



Scripture nugget – In Christ, we have power and authority over all evil spirits

Put on the armor of God so that you may be able to stand firm against the tactics of the devil. For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the heavens (Ephesians 6:11-12).

Our real enemies are not the people who hate us and deliberately do harm to us but the evil spirits that instigate them to such action (cf. Ephesians 6:12). Thus, to be really effective in dealing with our human enemies, it is important that we pray for them, and not to return evil for evil. St Peter tells us: *Be sober and vigilant. Your opponent the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8).* Satan and his army of fallen angels work tirelessly day and night to tempt souls to bring them to eternal damnation. Thus, we need to be very vigilant against temptations. Behind each human vice/ailment there is a corresponding evil spirit that is actively at work in that person's life, e.g. anger, unforgiveness, hatred, lust, greed, selfishness, unholy fears, depression, pride, etc. When Jesus went to St Peter's house, they found that his mother-in-law had a fever. Jesus rebuked the fever and it left her (cf. Luke 4:39).

If you act rightly, you will be accepted; but if not, sin lies in wait at the door: its urge is for you, yet you can rule over it (Genesis 4:7). The evil spirits lie in wait at the door of our heart in order to come into our lives and control it. The evil spirits are diametrically different from the Holy Spirit. They want to control us. The Holy Spirit respects our freewill. If our soul is in the state of grace, it is impossible for evil spirits to enter our hearts and control our lives. However, they can enter when the defences of our soul are down due to unforgiveness, sinfulness, unrepentance and strong, negative emotions such as anger, hatred, shock, despair and fear, etc. Thus, it is always wise to remain calm and at peace, and remember God's abiding presence especially in situations that evoke strong negative human emotions. We have the right to be angry but we are warned not to let our anger remain after sunset (cf. Ephesians 4:26). We cannot hate our enemies and withhold our forgiveness in order that we leave no opening for the spirits of hatred and unforgiveness. Instead, we are to love our enemies since Christ also died for them and to pray for them (cf. Matthew 5:44). In Scripture we see how greed of Judas predisposed his heart to entry by Satan (cf. Luke 22:3-6).

Conversation with Jesus: Precious Lord, those who sin are slaves to sin (cf. John 8:34). Let Your Precious Blood purify my heart of hatred, unforgiveness, grudges and anything that is not from You. Let Your Precious Blood purify my mind of falsehoods, demonic deception, pride, impure thoughts, distractions and anything that raises itself up against God and all that He stands for. Thus, purify my soul and flood it with a fullness of Your Spirit. Your Holy Spirit in me is greater than Satan and his whole legion of demons. You said: *Behold, I have given you the power to tread upon serpents and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you (Luke 10:19).* Lord, You have given me not a spirit of timidity but a spirit of love, power and self-discipline (cf. 2 Timothy 1:7). Give me a deep hatred for sin and thus, to be very vigilant against it. Keep my soul in the beautiful state of grace so that I can always stand firm in Your authority and power over all evil spirits. Mary, Mother of Salvation, pray for me. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.