

Warrior
11/8/54

"Lead Us Not into Temptation"

Will
1/10/54
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Scripture Lesson:-

Text:- Matthew 6: 13. "Lead us not into temptation"

Introduction:- All of us know something of temptation. We have had more or less to do with it from our youth. It is a part of the personal experience of every one of us. In our study of this petition, therefore, we find ourselves on familiar ground. We ask the question, "What is temptation"? As used in the Scriptures, the word has two common meanings

I.

Temptation is an inducement to evil. It is an appealing invitation to take the wrong road. It is this type of temptation that is pictured for us on the first pages of the Book of Genesis. "Has God said that you are not to eat of every tree in the garden?", the serpent is represented as asking Eve. "We may eat of every tree except one", the woman answers. The only one that is forbidden is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If we eat of that we shall surely die. "Ye shall not surely die", is the answer. "On the contrary you will be as gods, knowing good and evil." Here, then, was an alluring promise of a larger life. To win this life, it was necessary to go against the known "Thou-shalt-not" of God. The voice of inclination is calling in the opposite direction to the voice of conscience. Thus, Eve was tempted long ago, and thus we are tempted today.

Now every temptation may come from within or from without. "Every man is tempted", says James, "when he is drawn away of his own lust." Thus, we may be tempted when no one is making any effort to tempt us. We may look upon those who are in better circumstances than we are and become envious or covetous. We may look upon those worse off than we are and become hateful of those who are in a worse circumstance than we are.

A certain writer of the O. T. warns his son, "My son, if simmers entice thee, consent thou not". Here

Here is an inducement to do wrong that comes from a wrong companionship. A temptation that comes from without.

But there is one source from which temptation toward evil never comes, and that is from God. "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." God never invited any man to take the lower road. It certainly ought to be easy for us to accept this. Temptation is always dangerous, but it is never so deadly dangerous as when we persuade ourselves that the voice that calls us to take the wrong road is the voice of God.

II.

Temptation means a test or trial. This is the meaning that it has in our text. Such tests, when met along the path of duty, are intended for our good. They are to minister to our strength and to our growth in Christlikeness. We are never called upon to meet a testing of any kind but that God is there. He is always offering to us the undergirding of his everlasting arms. If we are only wise enough to hear his voice and accept his help, our victory is an absolute certainty.

Every test is to lead us to a firmer choice of right. When a teacher gives his class a test, his purpose is not the failure of the class, though failure is possible. When a manufacturer turns out a new car, he tests it. His purpose is not to wreck it, though it may become a wreck in the process. Even so, the tests that you and I have to face are God's upward calls to us; but they may prove our undoing by our refusal to respond to that upward call. Of this we may be sure, that whenever we stand at the forks in the road, God is there wooing us to take the right turn.

III.

Can we escape temptation? No, we cannot. If then, there is no escape from temptation, why pray this prayer, I believe that this prayer was the prayer of a forgiven man. He has just prayed for the for-

givenness of his trespasses, our sins. Having so prayed, he has come into the consciousness that God has heard our prayer, and has forgiven us and taken us back into his fellowship. The tragic quarrel between ourselves and God healed, we have come to enjoy the light of his countenance. How are we to face the future? How are we to keep this beautiful relationship into which God's loving forgiveness has brought us? We are to do so by having this prayer within our hearts and upon our lips: "Lead us not into temptation". We are to pray this prayer because of the deadly danger of sin.

1. We must constantly pray this prayer because sin is a dangerous thing. Jesus said to a man whom he had healed after a sickness of thirty and eight years, "Sin no more, lest a worse thing come to thee". He had been set upon his feet a new man. But Jesus reminded him of the ~~fact~~ that worked his ruin in other days. He tells him that it was sin that had forced him to lie for more than half a lifetime in uselessness. He warns him that to sin ~~xxx~~ again would result in deeper tragedy than that from which he had just been delivered. And what he says to this man he says to every one among us who has been healed from sin, "Sin no more".

What is your deepest dread? What do you shrink from more than anything else? Is it germs, or microbes, suffering, poverty, death? Unpopularity, criticism? Some shrink from these. But one thing we all ought to fear is "sin". Yes, we are to pray this prayer, "Lead us not into temptation".

2. We are to pray this prayer because we realize our own weakness. We know from actual experience that in our own strength we cannot triumph over temptation. Over confidence has been responsible for countless failures. You might see two football teams marching out onto the field for a game. One team is much heavier than the other. You immediately decide that the outcome of the contest is decided. The heavier team was confident of victory. But the lighter team won. Why? It owed its victory, partly to good playing, but more to

the over confidence of its opponents. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!"

3. When we are to pray the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation", with the full assurance that is we give God the ordering of our lives, he will be our sufficiency, that he will make us "more than conquerors thru him that loved us". The Christian life is to be a life of victory. We are not to be overcome of evil. But we are to overcome evil with good. God is faithful. "He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear. BUT WITH THE temptation, every temptation, make a way of escape." That is the firm conviction of the writers of the New Testament. You will find that God will keep you. "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, adominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."