

TEMPTATIONS ALLOWED

(CAN RESULT IN VICTORY THRU CHRIST)

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For one to consider how Satan tempts people to believe his lies (and the various stages of those temptations), is a subject that a true Christian should want to understand (and one could hardly consider that too much). That is because when a person seeks to know God and to serve Him in their life, it will draw the fire of the enemy, Satan (even when they just want to read and study God's Word, so they can make a choice to believe it and apply it in their life). The devil will use everything and everybody he can, to distract, discourage, and dishearten that person from even wanting to spend time to meditate on God's Word (aside from trying to apply it in their life and home).

The devil will try to paint God's way of life to be just as dark and foreboding as he can to a Christian (especially to one new in the Truth). At the same time (and as much as he possibly can), Satan will paint the past way of life (and things of the world that one has left) to appear to be wonderful and the best path for one to follow. Satan will try to tell you that you never had such troubles in your previous life, but now that you have come to a knowledge of the full Truth (and given your life to God), you thought you would be coming into a great place that would make conditions better for you. However, you are now worse off than ever (Satan will lie and tell you), and more-so, that you are only having a taste of the trouble that could come upon you.

The devil will suggest many kinds of evil thoughts and tempt us to believe his doubt and fear (and he will make them seem so real and truthful that we could believe them). He will try to make a feeling of condemnation come over us, after he has gotten us to believe his lies. Then he will tell us that God is displeased with us, and that it is no use for us to pray (for our prayers will not be answered). The result of giving in to (and believing) his lies, is, that we would become disheartened, discouraged, and could be on the verge of giving up our faith on God. The fact is, however, that it was Satan who was the cause of all our trouble from beginning to end (but he tempts us to believe

the opposite). We must put the blame where it belongs, ... squarely on Satan.

The real truth is that God's Word declares the Blood of Christ has reconciled the entire world to Himself. (2 Cor.5:18-21) "Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing (charging) their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." [We need to believe that Jesus' Blood makes us righteous, so that we can be made righteous by God, in Christ.]

In other words, the Blood of Christ has taken away all that God has against any human being, and that great work of His on Calvary's Cross is all that God requires for His favor and blessing. We need to believe on that great work on the Cross, and understand that no goodness on our part, nor anything that we can do will induce Him to be more favorable to us. The Blood of Christ is enough!

Satan tries to obscure all of these Atonement rights that a true Christian has a privilege to claim and enjoy, and to talk a person into giving up those Atonement rights (which are ours to enjoy in Christ Jesus). Satan will try to make things which you have put behind you (in order to follow Christ), to now look shiny and bright, and try to remind you about some good times that you gave up, what company you had enjoyed before, and how you enjoyed life then, as compared to what it is now. The devil will try to make you think that you gave up too much, and he will tempt you to crave the fellowship of worldly friends. He will try to tell young women that they will be without friends and a lifetime companion.

These are only some of the temptations that the devil will try to use, to cheat us out of receiving what God has in store for us. We would not listen to the devil, however, if we only knew how 'the Lord' can find a companion for a girl (or for a man), and that He will find one that is the right kind of companion for us. We need to turn that matter over to God, and by God's own grace and guidance we will become victorious in Christ Jesus (over all those suggestions and temptations the devil paints to our mind).

The devil will try to convince a person that they gave up too much, they will never have a good time again, will become poor, and cheated and robbed of good things, and, that you may not end up in Heaven after all. That is how Satan works, how he tempts people in every possible way that he can to accept his version, and since having been an 'archangel' (who would have superior intelligence), he knows therefore, all about every kind of an experience we might encounter in our life. Furthermore, he has been in the business of deceiving people for six thousand years, so he works in a person's mind and from the outside, (as well as through other human beings).

The apostle Paul realized that characteristic about the intelligence and the deceiving power of Satan, and Paul was inspired by God to tell us, (Ephes.6:12) "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." (God's Word also tells us, 1 John 4:4), "As for you, dear children, you are God's children, and have successfully resisted them; for greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."

The point that we need to realize about temptations from Satan is, that with God's help we can discover and prove what is the cause of the temptation. The power of the devil over our life (is caused by our lack of knowledge of God's Word about what was accomplished for us on the Cross) (thus, our unbelief because of that lack),... which results in the lack of a full surrender of our life to God (so that we can learn how to meet temptation and learn what God's will is for us). These three things can be laid at the bottom of every temptation we have to meet from the devil (and we may not be willing to admit it), but it is because of our lack of full surrender to God that we do not have real knowledge of Him. Not having a knowledge of God and real faith in God, is the cause of all temptations.

The primary thing needed in our life is not the deliverance out of the troubles or temptations we face, rather, it is the way we receive the deliverance that really counts spiritually. Many people, when in trouble, will do anything they can to get out of it. If the devil gets hold of us spiritually, physically, and financially, we will feel very uncomfortable; especially so if he gets into a 'loved

one' in our home. If we let down our guard, it can take the devil only minutes to get into an unsaved 'loved one' (and to cause a big disturbance of the peace of a professed Christian). The devil will fight them the hardest because he doesn't want them to progress any further in learning about God's will and His plan for their life. It could take weeks for a person to get straightened out and on the right track (and some never do get straightened out if the situation in not met Scripturally and in God's way sooner or later).

The devil may get in and cause trouble in the workshop and make things unpleasant, which is a test for us to see how we will meet it (in God's way or by our own self efforts). Then he will find his way into the company that we work for and try to destroy it. In fact, he will try to make trouble everywhere, and the whole object involved for a true Christian is not so much our getting deliverance we need, but whether or not we get that deliverance in a proper way (according to God's plan of trust). That is the really necessary aspect for one who wants to progress in the Christian life of faith.

Many people think it is a good thing to get the deliverance no matter how they get it, and that just getting the victory is the good thing about it. Receiving a victory or deliverance in any way but God's way, however, is harmful spiritually, instead of helpful, and it will land us in the Lake of Fire (if it is not repented of and corrected). We must have efforts of the self-life removed from our heart and our life, to be prepared and made ready to meet Jesus when He returns. We can't afford to not allow God to work in our life, for He is the only One who can make us ready to meet His Son.

People will say that "there is some good (in the churches)." There might be some good people in them (along with lots of Satan's followers), but their own goodness could not and will not buy them eternal Life. Their outward sincerity does not help them be prepared for eternity, nor to be ready to meet their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is the deliverance that we get in God's way that brings the most important spiritual blessing, and it is the remedy that delivers us from our lack of a knowledge of God's Word, from our unbelief, and the rebellion against God that is in our heart when we are born into this world. If we do not get our deliverance in God's way (through trust on Him), it will be a curse instead of a blessing, and it will land

us in the Lake of Fire. (Mark 10:15) Jesus said, "In solemn truth I tell you that no one who does not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will by any possibility enter it."

We all need to be tempted, troubled, and tormented (while we are outside of God's will), until we are 'willing' to take our deliverance in God's way. The nice part of God's plan is that when we receive deliverance in His way (and learn spiritually from it), we will not have that trouble again. If we do not get it in the right way, the trouble will come back until we are ready to meet it the right way. God is doing every-thing He can do to try to save us from our sins of the self-life in our heart. It is that misplaced trust and unbelief which keeps us from ever getting and having a real knowledge of God in our heart and life. Through getting our victory in the right way (in God's plan of trust and dependance on Him), we will be delivered from the trouble, and we will have a knowledge of God like we never had before. As we attain really true knowledge of God in our heart, we will automatically turn to Him in faith concerning every situation or battle that we face in our life.

The example of King Asa emphasizes for all of us, that getting our deliverance is not the important part, rather, it is 'how' we get the deliverance. King Asa had met a great battle in the right way, and as a result he had thirty years of peace. However, he got lifted up with pride and took credit himself for his peace and prosperity, and then he fell away from faith and trust on God. He proved to be once saved, then spiritually lost, and outside of God's will and favor. When another battle came along to test his lack of full surrender to receive victory in God's way, he sought his deliverance in an entirely different manner. It proved to be a serious curse to him because this time he did 'not' get his victory in the right way (according to God's plan).

Instead, he sent a letter to Ben-Hadad the king of Aram asking for his help (rather than depending on the living God in Heaven). (2 Chron. 16:3) "Let there be a treaty between you and me, as there was between my father and your father. Here, I have sent you silver and gold; come, break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel, so that he will withdraw from me."

He wanted to buy his way out of the problem that he faced. Well, he received a deliverance; but instead of thirty years of peace, he then had an

eternity of trouble. He had received his deliverance in a wrong way (misplaced trust, a false resting place), and it was rebellion against God. It settled his doom forever!

Of course, if he would have repented right then and there, confessed, and made the mistake right with God (even after the battle was over), he would have received forgiveness (just as did King David) (who was always ready and open for God's conviction, and ready to repent). (2 Chron.16:7-9) "And at that time Hanani the seer came to Asa king of Judah, and said to him: "Because you have relied on the king of Syria, and have not relied on the Lord your God, there-fore the army of the king of Syria has escaped from your hand. "Were the Ethiopians and the Lubim not a huge army with very many chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the Lord, He delivered them into your hand. "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. (Perfect toward Him, meaning, perfect in faith and trust on God). "In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars."

The Bible doesn't reveal that King Asa ever repented, rather just the opposite (as Vs.10 tells us) "Then Asa was angry with the seer, and put him in prison, for he was enraged at him because of this. And Asa oppressed some of the people at that time."

We can see from Asa's example of turning to man for help (and backsliding from trusting on God, that the most important thing in temptation is not getting our deliverance, but HOW we get it. It is not the deliverance received, but HOW we receive it is what counts in God's sight. (The late Pastor said) "some people will say, "Oh, I would be so happy if I only had a strong healthy body, or, if I only had abundant financial blessings" (and not really caring about HOW or by what means they would get those things). However, it would be the most destructive thing spiritually for us to get what we want in that wrong way. That is why God in tender mercy and love for us, ordained it in a completely different way. (Rom.5:6) "For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

We can rest assured that every circumstance that God permits to come into our life (whether spiritual, physical, or otherwise), it will be along the line of His gift of Jesus Christ to us when

we were so unworthy of it. God has allowed the circumstance to come along so that we may have a priceless privilege of learning more about what that great work on the Cross accomplished for us, (and what it means to us to get a real understanding of God in our heart). Being delivered by God out of temptation, means to deal personally with Him about it, and to receive the answer from Him alone (because that is the whole spiritual issue that is involved). Temptation comes because God (in His love) wants to deliver us from our ignorance of His Word, about what His Son accomplished for us on the Cross.

The only way He can teach us that, is by allowing us to be tempted, and see if we turn to Him alone for our deliverance, (through faith on the power of Jesus' Atonement sacrifice on the Cross). The temptation reveals the fact that we have not dealt personally with God before, and that we need to go to Him about it. We need to talk to God in prayer about the circumstance we face, and settle the matter by dealing personally with Him, ... and, there is no Scriptural reason for us not to deal personally with God!

We should ask ourselves the question, "could I find a better Helper, a wiser or stronger Person, a more loving or tender Helper than God Himself?" There is no reason in the world why we should not turn to God to be victorious over temptation. That is what temptation is for, and the benefit received is the spiritual blessing that comes out of it (to the extent that we turn to God personally when we are faced by temptation). When we go to God in real faith, we receive instant deliverance out of trouble (no matter what kind it is), and we do not have to wait for it (as the devil will always suggest to our mind), because Jesus Christ already paid for our victory for us (on the Cross). God's plan and promise of deliverance is for us is to ask, believe, and receive in the present moment, and God is always faithful to His promises when we believe on the power of Jesus' atonement sacrifice. (Matt.11:28) "Come to me, all you toiling and burdened ones, and I will give you rest."

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SOME MAIN POINTS:

1... When we seek to know God's Word so we can put it into practice (as Jesus commanded), so we can do His will in our life, (we will draw the fire of the devil with his many lies and dark thoughts to tempt us,.. to try to distract and discourage us from an overcoming life of 'victory in Christ'. However, 'temptations' allowed in our life, can bring victory through Christ Jesus!

2... The theme throughout the message is, even though getting our deliverance may always seem to be very important to us, the thing that is most important spiritually (for our present and 'eternal interests') is, —'how' we get our victory. Do we get it via human plans and efforts (or do we get deliverance through personal uncompromising trust on the power and promises of God?

3... The example of King Asa who trusted God for a great victory, and later turned away from trusting God (to trusting on help from another king), (and what the prophet sent by God told Asa after that backward step),... should clearly reveal to us just how important it is to get our deliverance in the right way (by an uncompromising faith on God). Our eternal Life is at stake if we are unwilling to repent as King Asa was unwilling!

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