

Do not Give the Devil a Foothold

²⁷ *and do not give the devil a foothold.” (Ephesians 4:27)*

Have you seen how a man rides on a horse? They will put the saddle on the back of the horse and at the end of the saddle there is the stirrup that will have a foot hold that the rider can put his foot on it and jump on the back of the horse.

Have you seen a man how he is climbing a high wall? He will use the small protrusion or the small hollow spaces in the wall to put and stabilize his feet and climb the wall. These footholds are small in size and it might not be of value to someone who is looking to the high wall or to the big horse but have big rule in achieving big things.

In the same way there are certain things in your life, you may call them small sins or small mistakes but they are footholds for devil to climb on you and bring havoc and destruction into your life. Jesus said, ***“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” (John 10:10)*** The thief is the devil and he will use these you call small sins or small mistakes in your life to destroy you.

1- Lies ***“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbour, for we are all members of one body.” (Ephesians 4:26):*** Telling lies is one of the things that Devil so delight to use. The Devil is liar and in the bible he is called the father of lies, ***“You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.” (John 8:44)*** Not speaking the truth and not addressing the issue clearly but in obscure way, that will enable devil to flourish and causes you more harm. If someone is doing wrong you don’t need to say and pretend that all the things are fine. You ought to speak up clearly that the following matters are wrong and need to be corrected.

2- Anger ***“In your anger do not sin’ do not let the sun go down while you are still angry.” (Ephesians 4:26):*** Anger is another foothold for the devil to destroy your life. Anger affects your body causing hypertension and heart disease. Anger will makes you think and speak bad and that will also causes you to fight and break relationships with the people around you. Some people along the way they are angry and in constant struggle and fight with the people around them, but that is not the life that God had ordained for us, ***“Because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.” (James 1:20)*** Don’t think it is normal that you are in constant fight and strife with the people that are around you. Even if they are not good, your anger is not the solution for your trouble but is the reason for things to go worse in your life.

3- Stealing ²⁸ ***“Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.” (Ephesians 4:28)*** Stealing is taking anything not belong to you without a permission. By stealing you are becoming partner of the devil. Small or big things you are taking without permission is a stealing. You may lose your job and your reputation with stealing. Some people they steal because they are in need but still they will receive the consequences of that, ³⁰ ***“People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his hunger when he is starving. ³¹ Yet if he is caught, he must pay sevenfold, though it costs him all the wealth of his house.” (Ephesians 4:30)***

4- Laziness, ***“Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not live unproductive lives.” (Titus 3:14):*** Others are stealing because they are lazy and don’t like to work. Laziness is another foothold for the devil to come in and destroy your life. They are depending on someone else effort for their living and that is not correct. ***“For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: ‘The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.’ (2Thessalonians 3:10)***

5- Unwholesome talk ²⁹ ***“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Ephesians 4:29)*** Observe what you speak very well. The way that you use your tongue will bring you either troubles as we can read in ***Proverbs 18:6*** ⁶ ***“The lips of fools bring them strife, and their mouths invite a beating.”*** Gossips, lies, jokes and bad words all are unwholesome talk Devil will use what you speak to bring you troubles. Or your speak will bring you blessings ²⁰ ***“From the fruit of their mouth a person’s stomach is filled; with the harvest of their lips they are satisfied.” (Proverbs 18:20)***

6- Grieving the Holy Spirit: ³⁰ ***“And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” (Ephesians 4:30)*** The moment that you received Christ as Saviour and Lord over your life you are sealed with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is living in you and is with you, and will grieve at the time you do sin against God. When you watch TV and don’t pray and read the bible, when you fight, steal, when you are careless about God and His work, going to parties, being along friends, doing immoralities, drinking, or any pattern of worldliness and loving the world. These all and the like grieve the Holy Spirit and makes you susceptible to Devil’s attacks.

7- Bitterness: ³¹ ***“Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.” (Ephesians 4:31)*** Nursing grudges, hatred, unforgiveness and trying to exact vengeance on the people who had harmed you that will makes you more susceptible to fall into anger, brawling, slander and malice; and these all are footholds for devil that he can use to harm you.

As you humble yourself before God and show willingness, ask Him to reveal to you your sins and shortcomings then the LORD will show you and let you see sin in the way that God see it.

8- Grumbling: *“And do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.” (1Corinthians 10:10)* Grumbling is keep complaining and arguing against people, authorities and against circumstances of life. Grumbling is sin because it is finally directed against God and not against people. People grumble against other because of money, food, position, authority, etc. The unwillingness of the people to accept and to comply with God’s will is the reason for them to grumble against one another. But this sin will bring God’s wrath and anger on them: *“Don’t grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!” (James 5:9)* Therefore, *“¹⁴ Do everything without grumbling or arguing,¹⁵ so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky.” (Philippians 2:14-15)*

9- The love of money: It is not wrong or sin to have money, but the love of money is sin and will lead you to danger, *“⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷ For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹ Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” (1Timothy 6:6-10)* To be content of what you have will bring you blessings and peace in your life, and will spare you troubles and falling into harmful situations. *“Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless. ¹¹ As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owners except to feast their eyes on them?” (Ecclesiastes 5:10-11)* Therefore, *“⁵ Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5)*

10 – Coveting, envy and jealousy: Desires to have the things of others, *“¹⁷ You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.” (Exodus 20:17)* Coveting will lead you to steal and do wrong things to possess what belong to others. But instead, look to Jesus and be satisfied of what you have and He will shine upon your life and He will bless you, *“Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame.” (Psalm 34:5)*

11- Lust: Is sexual immorality and will lead you to adultery. *“²⁷ You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’²⁸ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28)*

12- Friends: *“³³ Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” (1Corinthians 15:33)* You need to be aware of your relationship with people. Regarding the people with you in work places or people studying with you, you need to limit your relationship with them, only to be to the field concern. But after work and study, your fellowship should be with your family and with the brethren of the church.

All these above footholds and sin are dangerous for you and are the way for you to be destroyed by devil. For this reason this message is in your hearing to help you to come out from all that and be ready to follow God’s help and blessings as you are willing to obey the following steps to get rid of Devil’s footholds in your life.

A- Recognize the foothold of Devil in your life: You have the above list that we mention and that will help you to see them, in addition sit with God and with His word and He will show you clearly other footholds that you may not be discern now in your life.

B- Admit them as sin: Some they call the above sins mistakes. But that is not correct because unless you accept them as sin then you will not be delivered from the work of Devil. To accept them as sin is that you realize that you need to repent and turn away from them toward God.

C- Write down in a small paper all the footholds of devil in your life and daily kneel down at Jesus’ feet and ask Him to cleanse you from them: As you daily praying and asking the LORD to remove these foothold in your life then you will find after a while that you are freed from many of the footholds that you are praying and asking God to remove from you.

D- Discipline yourself: Go into strict training and put your body under subjection, *“²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵ Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. ²⁶ Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. ²⁷ No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.” (1Corinthians 9:24-27)* Do your best in that. Cut everything that may ignite sin and bring you into temptation that you cannot resist.

E- Change the atmosphere or the people that you are in contact with: Avoid friends, invitation to parties, facebook, TV, and everything that might causes you to be exposed to sin.

F- Ask help from Jesus: “Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.” (Hebrews 2:18) Continue read and meditate on His word and pray to Him continually to help you and deliver you.

G- Come to the church leaders and open up your life: ¹⁶ **Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” (James 5:16)** We as church leaders more than willing to sit down with you and council you if you are willing to open up your life and to accept help from us.

My Dear and beloved: ⁸ Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that the family of believers throughout the world is undergoing the same kind of sufferings.” (1Peter 5:8-9) Don't say about your sins are small mistakes, they are the reason for you to suffer. It is a time for you to wake up and work with God to be cleansed from all these sins.

My prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of your Son Jesus Christ who died on the cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord truly who can discern his error? Reveal to me Lord all my sins especially those that I am not aware of and give me the direction and the way out of all my wrong doings. Lord please cleanses from the following footholds _____ and give me the direction and the way out of all these sins. Lord truly I need your help, hear my cry and come and bring me up from the mire of sin. I really Lord determined to follow you wholeheartedly and to be cleansed and be a noble vessel in your hand to be used for your glory, this is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.