

Setting Your Heart on the Kingdom



I THESSALONIANS

When Satan Thwarts You!

(The Principle of: Your Witness Against the Devil)

1 Thessalonians 2:17-18

How much power does the devil really have? Some fear him more than they believe in God! Others ignore him as a defeated foe. And some preachers couldn't have church without him...forever binding, stomping and cursing the devil with every sermon! But what about Paul's words: *"I tried to come to you more than once, but Satan stopped us!"* Clearly, the devil didn't personally show up...but people whom he influenced did! Fallen natures became tools of the wicked one to prevent the apostle from returning to Thessalonica. Evil spirits can be bound, but the free will of deceived people can't! And so we ask the question: *Why would God allow Satan to oppose His people?* But more personally we ask: *What can you do when Satan thwarts (opposes) you through others?*

First of all, God is holy and righteous and *"there is no darkness in Him."* If God chooses not to act in a specific way, it's because He's working out a better plan according to His higher purposes (*Rom. 8:28*). Who then is Satan? He's a fallen angel with a death sentence over his head. But his final judgment doesn't come until redeemed humanity completes their witness on the earth (*Matt. 24:14; Eph. 3:10*). *Therefore, you are a threat to his kingdom. He'll do everything in his power, even stir up evil hearts, to stop or disqualify your witness.*

Now to the question: *"What can you do?"* The obvious answer is: *"Resist (set yourself against) him"* (*James 4:7*) and trust God for the end result. Yet know this: *Your ultimate victory is in your on-going witness, not just a one-time confrontation!* Indeed, Paul was hindered from returning to Thessalonica. And even the saints of old didn't receive their promise in their lifetimes (*Heb. 11:39*). But listen! At the end of the age, all who were hindered by the devil will rise up to judge those who participated with him (*Matt. 12:41-42; Rev. 6:9-11*). To the godly wife who is thwarted by her husband, don't fret! God sees your witness (*1 Cor. 7:13-14*). To the Christian entrepreneur whose business plan was stopped, be at peace. God commends you as if it has succeeded (*1 Kings 8:18*). *In God's Kingdom, your greatest weapon against Satan isn't your superior power. It's simply your faith and your enduring witness!*

Next: The Kingdom of God in 2 Thessalonians - Why Some People Will Never Believe

