

Lesson # 8 -- Deliverance from Temptation

Introduction

- A. The spiritual and emotional pressures created in us by temptation are a serious problem to many of us.
- B. Peter stated that trials are related to our faith (I Peter 1:7). Here is one area where we vividly understand that. When we undergo a temptation that is severe in depth or in length - we soon realize our own weakness and are thrown back on the faithfulness of God.
- C. From these lessons we understand the three areas from which temptations may come to us. One source is that fleshly nature which has been patterned by the Fall; another is Satan himself; and a third is the selfish world system about us.
- D. If we are to experience the deliverance that has been provided for us we must know something of the nature of temptation, its place in the Christian life and how to express our faith when we are tempted.
- E. The theme of this lesson is found in I Peter 2:9.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation . . . .

I. We Must Understand the Nature and Pattern of Temptation.

- A. The strategy of the enemy in temptation, Genesis 3:1,4,5.

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? . . . And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

- 1. The first step in the strategy of Satan was to raise a question about the truthfulness of God's Word. He led Eve to doubt the Word of God and then later he contradicted the truth. Satan subtly transferred Eve's authority from God and His Word to Eve herself. As this happened, however, the enemy carefully supplied the content of what he wanted her to believe. This is how we are often tempted today.
- 2. The second step was to get Eve to question the goodness of God. Satan insinuated that God had withheld something good from them. Because of this he implied that God was not good and should not be trusted. Is this why it is so easy for us to doubt the goodness of God and to be bitter against Him?

3. The third step was a blatant and unjustifiable promise, ". . . Ye shall be as gods . . ." This was intended, if nothing else would, to incite Eve to consider seriously the eating of the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Sin has always had and continues to have this basic character of deception.
4. The fourth step was to suggest a course of action based on this deception. The implications were clear: "It was right for her to make up her own mind . . . the choice was really a simple one - what did she want to do?"
5. The response of Eve to all of this is highly instructive for us.

And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat. Genesis 3:6

Observation: These steps are often found in the temptations we meet in our daily life. It is important that we affirm the truthfulness and clarity of God's Word and that God is absolute in goodness, righteousness and truth. We must watch for this pattern of attack.

B. Our vulnerability to temptation, I John 2:15-17.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

1. The first area of vulnerability is that of the lust (desires) of the flesh (selfish and sinful enjoyment of human desires out of the will of God). In the temptation of Eve she was shown that the tree was "Good for food" (Genesis 3:6). In the temptation of the Lord Jesus the first appeal was to His hunger (Matthew 4:3). This comes as a warning to us. We are exhorted to take charge of our fleshly desires (Romans 6:12; I Cor. 9:27; Gal. 5:22,23), reject all that is of a sinful nature and control that which is divinely given.
2. The second area is related to the desire of the eyes. This is the mental and vicarious delight in that which is sinful. Often the Christian will give in to looking upon and delighting in - that which he would never do himself. Eve saw that the tree was "pleasant to the eyes." The world of sinful literature and entertainment makes its appeal here. We are warned about the "desires of the mind" (Ephesians 2:3). It is instructive to see how Achan traced his downfall to this sin. "When I saw among the spoils . . . then I coveted them and took them" (Joshua 7:21).

3. The third area to which temptation appeals is that of pride. This includes those more common factors, such as possessions, relationships, and abilities, but it also points far beyond these. The emphasis here is on that terrible arrogance of the human heart when it adopts the attitude that it knows what is right and wrong, and is able to direct the course of life without dependence on God. This is the attitude described by Augustine as "The imitation of deity" (Confessions, II, VI, 13). In the temptation of Eve she was shown that the tree would make her "wise". We are not as important as we often try to make ourselves and others to believe.

Observation: In our creation we were given control of our mental, emotional and bodily functions. In the Fall we lost control and became vulnerable to being sinfully manipulated and led into bondage. Now, by God's grace, we can regain control.

## II. We Must Understand the Biblical Encouragement Related to Temptation.

- A. Temptation itself is not a sin, James 1:2,12.

My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers (various) temptations. Blessed is the man that endureth temptations . . . .

Observation: There is a difference between being tempted and giving way to temptation. Even the Lord Jesus, the holy Son of God, suffered under the former. We sin when we accept the temptation, give way to it, and practice the lust to which we are enticed.

- B. Temptation is under the control of God, I Cor. 10:13.

. . . God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape . . . .

Observation: There are many reasons why God allows us to be tempted:

1. So we may learn our weaknesses.
2. So we may learn to resist sin.
3. So we may learn and then help others.
4. So we may learn to be more kind in evaluating others.
5. So we may learn how great God really is.

- C. God has promised to deliver the godly out of temptation, I Peter 2:9.

The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation . . . .

Observation: God does not allow a situation to develop without making provision for our protection. He knows the way "out". We must want "out" and seek the Biblical avenue of escape.

- D. Jesus Christ was tempted and did not fail. He offers His help.  
Hebrews 2:18

For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour (give sympathetic help) them that are tempted.

Observation: The Lord Jesus Christ met all the forces of Satanic and worldly temptation when here on earth and triumphed over it all. He did this as our Representative. He now dwells within us, by the Holy Spirit, to be our divine enablement so that we may be successful in temptation. We must learn to receive His help and live in harmony with His Word. We need not be victimized by temptation nor live in bondage to sin.

### III. We Must Understand the Biblical Basis for Refusing Temptation.

- A. We must have a correct attitude toward temptation, I Cor. 10:13.

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man, but 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, that ye may be able to bear it.

Observation: God is not going to permit temptation to go beyond our ability to resist it - providing we are willing to practice the truth. This verse should cause us to have confidence in God. There is no place in the Christian life for defeatism, hopelessness and fear.

- B. We must instigate the correct attack in temptation, I Thess. 3:5;  
I Peter 5:8,9.

The Tempter . . . whom resist stedfast in the faith . . . .

Observation: We can be assured that Satan, to some degree, is involved in our temptations. We must do what Eve did not do - reject his insinuations, take our stand in God's Word, and practice the truth - believing God. Dare to repudiate every negative thought and feeling. Learn to say, "In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I reject that thought . . . ."

- C. We must initiate the correct action in temptation, Hebrews 4:16.

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. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Observation:

1. The most obvious application of this verse has to do with prayer. His promise is clear. He will supply mercy and grace for us in our time of need. The Lord Jesus reminded us to pray regarding temptation (Matthew 6:13; 26:41).

2. To come boldly unto the throne of grace implies a humble submission to the will of God. There are at least two vital areas where our submission to God must issue in practical daily choices.

a. The believer, to be successful in temptation, must learn to regulate his daily life.

- 1). There are some attitudes which must be rejected (self-pity, bitterness, criticism) and some which must be fostered (praise, thanksgiving, love).
- 2). There are some actions which must be rejected (selfishness, questionable entertainment, gossip) and some which must be fostered (loving, edifying, evangelistic).
- 3). There are some goals which must be rejected (self-centered, self-righteous, self-defeating) and some which must be fostered (the glory of God, love-for-others, church related).

b. The believer must learn to take charge of his functions.  
(See Lesson # 3 in this series.)

- 1). Our functions of thinking, feeling, and bodily desires have been given to us in our creation and were under our control.
- 2). In the Fall we lost control of these functions and are now highly vulnerable to temptation.
- 3). When we choose (decision of faith) to bring our thoughts, our emotions and our bodily desires into harmony with the Word and will of God - we open the door to God and His grace. It may help to make such a statement as the following.

"In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ I reject that thought of hopelessness and affirm that I have hope in that I belong to the God of hope (Romans 15:13) and have been begotten unto a living hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:3)."

"In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ I refuse that thought of criticism and gossip . . . ." ". . . I refuse that emotion of fear . . . I reject that lustful desire . . . ."

#### Conclusion:

A. Jesus Christ died and was resurrected to give us victory over sin.

B. We have the power of the Crucifixion and the Resurrection imputed to us. Let's choose to face our temptations in the Name and power of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit dwells within us to make this a daily reality.