

Doctrine of Resisting

1. Satan stands to resist the spiritual people of God as a personal adversary, sometimes through accusations.
 - *Zechariah 3:1 And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him.*
2. It is the will of the Lord that His followers do not resist evil which is to be understood as injurious behavior to self.
 - *Matthew 5:39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.*
3. Sometimes the Lord is pleased to give His people “a mouth and wisdom” to confound adversaries to the point those who oppose the saints have no resistance against them.
 - *Luke 21:15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.*

Illustration

- *Acts 6:10 And they [of the Synagogue] were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he [Stephen] spake.*
4. It is possible for individuals to always resist or oppose the Holy Spirit.
 - *Acts 7:51 Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*
 5. Christians are not to resist divinely ordained power.
 - *Romans 13:2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.*
 6. As the person and work of the Holy Spirit can be resisted so the truth can be opposed. By way of a negative example, New Testament believers are not to be like Jannes and Jambres who found themselves in opposition to Moses.
 - *2 Timothy 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.*

7. The promise is given to the Christian who struggles with the Evil One that if there is first a submission to God and second personal resistance, the Devil will flee from you because in reality he is fleeing from the presence of God.

- *James 4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

8. It is possible to do evil to others, to condemn and kill the just even when they do not resist or oppose the injustice.

- *James 5:6 Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.*

Special Note.

James speaks of individuals who oppressed others and acted very unjustly, to get estates; when they had them, they gave way to luxury and sensuality, till they had lost all sense and feeling of the wants or afflictions of others; and then they persecute and killed without remorse.

These same individuals pretend to act legally indeed, they condemn before they kill; but unjust prosecutions, whatever colour of law they may carry in them, will come into the reckoning when God shall make inquisition for blood, as well as massacres and downright murders.

Observe here,

“The just may be condemned and killed: but then again observe, When such do suffer, and yield without resistance to the unjust sentence of oppressors, this is marked by God, to the honour of the sufferers and the infamy of their persecutors; this commonly shows that judgments are at the door, and we may certainly conclude that a reckoning-day will come, to reward the patience of the oppressed and to break to pieces the oppressor. Thus far the address to sinners goes” (Matthew Henry).

9. The apostle Peter exhorts Christians to be sober and vigilant or watchful because the Devil, who is the Adversary of the saint, moves about as a roaring lion, walking, stalking, and seeking whom he may devour. Therefore, the Christian is to resist the Devil in a consistent and steadfast manner with the knowledge that others too suffer in like manner.

- *1 Peter 5:9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.*

Special Note.

“Learn from the following thoughts.

1. All the great persecutions that ever were in the world were raised, spirited up, and conducted, by the devil; he is the grand persecutor, as well as the deceiver and accuser, of the brethren; men are his willing spiteful instruments, but he is the chief adversary that wars against Christ and his people, Genesis 3:15; Revelation 12:12.
2. The design of Satan in raising persecutions against the faithful servants of God is to bring them to apostasy, by reason of their sufferings, and so to destroy their souls.
3. Sobriety and watchfulness are necessary virtues at all times, but especially in times of suffering and persecution. "You must moderate your affection to worldly things, or else Satan will soon overcome you."
4. "If you would overcome Satan, as a tempter, an accuser, or a persecutor, you must resist him steadfast in the faith; if your faith give way, you are gone; therefore, above all, take the shield of faith," Ephesians 6:16.
5. The consideration of what others suffer is proper to encourage us to bear our own share in any affliction: The same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren” (Matthew Henry).