**YIELD NOT TO TEMPTATION (#4)**

***Danger Close***

Unless you enjoy reading military history you might not have ever heard of the term “Danger Close.” If you are a foot soldier, a naval gunner, or a fighter pilot you are very, very familiar with that term. The military personnel who know it better than anyone is the infantryman who is on the front line within eyesight or earshot of the enemy. Usually they are in a life-and-death firefight, and often surrounded and badly outnumbered. Their job is to get as close to the enemy position as possible so that they can call in coordinates to the Air Force fighter jets in the vicinity, or the Naval gunships miles out at sea, or to the mortar launchers a few hundred yards behind them.

It goes something like this:
Sgt. Preston (Army scout, radio in hand, focused on the enemy now firing at them):
*"Steelrain, Steelrain, this is Hitman calling in*[*fire mission*](https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=fire%20mission)*, popeye uniform 059 098 038 degrees 200 metres,*[***danger close***](https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=danger%20close)*."*

Lt. Columbo (Air Force F-35 fighter jet 60 miles from target sets position and fires ASM – Air To Surface Missle):  *"This is Steelrain.* [*Roger that*](https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=roger%20that)*Hitman, splash in 5 seconds"* . . . . . BOOM!

Sgt. Preston: “Steelrain, Steelrain … Splashdown!” I owe you one!
Lt. Columbo: “Copy that Hitman! I’ll cash that IOU. Over and out.”

A “Danger Close” call for supporting fire is when friendly troops are within 600 meters for mortar and artillery; within 750 meters for a 5-inch naval gun; or 1000 meters for a Naval gun larger than 5 inches. If impact is too close the explosions could easily cause “*friendly fire*” which often results in the deaths of your own troops. In 1991, during the Gulf War, 35 of the 148 deaths of British and American forces were caused by friendly fire. *Danger Close* is a real concern during war.

Peter, James and John were totally unaware of the danger they were in as they finished the Passover meal and sang hymns as they walked to their old stomping grounds at the Garden of Gethsemane. They had made this trip many times. Judas knew it too. After pulling these three men aside Jesus confides in them these words: “*My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch*” (Mk. 14:34). After praying for His Father to take this cup of suffering away, He returns and “*found them sleeping*.” He looked Peter in the eye and said, “*Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour?* ***Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation****. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*” (Mk. 14:37-38).

Jesus could certainly see the *Danger Close* position they were in. They had no idea Satan was at that very moment stalking them. They were about to “*enter into temptation*” and were clueless to their danger. The NIV translates that phrase, “*fall into temptation*,” implying they didn’t see it coming, like falling into a hole. It was about to blindside them. We all sadly know what happened. The fact is Peter should have seen it coming. Just hours before Jesus had a one-on-one with him when He said, “*Simon, Simon! Satan has asked for you to sift you like wheat. But I have prayed for you that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren*” (Lk. 22:31-32).

Peter felt secure in his commitment to the Lord, proudly declaring, “*Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death*!” Regretfully, we also know how that boast turned out when the rooster crowed before sunrise and Peter was found weeping bitterly in shame (Matt. 26:75). He had not watched and prayed.

For us to be able to “yield not to temptation” we have to be able to recognize it when it is nearby. Far too many of us become victims (or, as in our illustration, casualties) to the dangers that are lurking nearby. Far too often we seem to have no idea how close we are to the dangers of a lion stalking us, seeking to devour us at any moment (I Pet. 5:8). A lion’s prey never suspects his presence until they hear the roar. Then, as viewed on a National Geographic documentary, the roar paralyzes the prey and it is too late. The next scene reveals dinner time for the lioness and her cubs.

If we are going to ask God, “*do not lead us into temptation*, *but deliver us from the evil one*” (Matt. 6:13), then we have to do our part by being vigilant at all times. A soldier in combat can never be “at ease,” but must always stand at attention and “*put on the whole armor of God … take up the whole armor of G*od … *that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil … that you may be able to withstand in the evil day*” (Eph. 6:11-13). Taking off the battle fatigues is to invite disaster. The enemy eagerly waits for you to “stand down” and relax your guard.

Brethren, think of your last five sins. Whether it was the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life (I Jn. 2:15) you gave in to temptation because, in the heat of the moment, you only thought of “*the passing pleasures of sin*” (Heb. 11:25), instead of “*the wages of sin is death*” (Rom. 6:23). You saw a carnival, not a casket. The temporary trumped the eternal. Again, just think of those five sins. Why did you give in to temptation?

If we could only see beyond the physical world to where “*principalities and powers*” are at this moment trying to “*separate us from the love of God*” (Rom. 8:38). If we could only see the “*principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this age, the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places*” (Eph. 6:12). We “*fall into temptation*” because we take our enemy too lightly. We don’t see the wolf in sheep’s clothing who comes as a thief in order to do one thing, “*to* *steal, to kill, and to destroy*” (Jn. 10:10).

So, how are you going to *yield not to temptation*? Here’s how:
1. Lean on your brethren for support and fellowship (Gal. 6:1-2; Jam. 5:19-20)
2. Study and memorize scriptures that resist Satan and sin (Psa. 119:11; 2 Tim. 2:15)
3. Sing with grace, sing with melody, in your heart to the Lord (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19)
4. Know Satan is stalking you. Danger Close. Watch and pray (Eph. 6:10f; Mk. 14:37)

Yes, watch and pray. In so doing you will not become a casualty of war, but instead, when Satan is near, you can call in to Jesus the coordinates of *Danger Close*.

Ask the Savior to help you, comfort, strengthen and keep you, He is willing to aid you, He will carry you through. – Rick