

6 Strategies to Defeat the Joy Thief

We all have been disappointed at one time or another. In fact, it would be surprising if we went through an entire week without encountering some kind of **discouragement**. Many Christians are laying along the roadside of life devastated, because they have not learned how to deal with the problem.

It is not God's will for you to live a disappointed, devastated or oppressed life today—or any day. When you resist the devil at the onset of your discouragement and learn to place your **hope** and confidence in Jesus, you can live in His **joy** and **peace**.

Part of Jesus' earthly ministry was to go about in the anointing of the Holy Spirit and deliver all those who were oppressed by the devil. This same power is available to us today. Through Jesus we can fight the enemy's attempts to weigh us down—if we don't rebuke him, he will try to destroy us.

When the devil makes one move toward us, we should keep ourselves so spiritually tuned in that we discern what he is trying to do and back him down. With the power Jesus made available to us, he has no choice but to run.

Deuteronomy 30:19 teaches us that we have a choice: "I call heaven and earth to witness this day against you that I have set before you life and death, the blessings and the curses; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live" (AMP).

Happiness and joy come from within. Each day we can make the choice to be filled with misery or have the joy of the Lord. Either we choose to listen to the devil and allow him to make us miserable, or we choose to withstand him so we can live in

the fullness of life that God has provided for us. We need to take the kingdom of God—righteousness, peace and joy mentioned in Romans 14:17—by force. As soon as you feel disappointed, stop the devil.

We are to “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12) in our daily struggle against the enemy and in our own minds and hearts. I have learned six strategies that we need to defeat Satan:

- **Think aggressively.** Don’t just sit around wishing your troubles would disappear. Plan and calculate, like a general preparing for battle, how to engage and defeat the enemy.
- **Pray fervently.** Hebrews 4:16 instructs us to approach God’s throne confidently and boldly. That means aggressively! Don’t be bashful with God. Step forward with confidence and tell Him what you need.
- **Speak fearlessly.** First Peter 4:11 tells us “whoever speaks [let him do it as one who utters] oracles of God.” As the children of God, you and I are to have a spiritually commanding voice against the forces of evil.
- **Give abundantly.** The way we give is the way we receive (Luke 6:38). No offering is too small and none too great. Give as God gives.
- **Work intently.** Whatever we put our hand to, we need to do it aggressively (see Eccl. 9:10). Don’t approach tasks with dread and a desire to escape. Stir yourself up in the Holy Spirit and get the job done.
- **Love unconditionally.** As children of God, we must love others as God loves us, and that means sacrificially.

You can learn to defend yourself against disappointment by

focusing on God, meditating on His promises, confessing His Word, and submitting yourself and your situation to Him in prayer. No matter what you have lost or how bad you may feel, you still have the ability to direct your thoughts away from the negative and toward the positive. In choosing to be positive, you can replace devastation with hope and expectation.

Take an inventory of what you have left, not just what you've lost. This keeps your mind in the present where God is. Remember, Jesus called Himself, "I am," not "I was" or "I will be." He is here for you. Today you can have **joy!**

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