

The Spirit led Jesus to be tempted by the devil

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Let us pray.

Dear heavenly Father, most gracious and holy Lord, I thank thee, Lord, for this day. I thank thee, Lord, for all that thou art to thy people. Oh, Lord, I pray that thou would take us away. Take us away, Lord, and set us in a place that thou would commune with our soul this day. Lord, take us from the cares of this world. Save us from the wicked one. Keep us, Lord, from ourselves. Lord, I ask thy anointing upon this hour and the hour to come that thou would be pleased to bring forth with power thy truth, that, Lord, this day that thy Spirit would search us and would search us, Lord and reveal that that we are, but mostly importantly, Lord, that would reveal that which thou art. Lord, lead us to thy feet. Put all thy enemies under thy feet this day and, Lord, may you, indeed, bless this time to the glory of thy name. Lord, I pray that thou would save me from myself this day and that thou would speak thy truth. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen

It is truly a blessing to the soul of the child of God to be brought to see that his Lord has gone first in everything, that everything that the Lord came down here to do, he accomplished perfectly. And as he treaded the steps on this earth, as everywhere that he was taken and everywhere he went, he went first. He went first for the child of God. He went first so that we then would come after him in his strength, by his power. And that is a blessing to me.

It is a blessing to me when many times in this life I am brought to waters I have never been in, to have depravity revealed to me in ways that is very wretched. It is a blessing to know and to be brought in the Word of God to see that he went first.

I want to talk to you today about an affliction that every child of God is afflicted with, but it is not something we think much of being in affliction and that is temptation. Every child of God will be tempted. Every child of God goes through temptation. And there is a purpose for it. May the Lord bring that forth today.

The first thing I would like to do is define to you what a temptation is according to the dictionary of old that we use. I believe it is the 1821 version of Webster's dictionary. It is the enticement to evil by arguments, by flattery or by the offer of some real or apparent good. That is temptation. One more time. It is the enticement to evil by arguments.

Who makes those arguments? Satan is always there to make an argument. The world will always make an argument for our time. There is something in us, too, that makes an argument.

By flattery or by the offer of some real or apparent good. That is temptation.

Our text today, our Scripture today, the focal point will be amazingly just one verse. We will look at very... a lot of the others, but I would like you to turn with me to Matthew chapter four and verse one.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.”¹

There is a lot in that verse. My prayer today is that the Holy Spirit would search it for us this day, would reveal the truth, the gospel truth that is found in this verse. We begin with the first word, “Then.” Why then?

“Then was Jesus led...”²

It is important for us to know what just took place up in the prior chapter. Jesus came and was baptized of John. In verse 16 it says:

“And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.”³

The Lord this day would receive the Spirit mightily from the Father and it prepared him for all that he would go forth into doing.

I want you to consider something this morning. I want you to consider that everything that Jesus Christ did he was led of the spirit. Everything that Christ did on this earth was by the power of the Holy Spirit. That is a mouthful, because we think of the deity of Christ. We think, does it make the deity any less in Christ to know that it was the Holy Spirit who led him? No, it doesn't, because it shows the perfect concert of the triune God, the sending of the Father, the condescension of the Son to come and the Holy Spirit's leading and guiding.

I pulled out three verses to support this thought, because I didn't want it to be mine. John says it in John 3:34. He says:

“For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.”⁴

¹ Matthew 4:1.

² Ibid.

³ Matthew 3:16.

⁴ John 3:34.

That is what we see here.

Peter says the same in Acts 10:38. He says:

“How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”⁵

God the Holy Spirit.

And, lastly, we quote Jesus himself who quoted the prophet Isaiah in Luke 4:18 when Jesus said:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”⁶

This is because the Spirit of God was upon him.

I thought about this a lot this week. And I said to myself and the Lord said to me, “How could it be any different?”

The Lord must needs have the Holy Spirit because he was the first fruits for his people. He showed us a more excellent way. He showed us the death of free will. He showed us the death of self. He showed us the death of all creature importance or creature exultation or the creature having any place in anything.

Is it any different for you today? If you just look at what Peter said about the Lord, he “went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.”⁷

We know that there are none good. There are none that seek after God. God said so himself.

I looked down and there is none that seek after me. They are all a fallen people. We have all had a great and mighty fall. We have lost that communion with the Lord. We have lost any kind of thought to doing good.

But the second Adam, the last Adam, I should say, he came to restore the image of God in his people. He came to restore the image of himself in his people. And the Holy Spirit now they all must be taught of God. All of the people of God are taught of him, are led of him. It is no ...

⁵ Acts 10:38.

⁶ Luke 4:18.

⁷ Acts 10:38.

This verse used to frighten me. I didn't understand what it was that Jesus was led of the Holy Spirit to be tempted. It used to bother me. And it used to bother me a lot that Jesus when he taught us how to pray he said, "And lead us not into temptation."⁸

Well, Lord, how can you say something like that? It is the devil that does that, isn't it?

I challenge you today. I challenge you to see what the Scriptures say. Does it bother you that God leads his children to be tempted? Does it challenge your thought and your knowledge of the sovereignty of God? We are going to look at that more closely here this morning.

The Lord has gone first.

Then...

It was such an important time. The Lord had to go first for his people and the Holy Spirit led him up to be tempted. We have to ask ourselves why now? Why did Christ have to go first? Well, we find that in Hebrews chapter four verse 15.

Once again, if you see me not thumbing to things it is because I used a little program called Quick verse which spit all these out for me so I didn't have to go 100 places all over.

But in Hebrews 4:15 Paul wrote these words with the inspiration and guidance of the Holy Ghost.

"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."⁹

See, that little "yet" at the end sets us apart from Christ. He was tempted in all points and we will see that near the end today. We will see in which way he was tempted, but he was tempted in all points. He was enticed to evil by arguments, by flattering, by the offer of some real or apparent good, but yet without sin.

It is what makes us different than Christ's temptation. Jesus said in John 14:30, he gives us the absolute insight here into why this temptation that we look at today did not succeed. In John 14:30 Jesus said:

"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."¹⁰

⁸ Matthew 6:18; Luke 11:4.

⁹ Hebrews 4:15.

¹⁰ John 14:30.

When the temptation came from Satan and from the devil unto the Lord, there was nothing for that temptation to take hold of. There was nothing for that temptation to mix with.

But what about us? And where are we leading here? Are we leading to the absolute fanatical thought that it is God who tempts us? Is that what is being said? No. It is not.

I would like you to hold your finger here and turn with me over to James chapter one.

You know, for the life of me I don't understand theology. There has always been a great debate pitting James' epistle against Paul's epistles because they believe that Paul's epistles were totally of the Lord meaning that it was the Lord who performed all things and then James came and wrote that we have a part in it. Well, that is the furthest thing from the truth.

James is a very practical book. It is a gospel book that tells us what the life of Christ is in his people. It is the outworking of the Word of God and God the Word of God in us. But I don't want to dwell in that. Let's stay in James chapter one and let's look here at... start... let's start in verse 12.

“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.”¹¹

Well, that almost puts the onus on you, doesn't it? You are going to gain a crown because you love him. You are going to endure temptation because you love him.

Not so fast. These Scriptures teach nothing of man's ability to overcome sin for himself. The Scriptures teaching nothing of man's ability to overcome temptation in himself.

Then James tells us flat out:

“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.”¹²

Well, then, if God ... if the Holy Spirit led Jesus to be tempted and he leads us into temptation, that is a tough one. How do we say that it is not God who tempted us? God has no part in sin. James clears it up in the next verse. We don't have to stay there.

He says:

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.”¹³

¹¹ James 1:12.

¹² James 1:13.

¹³ James 1:14.

See, Jesus set I forth for us when he said he has nothing in me. There is nothing. There is no lust. There is no covetousness. There is no pride in the Son of God. But when that temptation comes, when it comes and remember how we started today, temptation is an affliction. It is an affliction of the soul.

We are going to ask. We are going to answer the question in a minute why. But James wants us to know and it is very profitable for us to know that we don't stand up as this society is so permeated today and it always has been. For my 41 years on this earth I have always heard man say, "The devil made me do it."

But we have no right to stand up and say, "God made me do it."

Oh, God, it was your providence that brought this in, so therefore it is ok. We are going to get to that. We can't say that kind of thing, because that temptation is here for a purpose. It is here for the child of God for a purpose. And that is the only people I am talking about for the children of God, because the people in the world, the people outside of Christ know nothing about temptation.

Oh, sure, they are tempted to do this, but it doesn't bother them. There is no conscience to it. But for the child of God it does. There is an accuser there and that accuser is ourself, our conscience. But we have this fallen part in us, too, that wants to leap out to that temptation and embrace it and go with it, because it does entice us, not the spiritual man, but it does entice the flesh.

"But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."¹⁴

People want to lay blame to God because he allowed sin to enter into the world. That always puzzled me until the Lord revealed to me why, to reveal his perfect plan of salvation. His plan of salvation would not be in man, would have nothing to do with man and would have everything to do with this thing and everything to do with him. All glory to his name.

"Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."¹⁵

There you go. There is the laying hold of temptation. That is what temptation does in the child of God.

Is this confusing for you? Is it confusing for you? Does it try your very thought of the sovereignty of God? Are you starting to say, "Well, you know what? Maybe he is not sovereign over temptation"? Is there anything God is not sovereign over? Maybe you don't want him to be. Maybe it is more comfortable for you to say that the devil has got his hand in everything. It is easier for me to see that.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ James 1:15.

But why? Why does God bring temptation to his people?

Many of you have probably already figured out, because this is an afflicted people. And in those afflictions you know you have had temptations. You have had temptation to unbelief. You have had temptation to cry out to God, why me? You have had temptation to question God's very means and what he has used to afflict you.

But what end has he brought you to? What end does the Lord bring you to in that affliction? Why does he afflict you?

The same answer lies with temptation, too. And that answer is fulfilled and shown us in Hebrews chapter two.

Hebrews chapter two, we begin reading in verse 17.

“Wherefore in all things it behoved him ...”¹⁶

It pleased him. It was for his will and purpose.

“... to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted.”¹⁷

That is what we are seeing today.

“...he is able to succor them that are tempted.”¹⁸

Why, Lord, are we tempted? Love. It is love. It is the love for your soul. That is a hard one to swallow because his ways are so much higher than our ways. We are tempted. We are led to temptation. As we are tried in the fire, as the fire of temptation comes, as Satan comes with all of his fiery darts and all of his enticements and the world comes with all of its allurements and yourself rises up with all your pride and it rises up with all of your lusts.

You mean Romans 8:28 is true? It is true.

All things, even temptation works for the good of his people to them who are the called, to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose.

You see, we are called to be tempted. We are called for this refiner's soap and this refining fire to come through, to purge the child of God of all that we rely on: self, world, others. There is a temptation there.

¹⁶ Hebrews 2:17.

¹⁷ Hebrews 2:17-18.

¹⁸ Hebrews 2:17.

“For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted.”¹⁹

Was it some sadistic thought that he went through temptation so, ha, ha, you have to go through temptation? No. It is so he could pour out his love upon his children. In that time of need the Lord brings us to him and he succors us with love and he succors us with mercy and he succors us with his faithfulness and he succors us with all that is stored up in him and he does that for his people to show them what?

He reveals two things. He reveals to them what they are without him. What we are. We would easily sell out to Satan. We would easily sell out to our own lust and our own pride and there are times that we do. But he is still there to succor. He is still there to... why? Because of the last of verse, because to make reconciliation for the sins of his people. We will sin. Does this give us a license to sin? God forbid. It is always the danger when preaching a message like this that someone out there might be thinking, well, we just have a license to do whatever.

No. Because it is the love of Christ that constrains us. It is the love of Christ and this is the beginning of the hatred of sin. It is the beginning of being revealed of what how sinful sin is. And your soul is brought to hate it because as we are tempted and we do fall to those temptations, what is it that the Lord shows us? In his chastening hand of correction in bringing... what does he show us? Love. He shows us love. Even when we deserve much worse, much more, but he shows us love.

Why? Because we were elected by the Father, redeemed by the Son and we are sealed by the Holy Spirit.

To make reconciliation of the sins of his people he succors us with that reconciliation. He brings us to see the heinousness of sin. He shows us the remorse in our souls cry out, “Lord, this is what we have done against thee. I have been drawn in. I have been enticed by these arguments.”

And, oh, our pride is always enticed to do evil by arguments, flattery. Let some one come and flatter us for by the offer of some real or apparent good. This life is full of enticements. This life is full of temptations.

And when I look back in our text this morning at the love of Christ to come down here, to come down to this filthy earth, to come down to this place where sin abounded all around, to come down where persecution for himself would be at every corner, to come down and have to look the religious world in the face who denied his very existence, who spit upon him, who wanted him dead from the moment he got here and he did all of this in this great love to go first so that he could succor us, because we will be tempted.

This affliction of temptation will come. Yes, it is love. Now we know why then was Jesus led.

¹⁹ Ibid.

What a great, what manner of love, what a great love the Lord has toward his people to not leave us there in the temptation.

Have you ever thought about those words in his prayer?

“Lead us not into temptation.”²⁰

Nobody asks for affliction. Nobody stands up and says, “Lord, lead me to temptation. Lead me to affliction. I want that.”

But, Lord, you must deliver us from the evil of it. You must deliver us, Lord, and that is how we are delivered. You must keep us, Lord, and that is how we are kept.

“Then was Jesus...”²¹

And notice the next two words. See, it tells us something about temptation that it is given, that it is brought to us in the providential hand of God and the purpose of it is to lead us upward.

Not to keep us down on this earth. It is to lead us upward to Christ. It is to lead us up and to look away unto the author and finisher of our faith.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit.”²²

Christ in his going first showed us the way, the truth and the life in him. Christ in showing us the way of temptation showed us that he has defeated it, that the power of that temptation has been taken away by the succoring of Christ.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit.”²³

And notice where.

“...into the wilderness.”²⁴

Now that is not hard for us to understand this wilderness, because we live in one every day. The more I see of this world the more the Lord weans me from it, the more I see it as a one big barren wilderness. I pray for the day that the Lord delivers my soul from the things that still hold me back in this world. I pray for that weaning when the Lord would take those desires of worldly things and kill them, make me dead to them, slay those things.

²⁰ Matthew 6:13; Luke 11:4.

²¹ Mathew 4:1.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

As we are entertained in this Word and shown that we are strangers and pilgrims in this earth, our feet are not to take footing here on earth because we will and shall be beared up upon his wings. We shall meet him in the heavens. The people of God's place is not this world. It is not to partake in this world. It is not to embrace this world, because there is a lot of temptation. There is a lot of evil there. There is a lot of enticements there. But this world to the child of God, I pray, is dying every day, dying every day to the clutches of this world.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.”²⁵

You know, I was telling my children last night we have this popular misconception of the devil because Hollywood and society tries to paint the devil that he has got horns and he has got a pitchfork and he has got a long tail and he is this grotesque figure and all of that is just for us because, you know, he is real easy for us to see.

But the Scriptures deny that. The Scriptures speak of something else that he is, indeed, an angel, an angel fallen from heaven, an angel that can transform himself into an angel of light. This grotesque figure is not something grotesque to us. As Jesus said, “There is nothing in me to commune with...”

There is everything in us to commune with. As Satan's temptations come, as the temptation of life comes, as all of these things are led by the providential hand of God to try our souls, to try the faith, to purify us, all of these things in the purpose of God for the glory of God.

See, there is so much in this life today that makes Satan out to be an equal being on God's footing. And that is so untrue. It is so anti scriptural. It is so antichrist. The Lord has defeated him. He has put him under his feet. One day he will be defeated finally. But even in death, he has been defeated because the Lord has taken the sting of death away.

All of the ... do you not see him as disarming this weapon? It is a weapon that comes... and I am not making light of that weapon, because it is so, so very strong. It is still stronger than anything we have. Anything of our self will not be able to repel Satan.

It is Christ. It is the Lord who must fight for us. It is the Spirit of God who comes forth powerfully to resist the devil. What a dependency we have knowing that these temptations will come. The Lord tells us that they will come.

But greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world.

There is a greater than the devil here. I am always encouraged when I come to a passage like this and the devil is mentioned. I sometimes, of course, get a little hesitant, because of what a worthy adversary he is. But when you search the Scriptures and you see how the Lord in his providence and how the Lord in his restraining power has the devil on a

²⁵ Ibid.

leash, has him confined to this world, that is a comforting thing to me because there is a much higher world. There is a much higher place. There is a much higher dominion over what is here.

And I want to be part of this world. I want to have my clutches in this world I pray that the Lord would wean us from this world.

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.”²⁶

I know want to say a few things about these temptations. If you look at he first one in verse three notice that Satan now or that the devil now is called the tempter.

“And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God...”²⁷

I don't know about you, but I can identify with that. That seems to be one of the biggest weapons on Satan's arsenal to attack me with. It is that little two letter word “if.” It is always there.

Well, if you are God's child, you wouldn't act that way. If you were a child of God, you wouldn't speak that way. If you were God's child, you wouldn't treat your wife that way. If you were God's child, you would want to dot hat. If you were...

Do you know where I am going with this? He comes with that little two letter word all the time, he does. And it sticks in you. But he came to Christ with that word “if” and he said:

“If thou be the Son of God...”²⁸

And notice this very worthy adversary. He noticed Jesus was hungry, so hoe comes with him and he comes to... and this is our first temptation, you know, we are tempted where all the temporal things in this life. And don't tell me that you are not. We are all tempted with the temporal things in this life. We have food, but we are tempted with better food. We have necessities, but we are tempted with better necessities. We are tempted. We have things and when our eyes see things the lust that is there lusts for those things.

But not with Christ. As Jesus was hungered for 40 days and 40 nights, sustained by the Lord, remember he was led up by the spirit. He was full of the Holy Ghost. He was in the Lord. His strength was in supernatural strength. It was God's strength. It was God's sustaining. This is the only way that we can combat a temptation. It must be in his strength. It must be by his power.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Matthew 4:3.

²⁸ Ibid.

And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.²⁹

So the very first temptation we see, yes, is in temporal goods, temporal things, the things of this world. Once again, the things of this world. None of these things will be needed in the next world, but this world they are a temptation to us because we have so much going on in this world. We have so much that we do in this world that believe we need more. That is a temptation.

But I that is not bad enough, the devil then took him into a holy city and he set him on the pinnacle of the temple.

“And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God...”³⁰

There is that little word again. It is such a trying one and in all of these temptations you see that little word “if” because it is a question. Oh, if it is true and sometimes that temptation when it comes to us we say, no, it is not true. And we waver.

We must wait till the Lord brings the ravens to feed us. We must wait as David waited.

You know, it is not a sin to wait. In fact, patience is a fruit of the Spirit. And if the Lord gives you patience to wait, he will answer that fruit with nourishment because he succors those. Because, he was tempted first. He knows how that temptation comes to his children. He knows the strength that they need. He knows that they need the power of the Holy Ghost.

But look at this.

“Cast thyself down.”³¹

Well, look at Satan. He is going to quote Scripture.

“For it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.”³²

I want you to hold on a minute. I am going to read Psalm 91 to you, because that is what he was quoting. You see, he left something out. Satan will always leave something out. He is not above using the Scriptures, but there is something, the glory of God he is going to leave out. The power of God he is going to leave out.

Listen to what he left out.

²⁹ Matthew 4:2-3.

³⁰ Matthew 4:6.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

Verse 10 says:

There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.³³

Of God's divine appointment. The Lord was kept in all of his ways in God's divine appointment.

Satan left that part out. He left that part out and he is tempting now the Lord with what? He is tempting him with presumption. And oh how that comes for us. We get tempted to presume upon the Lord many times. He taught... he comes and he says, "You know, just throw yourself down. Throw yourself down and the Lord will send his angels. God will send his angels and he will keep you from being hurt." And it sounds good to us. And we presume upon the goodness of God and we presume upon the grace of God.

How many times have we said that to ourselves? And I am saying that to myself. The door is open. God has opened a door. We must walk through it because there is a perceived door open. God did that.

Well, God does everything.

Or, you know, it is God's providence that brought that into my life today, so I must act upon that.

We can't presume upon the grace of God. That is why Paul was so emphatic about the spiritual man who discerns all things. But it is the spiritual man, it is the one who has been given the power of the Holy Ghost to discern all of these temptations and all of these things that come into our life. We can't just jump and act on them.

Well, I am a child of God. I can do whatever I want to do.

Didn't this sound enticing? Throw yourself down. You know God is going to save you. You are the Son of God.

Notice what Jesus says, again. It is written.

There is nothing in him there is nothing in Christ for this to take hold of.

We think about how we are enticed with these things as I just mentioned. We know that there is something in us to take hold of. There is a fallen nature in us that it takes hold of. It says, "Yeah, you know, we reason it. We logically reason these things. Well, yeah, I mean, yeah, God brought that. It must be ok."

³³ Psalm 91:10-11.

But in Christ it was nothing. There was no sin. There was no pride.

Listen. It is written.

“It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.”³⁴

You are out of order, Satan. First it was:

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”³⁵

Well, what is the Lord saying? I live upon my Father. I live upon the deity. I live upon the trinity. I live upon God because in life and in everything all things consist in Christ.

Bread, temporal things? What is that to the Lord?

But the third one is really... shows us something about the sin. It shows us something about even more the usurping of this enemy.

Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.³⁶

Well, what do we call this? We call this the liberality of the devil. How can he give what is not his? He wants to give the Son of God what is the Son of God's. All kingdoms are under his feet. He is the ruler of all. And Satan says, “I am going to take you up here and I am going to show you all these kingdoms and I am going to give them to you if you just serve me.”

See how subtle that is? Not to us. This is the devil actually coming as an angel of light. God, Christ, all that has been given to him. Everything is his and the fullness thereof.

But that liberality word, oh, well, we have liberty. That is why we...

Be careful. Be careful with that liberty.

Paul said:

“All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient.”³⁷

In 1 Corinthians 6:12 he then said:

³⁴ Matthew 4:7.

³⁵ Matthew 4:4.

³⁶ Matthew 4:8-9.

³⁷ 1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:13.

“I will not be brought under the power of any.”³⁸

There is the test. Yes, all things in this world are lawful, because they are the Lords, but are they expedient? Are they good for your soul? Are they to the use of edifying? Are they to the use of building up?

Paul said,

“I will not be brought under the power of any.”³⁹

When you are under the power of them it now... you have succumbed to a temptation. They are in the dominion of Satan now, in his realm. But then Galatians 5:13 says it best.

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”⁴⁰

You know, the more I read and the more the Lord reveals in his Word to me, the more I start to understand what Jesus said.

“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.”⁴¹

For in these two commandments, all hangs on these two. All is fulfilled in them, in love. Christ fulfilled everything in his love, in his love to lay down his life, to shed that innocent blood, to go before us in perfect obedience, all of it out of love.

After the final temptation the Lord said to Satan a command.

Get out of here.

“Get thee hence.”⁴²

You can't get to me. I am safe and secure in the power of the Holy Ghost.

And, you know, we have to be brought there. But when we are, there is no temptation that would befall us. There is no temptation that will overpower us. When brought here under the power of God then and only then can we cry out:

“Get thee hence, Satan.”⁴³

³⁸ 1 Corinthians 6:12.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Galatians 5:13.

⁴¹ Luke 10:27.

⁴² Matthew 4:10.

⁴³ Ibid.

You can do it in man's strength, you can do it in your wisdom, but he ain't going to flee. He is not subject to you. He is subject to God.

“Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”⁴⁴

See, there is the seasons, the seasons of the Lord when he brings forth that nurturing and he brings forth that succoring and the devil is kept far, far away and all those temptations are kept far away. And the Lord just comes and he nourishes our soul and there is that season. There is that season of no attack and we praise God for those seasons, because those seasons are really priceless. Those seasons are precious. Those seasons is what gives us a glimpse of the life to come.

I would like to leave you today with one verse to tie all this together and that is found in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 13, one of my favorites.

“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.”⁴⁵

You know, he did make a way to escape. He made it in his Son, his Son who went first, his Son that will succor every child of God who also goes through these temptations.

Oh Lord, may you lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Dear heavenly Father, most gracious and holy Lord, may you add your power, your strength, your clarity, your truth for your name's sake and for the glory of thee and thee alone. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

⁴⁴ Matthew 4:10-11.

⁴⁵ 1 Corinthians 10:13.