

Some of you say you were uplifted during the revival. Now that's just the time the devil comes around to trip you up. He will have you get your eyes off Christ & looking at folks & finding faults. That gives the spirit quicker than anything that's the quickest way to backslide & ruin a
Scripture Lesson: - *War Church*

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

All of us know something of temptation. We have had something to do with it from our youth up. It is a part of the personal experience of every one of us. In our study of this petition, we find ourselves on familiar ground. After a person finds Christ as personal Savior, after the revival is over; after the victory is won, we then let down our guard, and the tempter of the souls of men, launches his daring

attack. Well, what is temptation? *after you've been on the mountain top then he is determined to defeat you & the church if he can*

Temptation is an inducement to evil. It is an appealing invitation to take the wrong road. *Not rob, Bank or murder but say unkind - Bible - Pray little things* 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 of 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! "You shall not surely die", is the emphatic answer. "On the contrary you will be as gods, knowing good and evil!" This is a promise of a larger life. But to win this life, it is necessary to go against the "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 desire, and enticed. That is, we may be tempted when no one is making any effort to tempt us. We may look on those who are in better circumstances than we are and become envious, or covetous. There are countless occasions for temptation arising out of our own hearts. We may be tempted by wrong companionship. My son, warns a certain writer of the O.T. "if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Here is an inducement to do wrong that comes from wrong companionship. But there is one source from which temptation to do 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." That is, says wise and practical James, "God never invited any man to take the lower road. It certainly ought to be easy for us to accept this. Yet, how many wrongs have been wrought by those who claimed divine authority. Temptation is always dangerous, but it is deadly dangerous when we persuade ourselves that the voice of God calls us to take the wrong road; is the voice of God. Temptation is an invitation to do wrong. But such an invitation never comes from God. *Be sure god never leads you to criticize & find fault.* Temptation means a test or trial. Such tests are met along the path of duty, and are meant for our own good. They are to minister to our own strength and to our growth in Christlikeness. They are to do for us what the sculptor does for the crude block of marble. They bring to light the angel that is within us. We are never called upon to meet a testing

unless God is there, inviting us to take the upward road. He is present offering us the strength of his everlasting arms. If we are only wise enough to hear his voice and accept his help, our victory is an absolute certainty.

But while God never leads us into temptation except for our good, such tests always have in them possibilities of disaster. When a teacher gives a class a test, his purpose is not to fail the class, though failure is possible. When a manufacturer of an auto turns out a new car, he tests it. He does not desire to wreck the car, but it may become a wreck in the process. Even so, the tests which you and I have to face, are God's calls to us. These calls may prove our undoing by our refusal to respond to the upward call. Of this one thing we may be sure, that when we stand at the forks of the road, God is there also, wooing us to take the right turn. *Be sure you are in God's will if you want His Spirit in His leading.*

Now, though we are commanded to pray, "Lead us not into temptation", yet into temptation God does lead us day by day. This does not mean, of course, that all the tests that we meet are of his choosing. Some are born of our wilfulness. But there are others that are a part of God's wise purpose for us. This is evidenced by the fact that to live in a world like ours is to be tempted. Temptation is a universal experience. There is no possible escape from it.

We may help ourselves, for instance, by a wholesome environment. We cannot pray this prayer, and vote for an increase of temptation through the re-

turn of the open saloon. While a wholesome environment is a great safeguard, it does not exempt us from temptation altogether. Jesus Christ knew no sin, yet he was tempted in all points like as we are. All of us are tempted. It is a part of God's wise plan for us. It was a part of his plan for Jesus. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. He was not tempted by mere chance. He was tempted according to the purpose of God. It is even so with ourselves.

The apostle James takes a different view. He says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into many temptations. It is God's way of growing a soul." Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him. Character is only achieved in a realm of choices. When we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," we do so, knowing that temptation is universal, and that it is the only way that God has of growing a soul.

If there is no temptation, why this prayer?

Well, this is the prayer of a forgiven man. He has just asked God for the forgiveness of his sins. His sins have been forgiven. He is in holy fellowship with his God. He prays, and in his prayer he does not forget his temptations, and he remembers his temptations to sin. He thinks of the future. How is he to keep this beautiful relation with his God? Having been made anew, for every forgiven man is a new creature in Christ Jesus, he prays this prayer, "Lead us not into temptation!"

We are to pray this prayer because of the deadly danger of sin. We who have been made free from sin are to live no longer therein. What is your deep dread? From what do you shrink more from than anything else? The one thing we ought to fear, more than anything else is sin. And because we too, realize that sin may undo for us all that the forgiving love of God has done, we are to pray this prayer, "Lead us not into temptation!"

Then we should pray this prayer, because we realize our weakness. We know from actual experience that in our own strength we cannot triumph over our temptations. Overconfidence has been responsible for the many failures in every department of life. As in a football game, the heavier team is always supposed to win. But it is not always so. The lighter team sometimes wins. Why? It owes its victory partly to good playing, but more to the overconfidence of the opposing team.

It is told that a certain man, after his conversion and uniting with the church, and after repeated warnings from his pastor, continues to hitch his horse to the same hitching post that he had used before his conversion. It was near a saloon. At last he fell. What was the secret of his downfall? What he needed to do, was to pray, "Lead me not into temptation!" Then he needed to seek a new hitching post.

Last of all, we are to pray, "Lead us not into temptation", with the full assurance, that if we give to God the ordering of our lives, he will make us more than conquerors. The Christian life is to be a life of victory. We are not to be overcome of

evil, but we are to overcome with good. God may be counted upon absolutely. He will never leave us or forsake us. He will bring us through to victory.

Conclusion:- Temptation; Yes; we are all subject to temptation. But some of us have learned that temptations can be overcome. We have learned the effectiveness of the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation!"

What about you? Have you yielded to temptation?

If you did, do not despair. Turn your face toward heaven, and pray this prayer sincerely, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" Then go on living for God and for His kingdom.

Perhaps, there is some soul here this morning that would like to come to this altar of prayer, and pray that God may give him the strength to say "no" to the evil one, when he tempts you.

If you are not overcoming temptation, you need to come to God. He will give you strength to defeat the enemy of your soul. Ask God to search us out. Let us ask Him to show us our selfishness, our deceit, our sin.

Announcement

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