

## Who Do You Think You Are? (Part Two)

By Wayne Vasilenko

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### Manipulating Your Reactions

In Part One of this message I attempted to show a few ways that Satan manipulates our thinking through various means. I gave a few illustrations as to how our everyday thoughts, feelings, and ultimately our beliefs can be steered in one direction or another simply by the manipulation of words. We are emotional creations. Although some other animals exhibit signs of emotion, we, (man and woman) are at the top when it comes to being affected by emotion. Our emotions can be steered so that our response is a person saying to another, "I love you" just as easily as we can react by saying "I hate you!" It comes about for the most part through words. Consider this, if every time we met I slapped you in the face and called you a "Low life dirt bag", I wouldn't expect you to react in a loving manner nor would I expect you to like me very much. I have a feeling that eventually you would slap me back or at the very least avoid me altogether. If this continued unabated, eventually I think you may even begin to believe that you just might be a low life dirt bag, after all why would I call you that every time I saw you? I doubt you would have anything nice to say about me as well. However, if every time we met I gave you a hug and told you how glad I was to see you and that I Loved You, I'd be willing to bet you would eventually look forward to our meetings. Eventually you would probably hug me back if you were reluctant to do so initially. I also think that if you were asked about me you'd eventually say that I'm a nice guy and I make you feel good, that I really care about you. Here I introduced physical interaction between us in conjunction with verbal interaction, one having a negative outcome, the other a positive one. The question is, "If we eliminate the physical aspect of each scenario (a slap in the face or a hug), would the outcome be the same?" Are the words just as powerful as the physical actions described?

### Bullies, Victims, Extreme Reactions

As long as there is social contact between people, there will always be "Bullies and Victims." Over the past decade it seems that we hear more and more of people having extreme reactions whether they are either the bully or the victim. Many times it eventually leads to either murder or suicide. My wife used to work with a woman whose daughter was harassed relentlessly by some of her classmates in school. It got to a point of threats of physical harm... all for no particular reason! I remember when I was in High School in the late sixties; a young boy on my school bus was picked on daily by much bigger and older kids, for no particular reason. I never could figure out why certain people always seem to be the ones being picked on. I also could not figure out why there were bullies; people seemingly obsessed with antagonizing anyone within close proximity, again all for no particular reason. Perhaps all of this social turmoil is just one other aspect of the Spiritual War that continues around us. Could it be that these bullies are simply doing Satan's bidding by attacking peoples self esteem? Are we as Christians immune from these attacks? It is apparent through God's word that we are to expect attacks.

#### **Ephesians 6:10-18 (New King James Version)**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of

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God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, <sup>15</sup> and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; <sup>16</sup> above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. <sup>17</sup> And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; <sup>18</sup> praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints...

If we were not to expect attacks then why would we need all this armor to protect us? To me this proves that Satan is behind it all. The fact that God provides protection tells me that no matter what... He loves us and He will protect us. It is interesting to note however that armor will do nothing to protect you unless you put it on. So how is your Self Esteem? When you look in the mirror, what do you see? We will explore this more in Part Three of this series.