

# "I AIN'T A SKEERED A YOU !"

## (Mark 3:27)

By Carl P. McMurray

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The title was, on more than one occasion, the precursor of some great battle over some real or imagined threat to this author in his youth. These were the beginning lines to kick adrenalin into gear and "get ready. " Whether the fight was actually with fists, or verbal, or just threats between boys (most of the time!) this was the battle cry or challenge.

As I've gotten much older and a little wiser, I've come to see other enemies lurking near from time to time. Among them all, Satan has become one of the greatest.

Sometimes his threats are just "tests" and imaginary. Most often, however, his threats are real and he is ready to lead one down some appealing path away from God and into darkness. James 4:17 teaches us to "...resist the Devil and he will flee..." That's good advice. But it's kind of like the advice fathers give their sons on how to deal with bullies at school. "Just stand up to him and he'll leave you alone," we say. We sometimes forget how hard it is to stand up to someone that we're afraid of. Once a fellow does it a few times it gets easier, just like resisting temptation - But, that first time is tough, isn't it?

In Mark 3:27 Jesus speaks of Himself casting out demons as "plundering the strong man's house. " This world is Satan's house and Jesus was "whupp'in the fire outa him." He also explained that the only way this could be done was by "first binding the strong man." This gives us some insight, I believe, into this battle we're engaged in. Those who try to walk too close to Satan, who say to themselves, " ...that won't bother me" or "I will influence them, not be influenced" are deceiving themselves. They're treating the Devil like he's weak or stupid and we can "play" with him. The truth is that he is "strong" and "like a lion." He is a liar and a murderer and he will kill us if he get's the chance. The only way to whip him is to "bind" him first. This is a helpful strategy.

Jesus "bound" Satan by preaching the word of God and exercising God's powerful light in a dark world. We can too. Every time you spend 30 minutes in real, truthful Bible study you cinch a knot on that "strong man." Every time you sincerely open your heart to your Father in humble prayer you "fling 'em back." Every time you eat the body and blood with a discerning heart, pick up a fallen brother or sister, shed a tear for joy during a song of praise, or encourage one who is young in the faith you hogtie that old dragon. Every time you turn your back on some activity of this world to take part in an activity of the next, you "slap the tar outa him."

Childish things are good to "put away" as we mature, but lessons learned in childhood are sometimes the ones we need the most. Do not be afraid of the

consequences of standing in the truth. Do not be intimidated by peer pressure, or family pressure, or personal desire. Let us go to work "binding" this strong man, one knot at a time. With some faithful knot tying I think we'll be surprised at how weak the Devil becomes and how much "plunder" we can take from him in joy, contentment, love and even the souls of men. It's time for a renewed battle cry and a revived spirit to run this bully off "our" block. Let's determine within ourselves to rise everyday facing our fight with the challenge in our hearts, "Devil, I ain't a skeered a you!"

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