

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## Vigilance

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**T**he terrorist bombings in our country painfully remind us of the constant need to be vigilant.

When the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon were penetrated by suicide bombers, the FBI and law enforcement agencies quickly began to gather up background information, detain possible involved suspects and tighten security throughout our country. At least one of the nineteen hijackers had an expired visa. If so much information could be gained after the fact, it makes one wonder if more vigilance applied regarding those who are our avowed enemies could have made it more difficult for the terrorists to execute their murderous mission.

All Christians have an enemy who is out to destroy their souls. He is the devil. How do we keep him from accomplishing his goal of destroying us spiritually? Peter exhorts all, “Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (I Peter 5:8). The devil is out to devour us. God’s immediate antidote is to be mentally alert (sober) and watchful (vigilance). Our English word, vigilance, comes from the Latin “vigilans”

which means to be “wakeful”. The Greek word translated vigilant also conveys the idea of “being awake”.

We all must be knowledgeable of the ways the devil uses to destroy us. This is no secret. We know that he tempts us to sin through the lust of the flesh, the vain glory of life and lust of the eyes. This is how he approached Jesus to tempt Him (Matthew 4: 2-3, 5-6, 8-9). The devil uses the things of the world, and packages them in these three ways to tempt us. (I John 2:16).

Knowing of these ways, we must then be mentally alert and vigilant to make sure we do not succumb to the devil’s ways to destroy us. Jesus says, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit is willing but flesh is weak” (Mark 14:38). Do you constantly watch for your soul’s well-being and pray this prayer? It is one thing to know what we are to do, have the ability to do it, but then not put the plan into action. Through constant vigilance and prayer, we can work with God to keep us from spiritual harm.

Discouragement is another tactic the devil employs to destroy

us. This is the context for Peter’s exhortation in I Peter 5:8. Christians were being persecuted. Sometimes in persecution, a Christian will begin to be discouraged, thinking that he or she is all alone. Peter adds to his exhortation of vigilance regarding the devil with, “...whom withstand steadfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren in the world” (I Peter 5:9). Keeping our faith strong in the faithfulness of God, and knowing that others in the world are willing to suffer for the cause of truth help us withstand the tactic of the devil to discourage us.

We must be constantly vigilant as to our love and priorities in life. We know we are to love the lord with all of our being (Matthew 22:37), but has your lack of constant vigilance caused your love and priorities to gradually focus upon other things? The love of money and the desire to become rich causes people to fall away from the faith and then perish in destruction (I Timothy 6:9-10). Keep a constant vigil upon your love. Place it upon the Lord, and your priority upon heaven. Vigilance is the key to our spiritual well-being.