



WHO ARE YOU?

KEY SCRIPTURES: Acts 19:8-20, John 8:44, Matthew 5:14-16

"I just wish Satan would leave me alone."

Ever said that? And if you have never said that, have you ever at least felt that way?

It is probably safe to say that many of us live life trying to stay under his radar. We think if we can just not threaten him too much, maybe even stay in his good graces—like he has any—we can get that old devil to pay us no mind.

It's an occupational hazard, knowing that the choices of grace and good will likely make the Christian more of a target. "Satan has no need to bother you if you're already playing on his team," we often hear. Still, even though we know that trials can be a sign that we are doing something right, we admittedly like to avoid them, if at all possible.

If it's alright with him, we would just prefer that the father of lies would kindly forget our name.

But is that really a good thing?

Take a peek into one of the apostle Paul's journeys. He was in Ephesus, and we are told in the nineteenth chapter of Acts that God was using him to do some extraordinary things. Evil spirits left. Illnesses were cured. And word got around.

Change scene to the sons of a Jewish priest there in Ephesus. They were attempting to mimic Paul's activities, using Jesus' name to try and cast out some evil spirits. But then. . . *"One day, the evil spirit answered them, 'Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?' Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding"* (Acts 19:15-16).

Does it make you rethink the notion that it's better to go unnoticed?

(continued)

"...so we can know our value, live with purpose, and make a difference...**In that order.**"



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These priestly sons were such fakes that even using the name of Jesus didn't get them recognized. And on top of it, it got their tails whipped.

When I read that story, I made these notes in the margin of my Bible. "Be real. Be a threat. Be recognized. Be strong. Unbeatable."

The truth of the matter is, there are only two teams I can play for; I am either on Jesus' side, or I'm not. Like a seasoned, old-timer friend of mine once said, "If you're not for me, you're agin me."

There's a legitimate fear of spending too much time thinking about the dark spiritual forces that exist around us, but we must also not be complacent about them. We must take heed at the press they were given in God's Word, and learn from what it says about them. And what does it say that should make us take notice?

They can smell a fake.

So the decision is ours to make. Are we going to be real, and therefore, a real threat? Or do we really not want our name to be known? It doesn't have the benefit package that we might hope it would. On the contrary, it might get our tails whipped.

Let's be real. Let's be a threat. Let's be recognized. Let's be strong. Let's be unbeatable.

Let's wake up in the morning, and make those dark spiritual forces say with trembling chins, "Oh no. I know who they are. They're trouble, and their light hurts my eyes."

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