

TRUTH & LIGHT

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SWORD OF THE SPIRIT

"Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm...Take the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God," (Eph. 6:13,17). No soldier would be completely armed and ready for battle without brandishing a sword for combat. But merely having one by your side wouldn't be nearly enough. What good would a sword do for a soldier who was not skilled in using it? In the same way, Christians must be skilled in the use of the scriptures for this weapon to be effectively used in battle. *"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth," (2 Tim. 2:15).* Constant time spent in exercises familiarizing ourselves with the Word is

necessary for us to develop the skilled use of it in combat. *"For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil," (Heb. 5:13-14).* *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect," (Rom. 12:2).* Once a Christian soldier becomes equipped with the skills necessary to handle the Word accurately, the sword of the Word of God becomes a potent weapon in defending themselves from the deceptive nature of Satan's temptations. From the Garden of Eden to our present day, Satan has used a cunning arsenal of deceptive

manipulation to achieve his evil purposes. Using a deadly combination of casting doubt and attributing evil intent on God Himself, Satan's attacks are effectively thwarted with the defensive capabilities of the Sword of the Spirit. Jesus demonstrated how effective this sword is when He used scripture to defend Himself against Satan's attempts to cast doubt and evil intent towards the goodness of the character of Jesus' Father. When Satan attempted to depict God as someone who carelessly and unnecessarily allowed Jesus to suffer with hunger, Jesus quoted scripture. *"It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God,'"* (Mt. 4:4). When Satan attempted to convince Jesus that he had a much easier and better way than God of being handed all the kingdoms of the world, Jesus quoted scripture. *"It is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God and serve Him only,'"* (Lk. 4:8). When Satan attempted to cast doubt on God's existence and full power by daring Jesus to hurl Himself off the top of the temple, Jesus quoted scripture. *"It is said, 'You shall not put the LORD your God to the test,'"* (Lk. 4:12). Jesus skillfully used the sword of the Spirit to cut

through the deceptive nature of Satan's attacks on God, exposing the devil as a liar and deceiver and revealing the ultimate goodness of God as revealed through scripture. Using the sword of the Spirit in this defensive manner protecting ourselves from the devil's temptations, we not only maintain our own faith and obedience as faithful soldiers, but we gain a better understanding and ability to offensively use the sword in an effort to remove others from sin by convicting them with the Truth. Jesus used the sword in this manner as well, exposing the dangers and consequences of our sins with a direct application of the scriptures. *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery'; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell."* (Mt. 5:27-30).