tempted to be problem focused again as he began to fear. However, after a couple of miraculous confirmations and a dream confirming God’s promises, Gideon finally became encouraged and began to become Word-Focused, and saw God’s

promise as a present tense reality even before he saw the *physical* reality of it (Heb. 11:1; Mark 11:24; 2 Cor. 5:7).

- h. Judges 8:28; Heb. 11:32-34
 - i. Though he struggled as we all do, Gideon's eventual Word-Focus enabled him to be a victor in life's circumstances.
4. Areas in which Satan has been Defeated

- a. The Bible says that Jesus has defeated Satan who is the one who held the power of death:

1) *So since, as the children partake of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise partook of the same; so that through death he inactivated him who had the power of death - that is, Diabolos; and released them, as many as through awe of death who through all their lifetime were subject to servitude. (Heb. 2:14-15; exeGeses Study Bible)*

2) *It is true that we share the same Father with Jesus. And it is true that we share the same kind of flesh and blood because Jesus became a man like us. He died as we must die. Through His death He destroyed the power of the devil who has the power of death. Jesus did this to make us free from the fear of death. We no longer need to be chained to this fear. (Heb. 2:14-15; New Life Version)*

3) *"...by death I here mean what Scripture often means by the same word,—all the ills that come upon man in this life and in the life to come. Satan, the enemy, brought sin into the world and all its sad consequences." (William Matson, **The Adversary: His Purpose, Power, and Person.** P. 99, 1902)*

4) Compare Deut. 28 with Deut. 30:15, 19

- b. Because of Christ's victory and how we share in it, we must see ourselves as already having authority over Satan's works:

1) *Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. (Luke 10:19)*

2) *(For Thou, O Jehovah, art my refuge,) The Most High thou madest thy habitation. Evil happeneth not unto thee, And a plague cometh not near thy tent, For His messengers He chargeth for thee, To keep thee in all thy ways, On the hands they bear thee up, Lest thou smite against a stone thy foot. On lion*

and asp thou treadest, Thou trampest young lion and dragon. Because in Me he hath delighted, I also deliver him—I set him on high, Because he hath known My name. (Psalm 91:9-14; Young's Literal Translation)

c. This includes believing God for healing and health despite bodily circumstances:

1)*When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses (Matt. 8:16-17).*

2)*Surely he bore our sicknesses and bore our sorrows: yet we machinated him plagued - smitten of Elohim and abased. And he is pierced for our rebellions; crushed for our perversities: the chastisement of our shalom is on him; and with his lashes we are healed. (Isa. 53:4-5; exeGeses Study Bible)*

3)*Surely He has borne our sicknesses, and He carried our pain; yet we esteemed Him plagued, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His wounds we ourselves are healed. (Isa. 53:4-5; Green's Literal Translation)*

4)*...and through his bruises was healing granted to us. (Isa. 53:4-5; Leeser Old Testament)*

5)*“For the believer who, already recognizing his identification with the death and resurrection of Christ, still further conceives of Christ on the cross as bearing away, after the manner of the ‘scape-goat’ of old, the curse which involves our entire manhood; body, as well as soul and spirit, will have a wider range of faith and joy.” (George B. Peck, **Throne Life or the Highest Christian Life**, p. 47, 1888)*

d. We must see ourselves as presently victors over sinful habits that so easily besets us:

1)*Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin (Rom. 6:6-7)*

Conclusion to part 4: Though we may struggle, if we are sincere as Gideon was, God will work with us. However, we must learn to walk by faith and see ourselves as God sees us and not as the circumstances and problems dictate to us. See yourself as more than a conqueror over every problem. See your enemies (Satan and satanic forces) defeated even before you take your authority over them and the problems they bring. Stand on God's promises and be Word focused and not problem focused.