



"By their fruits shall ye know them" Matt. 7:16

TEMPTATIONS PECULIAR TO THE SANCTIFIED

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Entire Sanctification, A Second Blessing
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INTRODUCTION

For forty years the name C. W. Ruth has been a synonym for soundness in the teaching of the doctrine of holiness after the Wesleyan interpretation. And it is not logically possible for one who is sound on this central tenet of scriptural orthodoxy to be heterodox on any theme directly related to it. Therefore thousands of people who have, by the preaching and writing of Evangelist C. W. Ruth, been safely directed into the conditions upon which God has bestowed His regenerating and sanctifying grace are always eager to hear him on a new theme, and the instruction and exhortation he gives are always safe and practical and worthy of all acceptance.

Hitherto, by far the larger portion of Brother Ruth's writings have dealt with the crises by which the soul is brought into the grace of full salvation. He is known far and near as pre-eminently a "second blessing preacher." His work as evangelist has compelled him to think and pray and plan primarily for immediate results in the responses of his hearers and readers.

But no man could live the life of a sanctified man as long as C. W. Ruth has lived it without having much to do with the temptations which are common to Christians in this state of grace, and none could attain the splendid reputation as "an overcomer" that he has gained without, incidentally, learning much that should be of great value to all who are sincerely anxious to "perfect holiness" in the fear of the Lord.

But besides having been a faithful scholar in the school of experience, C. W. Ruth is a theologian, a logician and a philosopher. He reasons and seeks out connections and deduces sound conclusions. Thus he is able, not only to write of temptation as he has known it, but also to treat of it as it may appear in the experiences and lives of others.

No one can doubt that a book on "Temptations Peculiar to the Sanctified" has been needed for a long time, and that it is needed now more than ever. And no one who knows the author of the present volume and his relationship to the holiness movement will doubt for a moment that he is the one to give us such a book. In fact, it would have seemed that he was negligent of duty if he had died without producing the book you now hold in your hand. This book will become a veritable spiritual manual for sanctified Christians and will be as effective a means in helping souls to keep the grace of God as the author's former writings

have been in assisting them to get it.

And despite the incongruity involved in a stripling's attempt to introduce a man of war, I am happy to commend Evangelist C. W. Ruth and his book, and to say to any who may possibly know me and not him: Buy this book, read it for your own soul's defense, sell it to your neighbors, give it to your intimate friends, and help it to reach out far and wide to the accomplishment of the glorious mission which it is competent and destined to fulfill. And may all those who must face a multitude of such temptations as are peculiar to the sanctified, enjoy also that life of constant victory which is also peculiar to the sanctified.

Yours in that love that never faileth,

J. B. Chapman,

Editor Herald of Holiness



01 – THE WHY OF TEMPTATION

Temptations are a part of the Christian's curriculum, and are essential to the development of a Christian character. In the first place they serve as monitors, reminding us of our utter weakness, and necessary dependence upon divine aid. They detach us and wean us from the world, and human dependencies, and drive us to prayer and reliance upon God. They develop the iron graces of faith, and patience, and fidelity, and thus save us from becoming mollicoddles or jelly-fish.

The reader would not be the Christian you are if it had not been for the trials and temptations you have encountered. It was when the sky looked most threatening, and human props were swept away, that you prayed the most earnestly, and the promises of God seemed most precious, and you leaned the hardest upon the strong arm of your Lord. The fact is, not many can endure continued prosperity and affluence without becoming self-reliant and self-sufficient – and backsliding. As we read in Deut. 32:15, “Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.” “When he slew them, then they sought Him: and they returned and enquired early after God” (Psalm 78:34).

A good soldier must learn to take blows as well as to give blows; a good sailor must learn how to utilize a head-wind. Temptations and trials are to the spiritual life, what the exercises in a gymnasium are to the physical life. Thus we become stronger and more useful. Having passed through the ordeal ourselves we know the better how to help, and how to sympathize with, others who may be passing through similar trials. When we ourselves have received help, and been divinely comforted in the midst of “our tribulation,” we will “be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God” (2 Cor. 1:4). Because Christ “Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted” (Heb. 2:18).

It is by trials and temptations that He “proves” us, and discovers the sincerity of our purpose, and the fidelity and loyalty of our hearts. As was said to the children of Israel, “The Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no” (Deut. 8:2). Not only does He thus “prove” us, but it is in the hour

of temptation that we “prove” God, (Psalm 95:9) and demonstrate to others His faithfulness, and the reality and power of His saving grace. It is thus “that the trial of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:7).



02 – THE TWO-FOLD NATURE OF TEMPTATION

The word temptation is used in a twofold sense in the Scripture. First, to denote a test, a challenge, or a trial, as in Gen. 22:1, where we read, “And it came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham.” Also in Rev. 3 :10, “Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.” When “God did tempt Abraham,” there was no solicitation nor enticement to evil; it was purely a test and trial of his faith, in the offering up of his only son Isaac.

But the more common use of the word temptation, as understood by the Christian world of today, refers to a satanic prompting or enticement to evil. It is in this use of the term that James says , “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man” -- to evil. (James 1:13)

Since there is no experience in grace, and no vocation, situation or place in this world in which the Christian is promised immunity or exemption from temptation, it is well for us to understand and know some things about this subject; and always to heed the warning and admonition of the Savior when He said, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation” (Matt. 26:41).

Some Christians have supposed that if they were sanctified wholly they would henceforth have no more trials or temptations, and would have nothing to do but to rejoice and shout the high praises of God; but they soon become disillusioned, for it is likely they will now experience more intense, if not more frequent, assaults from the enemy than ever before. This is on the principle that burglars will make a more determined effort to burglarize a mansion known to possess great wealth and riches, than they would to burglarize some vacant or dilapidated shack. We think there are some persons whom Satan does not annoy or tempt very much because he knows they do not possess anything of value, and he is reasonably sure of them anyway; why should he tempt such? But when the soul becomes the custodian of heaven’s riches, and becomes a multimillionaire in spiritual treasures, having a good supply of the “gold tried in the fire,” it should not be thought strange if the old thief would be found prowling about those premises; but the sanctified soul has improved safety devices, and more capital to run his business; more power of resistance.

When the matter is properly understood, such a one can readily “count it all joy” when he falls “into divers temptations” (James 1:2); for if the devil is after you, it proves most conclusively that he doesn’t have you; and it proves that you are still ahead; and it proves that Satan knows that you have something worth while, or he would not seek to rob you; and because of the temptation you will become stronger and more useful in the kingdom of God. Yes, you can actually get happy because the devil is after you; always remembering that “God is faithful, who will not suffer [will not allow] you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Cor. 10:13).



03 – IMPORTANT DISTINCTIONS CONCERNING TEMPTATION

Temptation Versus Sin

It is important at once that we distinguish between temptation and sin. It is no sin to be tempted, seeing Christ was tempted, and yet without sin. It is only when the temptation is consented to, and the will yields to the suggestion and sollicitation coming from the tempter, that sin enters.

Temptation is that which proceeds from the enemy; sin is that which proceeds from the individual.

Hence, we must not call our temptations sin, nor our sins merely temptations.

Sin And Mistakes

A sin is a thing of the heart, whereas, a mistake is a thing of the head. A mistake is something you did when you knew no better; a sin is something you did when you did know better.

Every tribunal of justice recognizes the fact that motive determines the morality of the act. Because of ignorance, and because the human intellect never becomes infallible, we may never be saved from making mistakes; but we can be and must be saved from all sin.

Accusations of Satan And Reproof of The Spirit

In like manner, it is important that the sanctified soul should early learn to distinguish between the accusations of Satan and the reproofs of the Spirit. The accusations of Satan should be instantly resisted and rejected; whereas, the reproof of the Spirit should be instantly heeded and obeyed.

The Holy Spirit never taunts and torments the soul by accusing and criticizing, and insinuating against it; that is always the work of Satan. He had evidently been engaged in that nefarious business up in heaven, for we read in Revelation 12:10, “I heard a loud voice saying in heaven . . . the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.” And since he is on earth he is ever seeking to torment, and falsely accuse the saints on earth.

He will dump a lot of stuff on your doorstep, and then assume the role of a ventriloquist and accuse you for having it there, and thus seek to destroy the peace and happiness of the soul. “Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). The Holy Spirit simply gives light, and gently reproofs, and warns, and woos the soul, and if persistently disobeyed, becomes grieved, and wounded, and sadly departs, leaving the soul in desolation and darkness.

Evil Thoughts And Thoughts of Evil

The failure to distinguish between evil thoughts and thoughts of evil on the part of a sanctified soul has occasioned much unnecessary suffering, and soul loss, Thoughts about evil are suggested from without, and cannot be avoided while the evil is all about us;

indeed, we are obliged to think about the evil before we can hope to remedy the same; but “evil thoughts” originate within, and are the product and the evidence of an evil heart (See Mark 7:21) . However, when a person can feel complacent in the presence of that which suggests thoughts of evil, and takes pleasure in the same, thoughts of evil become evil thoughts, and must invariably incur guilt.

As someone has well said, “While we cannot prevent the birds from flying over our heads, we can prevent them from building nests in our hair.” A person may have thoughts about evil and have a pure heart: but no one can have “evil thoughts” and have a clean heart. Of evil thoughts it has been said,

“Sow a thought and reap a desire;
Sow a desire and reap an act;
Sow an act and reap a habit;
Sow a habit and reap a character;
Sow a character and reap a destiny.”

Christ had thoughts about the evil that is in the world, and came to save men from the evil, and its consequences; but Christ had no “evil thoughts.” If the fountain is clean, the stream issuing from the same will be clean.

The Twofold Source Of Temptation

The Bible clearly teaches that there are at least two separate and distinct sources of temptation; the one that we may ever expect to have, and the other that we need not, and should not have. To make this clear, we would first refer to the temptations of Christ in the wilderness, as mentioned in the fourth chapter of Matthew. The record plainly states that He was “tempted of the devil.” These temptations were wholly from without. Satan was not in Christ, hence the temptations came from the outside. This is what may be termed the legitimate source of temptation, to which the Christian will be subject as long as he is in a state of probation. The Christian must not expect Satan to quit business simply because he has set up shop; he is not that sort of a devil; and he will ever ply his nefarious business.

But in James 1:14, we read of another source of temptation, as follows: “Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.” Here the source of temptation is from within – from “his own lust.” The word “lust” in the Scripture has reference to any unholy desire. The apostle is here saying, there are certain unholy desires, originating within – springing up from our own depraved natures – by which we are “drawn away” and “enticed.” We are undertaking to say that Jesus did not have this form or source of temptation; *and we need not and should not have it either.* **

In order to state this matter more clearly we would say, the carnal mind, “our old man,” original, or inbred sin, which was inherited by us as a result of the fall in the garden of Eden, is a most potent factor in temptation -we think this will be readily admitted by all Christians. Now, whatever part this depravity of our own natures may have in the matter of our temptations, was certainly lacking in the temptations of Christ – for the most excellent reason that He was always pure and holy, and had no carnal nature.

At this point someone is likely to quote the statement found in Hebrews, that Christ was “tempted in all points, as we are.” So we would ask the reader to turn to this passage, found in Hebrews 4:15, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” That is how we read it, and that is what it seems to say; but a little more careful scrutinizing of this passage will disclose the fact that there are three words italicized: “we are yet.” Every Bible student knows that this is done so that the reader may know that these words were not in the original text, but have been supplied by the translators. Since these three words were

not in the original text, we will omit them, and read, “but was in all points tempted like as . . . without sin.” He was tempted as a holy soul is tempted; as a person is tempted who is “without sin.” He was not “drawn away of his own lust, and enticed,” for He had no indwelling sin; and neither should we have indwelling sin -since the blood of Jesus will cleanse it out of our hearts (1 John 1:7).

It may be interesting to note what part this indwelling sin-nature plays in our temptations.

“Our old man” (Rom. 6: 6) and the devil are of close kin, and work together. For instance, when Satan knocks on the door from without – through some provocation, aggravation or temptation that may touch us – if the “old man” is still within, he is likely to respond and open the door by prompting us to “give as good as they sent,” and “let them know what we think of them,” and “stand up for our rights,” etc., and thus let bitterness come into our hearts.

It was not so much what the other party said, or did, that caused us to backslide, as it was what we said and felt in our own hearts. It is that inward response to the temptations from without, that is our greatest peril, and occasions the inward conflict, and struggle, and unrest. We would insist that this inward foe may be entirely eradicated and exterminated by the sanctification; *so that although the enemy will attack and assault us from without, we may have constant victory and peace and rest within.* **

Some have inquired, “How could a holy soul be tempted?” We would answer, just as Jesus was tempted; or just as holy angels have been tempted; or just as our fore-parents who were created holy in the garden of Eden, were tempted. There certainly was no appeal to, nor response from, anything that was evil within, They were not “drawn away” by their “own lust, and enticed.” The temptation entered through the will, seeing they were free moral agents, having the power of choice.

The unregenerate heart may be likened to a field covered with weeds, and thorns; in the experience of regeneration these weeds and thorns are all removed, and the surface of the soil is clear; *but some roots remain* in the soil and these roots are inclined to sprout and manifest themselves in impatience, and pride, and doubt; in entire sanctification all these roots are removed, Now there must be placed around this field a fence – the posts of which are obedience, and the rails of faith. But the enemy is ever alert and busy on the outside, and ever seeks to destroy, or break down this fence – and if he can succeed in doing so, he will again quickly sow the seeds of sin, and tares in that field (heart) that had been entirely cleansed.

How could a sanctified person sin? Just as a person who has been entirely cured of some malignant disease, might be stricken again by failing to observe the laws of health, or by undue exposure. But in such case the fault is wholly his own.



04 – TEMPTATIONS PECULIAR TO THE SANCTIFIED

Spiritual Pride

The “abundance of the revelations” may become the occasion of temptation to spiritual pride, as in the case of Paul – necessitating the “thorn in the flesh,” lest he should become “exalted above measure” (2 Cor. 12:7). There are at least four kinds of pride: namely, race

pride, face pride, place pride and grace pride, -and this latter pride is perhaps the most subtle and dangerous of the four.

The person who prides himself in the fact that he has an experience in grace making him superior to the rest of his brethren, is almost certain to become an egotist and a bigot; assuming that he is a favorite with the Lord, and therefore refuses to be advised and warned of his peril until it is too late. It is usually this sort of pride that “goeth before destruction,” and the “haughty spirit before a fall” (Prov. 16:18).

The adversary is not particular whether we become disheartened and discouraged, or exalted and puffed up, as either will accomplish his purpose, and result fatally. The suggestion that one is superior to others, always comes from the enemy, and will minister to spiritual pride, if not instantly rejected; and “being lifted up with pride” they fall into the condemnation of the devil” (1 Tim. 3:6).

Waning of Ecstasies

One of the most common temptations peculiar to the sanctified life comes through the waning of ecstasies. No person can always feel just the same – even though he has been sanctified.

“Ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations,” nevertheless still “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” (1 Peter 1:5, 6). There is no experience in grace where a person is exempt from temptation; and “manifold temptations” bring “heaviness.”

Thus we see that the spirit of “heaviness” is perfectly compatible with the spirit of holiness; that a person may be in heaviness “for a season” and still have the blessing, and be “kept by the power of God,” “ready to be revealed in the last time.” This is perhaps one of the most difficult lessons a sanctified person has to learn, When there is a fullness of joy, and the emotions are stirred, a person is likely to think he is all right; but when the joy subsides and there is not that exuberance and overflowing joy that had formerly characterized the experience, the enemy is sure to whisper, and suggest that the experience of entire sanctification has been lost, and that the Lord has become displeased, and therefore they cannot rejoice as they formerly did. This is a most adroit and subtle temptation, in that it not only is calculated to destroy the faith of the believer, but diverts the attention from the Savior to one’s self.

We venture to say, perhaps ninety-nine out of every hundred who have ever lost the experience of sanctification, have lost it because they entertained the suggestion of the enemy relative to their feelings; as he whispered, “You do not feel right;” “You do not feel as you formerly did;” “You do not feel as others say they feel,” they admitted the entering wedge of doubt, and soon were not only in “heaviness,” but in utter darkness. Had they remembered that we are “kept by the power of God through faith,” regardless of feeling and continued to stick to the facts of a complete consecration, and unwavering faith in the all cleansing blood of Jesus, they would have triumphed, and come off more than conquerors.

Indefinite Testimony

One of the early temptations coming to all who have obtained the experience of sanctification, is, to be indefinite and evasive in giving testimony to this second work of grace; especially is this the case where there is opposition to such testimony. At such times the enemy will suggest that if they will but live the sanctified life, it will not be necessary to witness to the same by the word of mouth, seeing that the life speaks louder than words.

But we read in Rom. 10:10, “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” M-o-u-t-h does not spell life; it spells mouth; And in Revelation 12:11, we read, “They overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;” In persuading them to refrain from definite testimony the enemy has gained his first victory over them.

The divine instructions to the children of Israel, after they had entered Canaan – which is a type of the sanctified life – were as follows: “When thou art come in unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and possessest it, and dwellest therein; that thou shalt take of the first of all the fruit of the earth, which thou shalt bring of thy land that the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go into the place [the church] which the Lord thy God shall choose to place His name there. And thou shalt go unto the priest [the pastor] that shall be in those days, and say unto him, I profess this day unto the Lord, thy God, that I am come unto the country which the Lord sware unto our fathers for to give us” (Deut. 26:1-3). They might have reasoned, and said, “What is the use of saying, ‘I profess this day’?” Would not the fruit in the basket be a sufficient witness and proof that they were in the land? But God demanded the testimony, as well as the fruit; thus teaching that life and lip – the testimony and the fruit – are inseparable.

He who does not live the experience will not long have a clear testimony; and he who is not faithful in testimony will not long live the life consistently. The golden bell and the pomegranate, alternately, on the hem of the robe of the ephod worn by the high priest while ministering in the holy of holies (Exodus 28:33-35) teach precisely the same lesson; the pomegranate signifying the fruit in the life, and the golden bell the testimony. They must not be separated. The consecration made in order to obtain the experience requires obedience and faithfulness in witnessing to the same.



05 – TEMPTATIONS PECULIAR TO THE SANCTIFIED -- (Continued)

Impatience With Others

Because of the clarified vision and increased light, and the new impetus and accelerated movement that has resulted from the new-found experience of entire sanctification, there is likely to come a temptation to feel impatience with the dullness and sluggishness of (those who) have not yet sought and found the same experience; and unless the soul is watchful there will be a temptation to become critical and censorious, impugning the motives, and doubting the sincerity of (those who) do not immediately “walk in the light,” (which was given to you) and press into the experience. And then we have the sad spectacle of holiness people seeking to promote the beautiful experience of holiness in an unholy way.

At such times it is well to remind one’s self of the dullness and density we were in, for many long years, before we sought and found the experience; and that the matter was never fully understood and appreciated by us until after there had been given to us an inward illumination and revelation by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a personal heart experience. The “light” we have thus received may yet be darkness to those about us; Not until the Holy Spirit thus illuminates their hearts and minds, even as He did us, can they have a proper appreciation of that which has become so wonderful and glorious to us.

There is need of constant care and watchfulness at this point. A critical, fault-finding,

censorious spirit is injurious and detrimental to the promotion and experience of entire sanctification. The good shepherd “goeth before” his sheep to lead them; not to drive them in the way they should go.

The Suggestion To Compromise

Another challenge and temptation will soon come as a result of the aloofness and withdrawal of sympathy – oftentimes resulting in complete ostracism – on the part of such as were formerly your friends; and because of the furtive glance of the eye, the significant shrug of the shoulder and the secret whisper among those whom you love and long to help, because of the insistent misrepresentations and reproaches there will come a feeling of loneliness, and then the suggestion that you compromise just a little so as to prove to them that you are not an “old fogy,” an “extremist” or a “fanatic,” as they had supposed.

The temptation to become a little more liberal and broader in your views, so as to become more useful, and thus be enabled to win others for Christ, is such a subtle and plausible suggestion that even some who were supposed to be mature Christians have been deceived and beguiled thereby; compromise is the sure way to defeat.

It should be remembered that the way of holiness never was a popular way; and in the very nature of the case, true holiness can never become popular in this world – seeing it runs directly counter to all the customs, fads and fashions, of this world. “That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15); “Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God” (Jas. 4:4). There can be no truce nor temporizing, here; In order that Jesus might “sanctify the people with his own blood,” He must needs go outside the gate; and he who would enjoy this rich experience must “go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach” (Heb. 13:12,13). There is no other way.

Resting In A Past Experience

Another danger point lies in the temptation to feel, now that you have been sanctified, you are all right, and have it all, and therefore you can rest on your oars, and take it easy; and thus through a lack of persevering vigilance and prayer, and a failure to observe the necessary means of grace – such as secret prayer, reading the Word, family devotions, attendance of public services, seasons of quiet meditation and self-examination and waiting upon the Lord – there will soon come weakness and spiritual leanness; and although still subscribing to the doctrine, and professing to be “saved and sanctified,” the experience is largely a memory, and lacks the freshness and unction that formerly characterized the same: and soon it will simply be an “empty profession,” and “ancient history.” While no outward sin has been committed, the grace of perfect love has leaked out, because of “fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness” (Ezek. 16:49).

It requires just as much diligence and vigilance to retain the experience of sanctification as it did to obtain it.

Instead of consecration being merely an act, it must become an attitude, to be worked out in daily life: not an occasional matter, but a daily practice. Nor does it work itself out automatically, but requires a real heart purpose and a fixed determination to press on. There is no such thing as “getting it all;” and every experience in grace should be regarded as a stepping stone to higher altitudes of grace, and never as a finality.

It will help a person to remember that the best things are still ahead. “It is better farther on.” Instead of relaxing, and feeling content with present attainments, we should ever seek to redouble our pace, and press forward with renewed vigor. It was after Joshua was old, and

had been in Canaan a number of years, that the Lord said to him, “There remaineth yet very much land to be possessed” (Josh. 13:1). “Onward” should be our motto. “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day” (Prov. 4:18). “As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith” (Col. 2:6, 7).



06 – TEMPTATIONS PECULIAR TO THE SANCTIFIED -- (Continued)

Depreciating The Former Experience

One of the early temptations peculiar to the sanctified, is to underestimate and undervalue their former experience in justification. At times they may be heard to say, “When I was just only converted,” etc., as though that experience had not had much meaning to them. This, of course, is a most serious mistake.

There is absolutely no need nor occasion for anyone to minimize or depreciate the experience of justification in order to exalt and magnify the experience of entire sanctification. While we may appreciate the fact that by comparison the latter experience may seem to transcend and outshine the former in its fervor, and freedom, and fulness – in emphatic and ecstatic manifestations – it must, nevertheless, be remembered that the mercy which provides the forgiveness of sins, and quickens a dead soul into newness of life, is the greater miracle; and that without the work of regeneration -at which time we pass from “death unto life” (1 John 3:14; Eph. 2 :1), the experience of entire sanctification would have been impossible.

It is a wonderful, a most glorious experience, to be clearly, and scripturally “born again;” indeed, we think there is nothing comparable to it. And in no sense is it a half-way work. In analyzing the experience of the new birth, it will be seen that at least ten distinct things have taken place, as follows: 1. Holy Ghost awakening, and conviction for sin; 2. An unconditional surrender of the will; 3. . Repentance; 4. The exercise of a lively faith; 5. The pardon and forgiveness of every sin; 6. The quickening of the soul into newness of life; 7. The washing of regeneration; 8. Adoption into the family of God; 9. The bestowment of love, peace, joy and power to become the sons of God; 10. The witness of the Spirit, attesting, and certifying, the fact of our acceptance with God. While much of this occurs coetaneously – so that to have one is to have the other – they are nevertheless distinct, and all enter into the experience designated as “the new birth.” And this experience will save and keep the soul from sinning. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin” (1 John 3:9). Instead of minimizing, we would ever seek to magnify the experience of justification.

Mistaking Liberty For License

Another temptation peculiar to the sanctified life, is that of mistaking liberty for license.

Human nature, like the pendulum of a clock, is inclined to swing from one extreme to the other.

Having been in bondage and enslaved by sin for so long a time, and now suddenly emerging into liberty, and the perfect freedom of the Spirit, there is need of constant watchfulness, lest this liberty should be used as “an occasion to the flesh.” There is liberty always to do anything and everything that is right, and pure, and holy; but this must not be

mistaken for license to do anything that is doubtful, sinful or unholy. Irreverence, undue familiarity, insubordination, lightness, foolishness, inordinate affection, tending to free-loveism – all these things are the temptations and devices of Satan, in order to destroy the souls of men. To love too much is just as fatal to spiritual life, as not loving enough. Paul said, “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient” (1 Cor. 6:12) . “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free” (Gal. 5:1).

Mistaking Light For Guilt

Another temptation peculiar to the sanctified soul comes as a result of an increase of light.

As the Holy Spirit illuminates the mind, and unfolds new duties, and new responsibilities – and thus indicates some things that should be done – such as tithing, or fasting, or the call of God to certain lines of service: or, He may reveal some things that should be left undone – though other devout people may not seem to have any convictions or conscientious scruples in the matter – such as the wearing of gaudy attire, reading secular papers or traveling on the Sabbath, indulging in questionable amusements or doubtful habits – as light and conviction come upon the heart concerning such matters, the enemy is almost certain to accuse and condemn the soul concerning the past, and seek to prove that such a person evidently had not been sanctified – and if the person is not careful at this point, there will be a casting away of his confidence, and a questioning in his own mind whether he really had the blessing: Whereas, such person ought to thank God for an increase of light, which in itself is an evidence that he is growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior.

Such a person has nothing to do but walk in the light, and obey the promptings of the Spirit, and stick to the original contract to which he had agreed when first he made his consecration. No one is expected to do better than he knows, nor is he condemned for what he has not known. But when light is given, individual responsibility cannot be evaded. Indeed, light is ever the measure of our responsibility. As Jesus said, concerning this, “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.” “This is the condemnation, that light is come . . . and men loved darkness rather than light” (John 15:22; 3:19). It is only when men refuse to walk in the light, and deliberately disobey, that guilt is incurred, and condemnation sets in.

Gratification of Physical Appetites

Paul said, “I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (1 Cor. 9:27). Physical appetites, which are God-given, and wholly innocent, may nevertheless become the avenue of temptation, and the occasion of sin, when indulged and gratified excessively. Hence, the body must be kept under, and every physical appetite be brought into subjection, lest the tempter gain an advantage over us.

While eating, necessary food is God-ordained and absolutely legitimate and necessary, nevertheless, eating that which is known to be injurious, or eating too much and thus becoming gluttonous, is to yield to temptation, and become guilty of sin, While there is no sin in the body -no sin in matter – the body may nevertheless become the occasion and the instrument of sin.

“Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body” (1 Cor. 6:18). Thus the married, and the unmarried, may sin against the body by forbidden or excessive indulgence of fleshly appetites. Hence the injunction, “As ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity into iniquity, even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Rom. 6:19).

“What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:19, 20).

Misguided Zeal

Misguided zeal invariably leads to fanaticism. When Satan cannot keep a person in the ruts of a dead formalism he will invariably seek to rush that person over the precipice, into the snares of some soul-destroying fanaticism. While “it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing,” Paul complains concerning the Galatians, “They zealously affect you, but not well” (Gal. 4:17, 18). All fanaticism has in it some phase of truth; but invariably it is distorted truth, and distorted truth is error. It places first what God placed last, or vice versa, and thus diverts the mind from that which is most essential and imperative. Usually a misguided zeal will place undue emphasis upon demonstration, or upon some of the gifts of the Spirit – such as “healing,” or the “speaking in tongues,” or “miracles” -- and thus sidetrack the soul from the main line of that “charity,” which is perfect love in a pure heart. A fanatic is not at the first an evil minded person, but one who has a misguided zeal for truth, and has lost his equilibrium, He has “a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge” (Rom. 10:2).

The Temptation To Doubt

The writer to the Hebrews warns against “an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God” (3:12). Many speak of their doubts, as though it were merely an infirmity, or human weakness, and excuse themselves by saying, “I am just naturally a doubting Thomas;” but instead of doubts being a human weakness, it is a devilishness. To doubt God, is to dishonor Him. A person should no more consent to being a doubter than he would consent to being a thief, or a liar. A thief or a liar might as readily be counted a Christian, as one who doubts God. Doubts invariably proceed from an evil heart. In sanctification this “evil root of unbelief” is utterly destroyed. While the enemy may present or suggest the temptation to doubt, it is instantly rejected by the sanctified heart. There is no soil in a pure heart in which the seeds of doubt and unbelief can germinate and grow. But says one, “I do not doubt God, but I doubt my experience; I doubt that He has sanctified me.” But the whole question here is, Have you fully met the conditions? If so, there can be no doubt concerning the faithfulness of God, in doing His part. Surely you would not say that you had met the divine requirements, but you now doubted God’s faithfulness in fulfilling His promises.

Remember, “Without faith it is impossible to please him” (Heb. 11:6); and that He is ever saying, “According to your faith, be it unto you” (Matt. 9:29).



07 – HOW TO MEET TEMPTATION

We cannot escape the fact of temptation while in a state of probation, but we need not despair; nor need we be overcome by the same; for God has promised to make a way of escape.

We should meet temptation:

1. By Watchfulness And Prayer

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation” (Matt. 26:41). To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Be careful to keep off of the devil’s territory. We fear some people actually tempt the devil to tempt them, by trespassing on his territory. They try to see how near they may walk to the danger line, and by so doing expose themselves to unnecessary temptations. We cannot prevent the enemy from assaulting us, but we can frequently avoid the occasion for temptation *by keeping out of the danger zone*, and attending strictly to our own business. To play with temptation is to invite defeat. While the Lord delivered Daniel when he was cast into the lions’ den, we do not believe that He would have thus delivered him if Daniel had deliberately jumped into the lions’ den, as an experiment.

Not only need we be watchful, but prayerful. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much” (Jas. 5:16). It is said, “Satan trembles when he sees, the weakest saint upon his knees.” By prayer we receive renewed help, and strength, for the conflict, and deliverance in the hour of temptation. Like the little boy who was being taunted by his schoolmates, and knew that he could not withstand them alone; but having an elder brother in an adjoining room, he would run and call on his big brother for assistance; and when the big brother appeared on the scene, the tormenting schoolmates would all disappear. Even so, we too have an “elder brother,” and when we call upon Him in prayer, and He appears on the scene, the enemy is soon discomfited and put to flight. “Because greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

2. By Using The Sword Of The Spirit

Jesus met temptation, and triumphed over the same by saying, “It is written.” His only weapon of defense was the Word of God which is “the sword of the Spirit” (Eph. 6:17). Human arguments and human wisdom are not sufficient. He who is thoroughly equipped and fortified by the Word of God, has the surest way of victory. David said, “Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee” (Psalm 119:11). To meet the temptation with a “Thus saith the Lord,” and an unwavering faith in the promises of God, is to defeat and discomfit the foe, and bring certain victory to the soul. “His truth shall be thy shield and buckler” (Psalm 91:4).

3. By A Steady Faith

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Eph. 6:16). There has never yet been any artillery invented, in earth or hell, that can penetrate “the shield of faith.” Ever since Christ has said, “According to your faith be it unto you,” this has been the victory that overcometh, “even our faith” (Matt. 9:29; 1 John 5:4). All the mighty warriors, whose portraits are hung up in the gallery of fame – the eleventh chapter of Hebrews – obtained their “good report through faith” (Heb. 11:39). “With God all things are possible;” and “all things are possible to him that believeth;” faith couples up with the arm of omnipotence, and thus enables the Christian to triumph over every foe. The “shield of faith” makes one invulnerable, invincible, and unconquerable. “Kept by the power of God, through faith” (1 Peter 1:5); “By faith ye stand” (2 Cor. 1:24).

No person can withstand Satan in his own strength, or by his own ingenuity. It will help the saint to always remember this fact, lest he rely upon himself instead of “looking unto Jesus.” We are “overcomers,” and “more than conquerors” only “through Him that loved us” (Rom. 8:37).

When self-sufficient and self-reliant, we are certain to go down in defeat.

Since there is a way of victory for every soul – regardless of circumstances – there can be no reasonable excuse for failure or defeat. “God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape” (1 Cor. 10:13).

With this assurance the soul should meet temptation in “quietness and confidence,” knowing that the greater the conflict, the more glorious the victory. So that with Paul we can say, “Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph, in Christ” (2 Cor. 2:14).



08 – WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF DEFEAT

Humbly acknowledge the defeat; but never give up. There is always a way out, seeing our God can make a way where there is no way. “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1). I am speaking particularly to such as have enjoyed the experience of entire sanctification. First, we would distinguish between an involuntary defeat and a willful sin. There is a vast difference between the soldier who is shot down while his face is set against the enemy and is trying to do his best, and the soldier who willfully and deliberately surrenders to the enemy and proves himself a traitor. Certainly, no man can purposely and willfully sin against God and retain His favor; in such a case the only way back would be to come by contrition, and confession, and repentance, making reparation and restitution as far as possible -just as any sinner must come.

But every person who suffers an involuntary defeat is not at once a backslider and a sinner.

“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and He delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand” (Psalm 37:23, 24). We may illustrate this by the child that is just learning to walk: if it falls while doing its best, and is trying to obey the call of the parent, it will not be “utterly cast down;” that is, it will not go clear down, because the parent “upholdeth him with his hand.” But if the child refuses to make the effort, and deliberately and willfully thrusts itself upon the floor, the parent is likely to engage in a different procedure.

There are three steps in the downward course: first, the fall, which, if consented to, eventuates in backsliding; then backsliding, if consented to, is likely to eventuate in apostasy; and apostasy takes one over the “dead line,” from which there is no return. Just as the Christian cannot stand still on the upward way, so in like manner, the backslider, or the sinner, cannot stand still on the downward way. Immobility is inconsistent with our being, morally, mentally or physically.

But the question is, What to do in case of defeat? Well, what can be done? What is between God and this soul? We answer, just that one thing which occasioned the defeat. God does not again bring up the past, which long since has been forgiven. We will suppose that the defeat came through a misunderstanding, or perchance through a heated argument with a brother in the very effort to do and to say what you believed to be right, you manifested the wrong spirit, and said some things that should not have been said. Now what can be done? Go to the brother and apologize; humbly acknowledge your wrong; then acknowledge it to the Lord, and put it under the blood by pleading the atoning merits of Jesus, and go on to victory. What more could be done in a thousand years?

When the children of Israel suffered defeat at Ai, because of an Achan in the camp, they

were not obliged to return to Egypt and start all over again; no, they simply acknowledged the defeat, uncovered and destroyed Achan, and remained in the land of Canaan, and went on to victory. But if they had refused to acknowledge defeat, and failed to part with Achan, doubtless the Lord would have forsaken them, and their enemies would then have driven them back, clean out of the land of Canaan. We would suggest that it is well always to keep on hand a good stock of the grace of apology; never be above saying in sincerity, "I beg your pardon." Transferring the blame, and excusing and justifying one's self is not profitable, nor the best course to pursue.



09 – THE WAY OF ESCAPE IN TEMPTATION

"God is faithful, who will . . . also make a way to escape" (1 Cor. 10:13). You can always count on the faithfulness of God. He is able, and He will do it. While He permits the enemy to hedge us about occasionally with what seems to be an insurmountable wall, He never allows him to place a roof over us; hence the Christian can always look up, and receive help from above.

"Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Psalm 34:19). There is no promise of immunity from temptation, but there is a promise of strength "as thy day," and "a way of escape." We will never need to endure that which we cannot endure, seeing "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." The way of escape does not always appear before entering into the temptation, but in the midst of the same. God could have delivered the three Hebrew children before they were cast into the fiery furnace, but such was not His plan; but the deliverance was granted to them in the midst of the fiery flame; so that even a heathen king was compelled to acknowledge the presence of "the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" who was with them; and that "no other god can deliver after this sort." He could have delivered Daniel before he was cast into the lions' den, but the greater deliverance, and the greater victory, was given in the midst of the lions, when Daniel was brought forth unharmed.

If the reader were to interview Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in heaven, and ask them to tell what they regarded as their richest Christian experience while on earth, they would doubtless say, it was at "the time when they made it hot for us" -- seeing the furnace was made "seven times" hotter "than it was wont to be" -- and God delivered us. In like manner Daniel would doubtless tell you his richest Christian experience was granted at the time when his enemies tried to "lionize" him and thrust him into the lions' den, and God so miraculously delivered him.

Here we see that the greatest trials become the greatest blessings – blessings in disguise. The deliverance in the midst of the trial is a greater blessing, and a greater victory, than it would be if kept and shielded from the trial. If at times the way seems dark we need to remember that the tunnel is simply the short cut to a desired destination. The greater the conflict, the greater the victory; the more intense the temptation, the more glorious the deliverance.

Jesus plainly told us that "in the world ye shall have tribulation" (John 16:33); but He also added, "be of good cheer: I have overcome the world;" thus He meant to encourage our faith, assuring us that His victory over the world was the pledge of victory for all who would trust Him.

No, He does not always shield us from temptation: “But He giveth more grace,” and in His own good time, and in the very best way, makes a way of escape, so we may be able to bear it.

We may be “more than conquerors through him that loved us” if we will put on “the breastplate of faith,” and carry “the shield of faith, wherewith we shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked;” for we “are kept by the power of God through faith;” and “by faith ye stand” (1 Thess. 5:8; Eph. 6:16; I Peter 1:5; 2 Cor. 1:24). “When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” “The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation” (Isa. 59:19; 2 Peter 2:9).

“In every condition – in sickness, in health;
In poverty’s vale, or abounding in wealth;
At home and abroad; on the land, on the sea--
As thy days may demand, shall thy strength ever be.

“Fear not, I am with thee, oh, be not dismayed,
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I’ll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

“The soul that on Jesus still leans for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I’ll never, no never, no never forsake.”



10 – THE REWARD OF TEMPTATION

“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.” “Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (Jas. 1:12; 2 Cor. 4:17). Not only do temptations, when overcome, develop the soul fiber and enrich us in patience, faith and grace, and a general increase of capital with which we may the better carry on for God – and thus serve our day and generation more effectually – but by reason of the same, we shall receive greater blessedness in the world to come. They “work for us;” that means, we shall receive greater honors and a larger pension when the war is over.

The soldier who never endured hardness, and suffered no loss, cannot hope to receive the same considerations at the close of the war as does the battle-scarred soldier who returns from the conflict with an armless sleeve or some ghastly wound. And of course there is no pension at all for the man who is shot in the back while fleeing from the foe. The laurels of the victor are determined by the fierceness of the battle and the faithfulness of the soldier. Yes, even now, great trials and temptations make way for great grace – for, “as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation” (2 Cor. 1:7) – and then, after we have thus suffered with Him, we shall be “joint-heirs with Christ,” and “shall also reign with Him” (Rom. 8:17; 2 Tim. 2:12).

The promised rewards to the “overcomer,” are simply beyond human computation, or finite comprehension. Read the promises given to the “overcomers” in the seven churches of

Asia:

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Rev. 2:7).

“Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life, He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death” (Rev. 2:10,11).

“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it” (Rev. 2:17).

“He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron . . . and I will give him the morning star” (Rev. 2:26-28).

“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (Rev. 3:5).

“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name” (Rev. 3:12).

“To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Rev. 3:21).

No wonder the Apostle Paul said, “I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom. 8:18).

In heaven we shall doubtless thank God for every temptation and trial He permitted us to suffer down here.



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