

What It Means To Be Saved

Part 1

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Our message today focuses on temptations and how to meet them. Learning how to meet temptations in God's way is the most valuable thing in temptations; it is the most effective way of getting delivered out of temptation.

The moment a person gets the least knowledge of God, the least reaching out after God, Satan tempts them and becomes very active indeed with every kind of suggestion to the mind. Most people do not know anything different; they think it is the thoughts of their own mind. Therefore, they are hindered; they are torn between two opinions. They get discouraged and disheartened by the pictures that Satan paints or presents to their mind.

This often follows us far into the Christian life. We are continually hindered through discouragements and troubles of every kind.

Many people think that when they give their heart to God, there will always be peace they will always have rest. They think that the sun will always be shining; they will always have fair weather; and everything will always be to suit us.

Of course, this is a Christian's heritage or inheritance; but we expect it from the very beginning.

Just imagine the surprise, when a person begins to reach out to God or gains the least knowledge of God and cannot find peace with a microscope of the highest power; they cannot find peace whichever way they look. Everywhere they look there is trouble within and without; everywhere they look there is something of Satan to pay. Their experience is as if a brick house has fallen on them, and they are buried under the debris.

We may hear professing Christians telling of their wonderful experiences—their glowing, happy experiences.

Meanwhile, we are being hammered, tormented, and kicked around by Satan, who is telling us that those professing Christians are so wonderfully spiritual. Satan says that they have such wonderful spiritual experiences, and everyone of them is established in God's will—

true, noble, loyal specimens of Paul, Silas, James, Peter, and John.

While we are down and full of trouble, Satan further suggests that our troubles are caused by our desperate condition and the perverseness of our personality or behavior.

Satan may say, "All your troubles are caused, as well as your weakness, by your terrible spiritual condition. You can never be helped; the lake of fire is your doom, and you know it!"

We could believe Satan's lies, sit back in the corner so to speak, wishing that we were never born, just trying to keep out of the lake of fire as long as we can.

Finally, in God's great mercy, with His help, we discover the cause of our trouble—Satan never chases dead fish.

Then we discover that those professing Christians who had such wonderful experiences, who in their own minds were all packed up and ready for heaven, were living terrible lives; one might be a person who acts without moral restraint, one a drunkard, and another a gambler—those who had such wonderful experiences, and the majority of them are headed to the lake of fire. Their church does not teach them the truth about what it really means to be saved. Death and destruction will come because they reject the Truth of God's Word.

We may not understand those people: we believe what they tell us and what Satan tells us—that they are saved and have had a wonderful experience.

However, on the other hand, when we have had a genuine work of God done in our heart, it will draw the fire of the enemy, and our experience will be as Paul says—*"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."* (Ephesians 6:12)

Everything Satan can say and do, everybody and everything he can use to make life unpleasant and unhappy; he will do.

This is caused through our ignorance and unbelief—in most cases—because it is our tendency to believe everything Satan suggests and believe nothing God says in His Word.

It can take a long time to learn that we cannot depend on other people's experience. We must learn to go to the Word of God itself.

We often desire to hear some practical experience of that Word, something which has

been done. We do not want the bare Word of God, and we keep away from it.

We may have or have had a book with some passages of Scripture in it and then the explanation. We might always want to know what this writer has to say about those Scriptures. We always have had a strong desire for this book, like a dog after a bone. Of course, that is not the proper way.

We may be very anxious to know what these writers think about the Word of God, but we will be compelled to come to the place where we will be interested only in knowing what the Word of God itself says, where the Word will mean everything to us.

That is the true place of a true Christian, and then we will not be influenced by the winds and waves Satan may 'kick up.' We will not be influenced by Satan's temptations and discouragements.

Many professed Christians—Christians who are only saying "Lord, Lord," —are enjoying a false peace, but destruction will come swift and sure, just as sure as the reward of Judas and the false leaders in Bible times.

God, in His great mercy, if we allow Him, can bring us to the place where we realize that God's peace, health, and prosperity are our inheritance, and we can reach that place through many and various seasons of temptations and trials of every kind.

In Acts 14:22 it is written: — *"That we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."*

1 Peter 1:6 reminds us, *"Wherein ye greatly rejoice though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:"*

Many and various kinds of trials. Wherever you walk, the devil will attack you; but if you will meet temptation right, you will be settled, established and made strong.

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of 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)

1 Peter 5:8-10, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the*

same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." (1 Peter 5:8-10)

All of God's dealings with us are for eternity. All of the devil's dealings are for eternity. Satan will oppose and hinder us in our spiritual and divine life and get us to plunge into things which may make us prosperous here in this life, but they will sink us into eternal ruin.

Satan does not care what we believe, as long as he will get us when we are dead—that is all Satan is anxious about.

God deals with us for eternity. This is just a school; God's plan is that we are to graduate; Satan says we are not to graduate; all the fighting is between God and Satan for that graduation day.

Satan is determined that we are not to be prepared, and God says we are to be fully prepared for that day, and we are to be without spot or blemish. That is what all of Satan's temptations are for, but as we meet them right, God strengthens, settles, and establishes us.

"After that ye have suffered a while" —this does not mean that we are sick or in trouble and cannot get the victory as we ought to at once; but it means after we have suffered and have been tempted in many and various ways, Satan having come and attacked us in one place, and Satan has been driven out—probably our spiritual life—then our bodies, or finances.

Just about the time we begin congratulating ourselves that we have not had any type of oppression from the devil for a long time, the next morning we will awaken with a visitor; we will have a stuffy feeling in our nose and will feel all tightened up. You will seek God in prayer and faith, and Satan will be driven out of your body.

Satan will then come and perhaps get into some unsaved person, and they will treat you just as meanly and contemptibly as possible. This is only Satan coming to make a disturbance and pick a fight. Perhaps the devil will get into a husband or wife, or some other member of the household. The husband may accuse the wife of spending too much money, saying she spends it foolishly, or the wife nags at the husband saying he is stingy. Satan

gets into people for the sake of disturbing their peace and robbing them of their inheritance.

Then the devil may get into your boss at work, and if you stand up, you are too tall, and if you sit down, you are too short. If you are an employer, or foreman, Satan may get into the men, and they will do just the opposite from what you desire them to do.

Perhaps Satan will get into our finances, and we will find that the bottom has dropped out of everything that we are leaning on; our income will stop or somebody will rob us, or something else will go wrong—if Jesus comes, and we have anything in our heart against anyone, even though they have done something toward us, we cannot go up with Him.

It is written: — *“But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”* (Matthew 6:15)

We must let people walk all over us—take advantage of us in many ways—and be just as sweet as if nothing had happened. We must learn to meet this thing right, as we are commanded to “love our enemies, do good to them that hate us; we are to lend and hope for nothing again.”

We will read that, for we cannot know it too well. *“But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.”* (Luke 6 :35-36)

We might be in a situation where some people we know are talking for a long time together in a corner; Satan might suggest to us, “They are talking about you.”

We might say, “Maybe they are; I guess I deserve it.”

Satan continues, “They do not want you to be a part of their group anymore.”

We respond, “I guess they don’t.”

Now we are going down the sliding board. The devil asks us, “Well, what are you going to do about it?”

We must respond to the devil and say, “I am not going to do anything about it. I am only going to pray about it, and I am going to pray for them rather than talking about them or meeting them in a wrong way. I will not allow anything, with the Lord’s help, to cause me not to follow God’s Truth in all that I say and do.”

This could seem like a minor thing, especially to an adult; however, our success in our Christian life can hinge on how we meet those so-called minor things.

If we meet things or temptations in God’s way, in a Christlike manner, according to the Word of God, we will be richly blessed in this life and in Eternity.

Now we have a text, which tells us that the way we meet temptation will show whether we are going to Heaven or not.

Some people say that if we are converted, we are going to Heaven. The Bible does not teach that. The Bible does teach that we must have a new birth, but what we get after that—after the conversion, is really what counts as to whether we are going to reach Heaven or not, whether we are going to be saved or not.

A boy to be qualified for President of the United States must be born a citizen of the United States of America. What would you think of some mother who would say of her boy—“Well, he is going to be President of the United States.” You would ask—“How do you know?” “He is a male child, born in the United States of America.” Does that warrant him being President? Are there no other qualifications?

“Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18 :3)

Ninety-nine out of every hundred people do not know what it really means to be saved. The Bible conception is directly opposite to the human conception; the Bible places the test of our being saved at the end of our Christian life; man places it at the beginning.

If a boy is born a male child in the United States and is qualified for President, what happens between his birth, nomination, and election is what will decide whether he will be President or not.

James tells us— *“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.”* (James 1:12)

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