

*There is therefore **now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus**, who don't walk according to the flesh, but **according to the Spirit**. For the **law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus made me free from the law of sin and of death**. For what the law couldn't do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God did, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, **he condemned sin in the flesh**; that the ordinance of **the law might be fulfilled in us**, who walk not after the flesh, but **after the Spirit**. For those who live according to the flesh **set their minds on the things of the flesh**, but those who live according to the Spirit, the **things of the Spirit**. For the mind of the flesh is death, but **the mind of the Spirit is life and peace**; (Romans 8:1-6)*

*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor **angels**, nor **principalities**, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, **will be able to separate us from the love of God**, which is **in Christ Jesus our Lord**. (Romans 8:38-39)*

*For though we walk in the flesh, we don't wage war according to the flesh; for **the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh**, but mighty before God to the throwing down of strongholds, **throwing down imaginations** and every high thing that is **exalted against the knowledge of God**, and **bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ**; (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)*

Where do these imaginations and rogue thoughts originate?

*And **there was war in heaven**, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. **The dragon and his angels waged war**, and they were **not strong enough**, and there was **no longer a place found for them in heaven**. And the great dragon was **thrown down**, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.*

*Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "**Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night**". **And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death**". **For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them**. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time." (Revelation 12:7-12 NAS95)*

The **fight** we are in is not external but **internal**. It involves **what we believe**, both about God's disposition towards us as well as what or who we allow to **define our own identity and worth**. The **war** began in heaven, and it **involves accusations**. It is these **accusing assertions** that compose the ammunition the devil uses to **captivate our imagination** and hold us **hostage** with lies.

***Rejoice in the Lord always!** Again I will say, **Rejoice!** Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious, but **in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving**, let your requests be made known to God. And **the peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will **guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus**. Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, **think about these things**. The things which you learned, received, heard, and saw in me: do these things, and **the God of peace will be with you**. (Philippians 4:4-9)*

*In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; God will appoint salvation for walls and bulwarks. **Open the gates, That the righteous nation which keeps the truth may enter in. You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You. Because he trusts in You. Trust in the LORD forever, For in YAH, the LORD, is everlasting strength.** (Isaiah 26:1-4 NKJV)*

What is this strong city where we are kept in peace securely? It is the **New Jerusalem** which is composed of all who **choose to believe the truth** as it is in Jesus that alone sets us free from the law of sin and death. This truth is **not a set of doctrines** but the truth about reality, **about love and when embraced is experienced** because we choose to **identity with truth** of Jesus who overcame the world.

*Finally, **be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world's rulers of the darkness of this age, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.** (Ephesians 6:10-13)*

*Grace to you and **peace be multiplied in the knowledge of God** and of Jesus our Lord, seeing that **his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and virtue; by which he has granted to us his precious and exceedingly great promises; that through these you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust.** (2 Peter 1:2-4)*

*For this cause, we also, since the day we heard this, don't cease praying and making requests for you, that you may be **filled with the knowledge of his will** in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, that you may walk worthily of the Lord, to please him in all respects, **bearing fruit in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to the might of his glory, for all endurance and perseverance with joy; giving thanks to the Father, who made us fit to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who delivered us out of the power of darkness, and translated us into the Kingdom of the Son of his love; in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of our sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in the heavens and on the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and for him.** (Colossians 1:9-16)*

*having been buried with him in **baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God**, who raised him from the dead. **You were dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh. He made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, wiping out the handwriting in ordinances which was against us; and he has taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross; having stripped the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.** (Colossians 2:12-15)*

*I will hear what God, Yahweh, will speak, for **he will speak peace to his people, his saints; but let them not turn again to folly.** (Psalms 85:8)*

What could it look like to **turn again to folly?**

Allowing the accuser's familiar slander to **go unchallenged** in our imagination.

Accusations steal peace; Jesus' **presence** and words **induce peace.**

I choose who to **listen** to, who is **allowed to occupy space** in my imagination all day.

I ultimately am making the choices as to **who is given access** to shape my perceptions and reactions.

I do not have the strength to save myself from the power of sin and lies and live in freedom.

But **I do have the authority** of free choice to determine **who gets permission** to live in my head.

*I have seen his ways, and **will heal him**: I will lead him also, and restore comforts to him and to his mourners. **I create the fruit of the lips: Peace, peace,** to him who is far off and to him who is near, says Yahweh; and **I will heal him**. But the wicked are like the troubled sea; for it can't rest, and its waters cast up mire and dirt. (Isaiah 57:18-20)*

*Behold, the time is coming, yes, and has now come, that you will be scattered, everyone to his own place, and you will leave me alone. Yet **I am not alone, because the Father is with me.***

*I have told you these things, that **in me you may have peace**. In the world you have oppression; but cheer up! **I have overcome the world.**" (John 16:32-33)*

*Above all these things, walk in love, which is the bond of perfection. And **let the peace of God rule in your hearts**, to which also you were called in one body; and **be thankful**. **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly**; in all wisdom teaching and **admonishing one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your heart to the Lord.** (Colossians 3:14-16)*

*Now **may the God of peace**, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, our Lord Jesus, **make you complete in every good work** to do his will, **working in you** that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:20-21)*