

Oculi

My eyes are ever toward the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the net.
Turn Yourself to me, and have mercy on me,* for I am desolate and afflicted.*

The ways that Satan can attack are myriad -- even as he has a legion of demons. He tempts to self-reliance or laziness, to pride or hopelessness; to excess of pleasure or excess of sorrow.

He also attacks the body directly--causing epileptic-type symptoms; schizophrenic symptoms; He causes blindness, or deafness, muteness, or covetousness alike. In short, not only does he attack your conscience and mind, but also your body, your soul, your health, your family, your friends, your enemies.

To count the various things that the devil attacks, all we need do is to count the various things that God gives.

"I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my reason and all my senses and still takes care of them. He also gives me clothing and shoes, food and drink, house and home, wife and children, land, animals, and all that I have. He richly and daily provides me with all that I need to support this body and life."

As the anti-god, he attacks everything that is of God--every possession of Jesus. And in every case--however and whenever he attacks--he is stronger than man. We stand by helpless and alone as he takes the things and the people that God has given and kills them, perverts them, estranges them and cripples them. In light of this, we must stop dividing our lives into "religious matters" and "mundane matters" -- God's things and man's things.

To think this way is to cordon off certain things of your life from Christ.

"You take care of my salvation--I'll take care of my health."

"You forgive my sins--I'll work to become a better me."

"You help me kick this habit or addiction, I'll keep my family together."

Such thinking is the result of artificial division of our lives--rending assunder what God has put together.

The result of such a false division is that we chose to battle the devil on our own...
...to take on Satan by our own resources and strength.

For we have stopped seeing our entire world as a battle between God and the devil. Whenever and wherever we take up this attitude, we will lose and be robbed. There is no neutral or inert stuff in our lives.

All of it comes from God and therefore all of it is spiritual and meaningful.

All of it is created and given for our good and therefore Satan will take all of it and to strip it from us--by death, robbery, or causing you to throw it away.

And your will in this matter is no match for Satan's will.

For angels were created stronger than men in every regard.

And they retain this advantage whether fallen or not.

But one man is stronger than the angels and therefore, stronger than Satan.

Jesus is a man who is also God.

He is a creature who depends on all the supporting creation that God gives.

But He is also the Creator who gives all and creates all--including Satan himself.

He came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary to be defeated by Satan in your stead and on your behalf.

He was taken by Satan, ravaged unto death.

Robbed of all that he had.

Family and friends were taken away. The clothes on His back--the water in His mouth--His health, His freedom, His life and blood.

Satan took Him completely into his palace and bound Jesus there.

But Jesus is the stronger man.

For unlike you and me--unlike every other created man, Jesus is also God.

Against whom the devil cannot prevail.

And so, Jesus has now turned the tables and bound Satan.

Jesus has taken back from Satan all that Satan took from you.

It has been freed again from the devil's clutches and returned to godly use.

Because of Jesus, there is nothing, any longer, which Satan can take from you.

All creation--even Satan himself--must serve you at Christ's behest.

Therefore we can turn our eyes toward the Lord with full confidence.

That for as many different ways as the devil can attack us, Jesus has defeated him.

No matter what it is that the devil has taken from you or threatened to take from you, Christ came to give it back.

That is the lesson of this Gospel. Plain and simple.

But this also, you must know:

Just as Jesus defeated Satan and took all of his goods by Himself being defeated, so also your rescue will not be in the form that you expect.

If you judge by your reason or senses you will look in vain to find victory.

And because of this lack of evidence, you will be tempted to discard Christ together with His victory over Satan and look for other helpers--other saviors.

Turn to money or doctors, counselors or ambition, false preachers or holy men.

Turn where you may, follow the empty promises that they make and you will accomplish what Satan can never do.

For Satan can never defeat Jesus, but you can cast Him away.

And this is only prevented by Christ Himself and His Holy Word.

No other activity or thing is able to accomplish this.

Not your striving nor your worry.

Not your hoping or your money.

Not your good will or your anger.

This gift is so great that it even eclipses giving birth to Jesus!

"Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!"

What you are receiving right now through the hearing of God's word keeps your soul and delivers you from all affliction and pain and forgives all your sin.