

The INTERCESSOR

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

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What About Temptation and Sin?

by Norman Grubb

To boldly proclaim that Jesus Christ is living out His life in my form raises some basic questions: Why do temptations still pull at me? And how is it that I still sin? In the following excerpt from "Yes, I Am," Norman gives keen scriptural insight into the difference between temptation and sin, God's ultimate for-others purpose in our temptations, and how our temptations and trials are His opportunity to move into faith-action as us.

Life is not a bed of roses. Life is not lived on a Cloud Nine. What about those areas of our daily living which appear to contradict a life which we say is *not we living it, but He as us?* What about what are certainly temptations, and appear often to be failures and even sins?

Paul and James speak of these aspects of life as temptations and trials (one word covers both concepts in the original Greek). Temptations are enticements to want what we should not; trials are those times when we are faced with what we don't want, but can't avoid!

First then, temptations, which until we have them in right focus are the most troublesome to us. They are the

reason why many people say, "This Christ-in-you life is not livable or workable, because of the way we succumb to so many temptations." Yet we know that temptations are just as continuous in a *perfect* human life, because it is said of Jesus that He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Therefore temptations and their enticement are part of a perfect, not imperfect life—and are not themselves sin.

So we squarely face constant temptation on this new level of living, just as much as in the former. The question, then, is often asked, "What is it in us which is tempted and responds to temptation, if we are this new man in Christ and say we are dead to sin and have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts?" The answer is simply that, as we have already said, we are *human selves*, and our oneness with Christ does not alter our two-ness in being He and I. God's whole purpose is to express Himself through our fully human selves, just as He did with Jesus.

So this human self of ours is just as continually tempted as His was. James explains temptation as being related to

the obvious fact that I, as a human, have all the human appetites and faculties of soul and body. In fact, it is by these that God manifests Himself through our selves. Our humanity is responsive to what we might call the "upward temptations" of producing the fruits of the Spirit (see how God "tempted" Abraham to sacrifice his son—Gen. 22:1). So also it is fully open and responsive to all the downward temptations of the flesh, world and devil. This world contains every

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form of solicitation to the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes and the pride of life, for “the whole world lieth in the wicked one.” To these we in our humanity have responded and lived in all our unsaved days. We have been at home in them. So no wonder that we are constantly assailed by such “drawings.” For James says temptation is when we are “drawn away by our own desires and enticed” (1:14); and enticement makes us really want to do it. So temptation definitely makes us want to do what we should not.

Now the vital point is to recognize that this is not sin. Scripture clearly

Temptations are pulls back to walk again in darkness. But if we now know *who we are*, we see all our temptations as what God is meaning us to have, and each exactly suitable to us. We see them all as opportunities to manifest Him through our souls and bodies. Temptation has become opportunity!

states that Jesus was tempted at all points (and that covers a great deal) as we are, so temptation is not sin for He was “without sin.” That means He was enticed to do such things and yet never sinned. Therefore, temptation is not sin. We know He was so tempted because we are given one instance when He did temporarily respond to temptation. That was after He had constantly told His disciples that His Father’s will was for Him to die and rise again. Yet when the time came, He plainly said He didn’t want to die. He was “enticed” to want to escape death

and live. “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me.” That was temptation, and He plainly had it. Of course His victory was, “Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt,” and that took three hours of bloody sweat to have it settled.

This is of great value to us. Just because we are so often tempted, just because we feel the various pulls of soul and body, we should not drag our feet under a sense of guilt and false condemnation.

Sin is only when we go a definite further step. When, as James says, “lust has conceived, it brings forth sin.” Conception and birth are the results of a marriage union. In other words, we have gone beyond the “wanting” condition to a deliberate, conscious choice of doing the thing; and we don’t often go that far.

But now in our union life, a total reversal has taken place: not just a change of our spirit joined to His Spirit, but of the control of our whole personhood, including our soul emotions and body appetites. All are now His property. Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit. Our members are “instruments of righteousness unto God.” We are slaves of righteousness, whereas we used to be slaves of sin. We are “renewed in the spirit of our minds,” and every thought is being “brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ.” There is now this upward pull on our souls and bodies—upward temptation to respond to Him. Our bodies are living sacrifices. We delight to do His will.

This is a radical reversal from our fear of flesh responses and our constant guarding against them. Even though Christians, we have become so

used to seeing ourselves negatively: Sex is so dangerous and so close around the corner that we are captured by illicit desires...also by greed and love of material things...and by jealousy and hate and resentment. We have been afraid of our flesh, and by no means free to fearlessly use our body faculties and soul emotions for Christ and others.

We therefore, in our new union relationship, take a further step of faith on the soul-and-body level. We are firm in faith that we are *kept*, and *He* does the keeping. “Kept by the power of God through faith,” wrote Peter. “Now unto Him who is able to keep us from falling,” wrote Jude. And said John, “Perfect love casts out fear.” So why be fearful?

So, in this new way, we have our emotions to use to express our love and joys and interests, and our minds to be stretched in daily launches of faith in the God of the impossible; our bodies too, appetites and all, are free to express our love and care for others, without being fearful of their misuse. That is our new boldness of faith, though those appetites and emotions have formerly had such a negative hold on us. But fear not. Have faith in the Keeper.

This also gives us a radical change of outlook on temptation. It used to be something to be fearful of, avoid, and feel greatly guilty about; now we see temptation as an asset, not a liability! Why and in what sense? Because light must have darkness to shine out of. Temptations are pulls back to walk again in darkness. But if we now know *who we are*, we see all our temptations as what God is meaning us to have, and each exactly suitable to us. We see

them all as opportunities to manifest Him through our souls and bodies. Temptation has become opportunity! We understand why James tells us to count all temptations as *joy*. *Christ is manifested by them*.

James Explains

But how can we say that it is Christ who is manifested when we are tempted? Let us look at what we do when we are tempted, and then at the remedy for it.

What happens during temptation is that the human part of us is being drawn away by some solicitation to

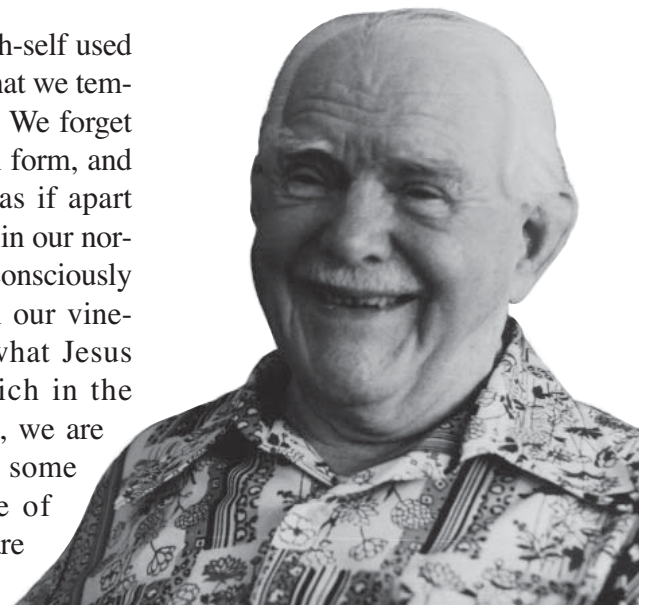
The importance of accepting, acknowledging, and not resisting is that this “draws the teeth” of the temptation. What you resist, resists you. What you fight, fights you. In this sense I apply Jesus’ words, “Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest...thou be cast into prison.”

function just as our old flesh-self used to; and what this means is that we temporarily forget who we are. We forget we are Christ in our human form, and we are pulled to respond as if apart from Him. Instead of being in our normal daily condition of subconsciously recognizing that we are in our vine-branch union (which is what Jesus meant by “abiding,” which in the Greek means “remaining”), we are diverted into believing in some attractive flesh-response of body or soul; and what we are believing in at any time

holds us in its grasp.

Now in our former self-striving life, trying to combat temptation and sin in our own strength, we would try to resist it even while we responded to it and, as a result, have an inner sense of condemnation because we were even dallying with it. But usually the more we resisted and condemned ourselves, the more the thing gained its hold on us. So we lived a fighting, struggling, supposedly two-nature life—the one striving against the other.

But now, in our new understanding, we don’t deny or fight the temptation. We do not resist or struggle against it. No, we admit and accept it, because we recognize it is not sin but is the normal pull that the outer world, through the flesh, has on us—as it did on Christ—and that God *means us* to have it. But the importance of accepting, acknowledging, and not resisting is that this “draws the teeth” of the temptation. What you resist, resists you. What you fight, fights you. In this sense I apply Jesus’ words, “Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him;



lest...thou be cast into prison.” In other words, acknowledge that he is your adversary, and that will take the bite out of him.

So the result of my accepting and agreeing is that it takes the heat out of any resistance by me, and loosens me from the grip of my diverted believing in this enticement...and as I free the temptation to be a temptation, I equally free myself from being bound to it by my false believing in it. And I am free to do what? To remember and recognize *who I really am*—Christ in me! Recognition is faith in its completed form. So I recognize that He is *peace* when I am tempted to worry. He is *courage* when fear grabs me. He is genuine *love* for a person I am feeling hatred for. Furthermore, He is *other love* who can reverse my temptation to an illicit love, and can cause me to love that one for his or her own benefit and not for my self-gratification. Since He is all these to me *as me*, I am the manifestation of peace, love and power. Christ is the light who uses the darkness as something which, by His swallowing it up, manifests *Him* as light in a new form. If I wasn’t tempted to hate, I couldn’t experience and manifest His love. If I wasn’t tempted to fear, I couldn’t experience and manifest His courage. If I wasn’t tempted to an illicit love, I couldn’t experience and manifest His other-love for the benefit of that person through me. My temptations are my assets in continually manifesting Him in new forms.

This is the way in which we totally reverse our outlook on our temptations. We used to be frightened of them because, while still thinking we were independent selves, we were afraid of ourselves and how we could be captured

by sin...so we would pray the beginner’s prayer, “Lead us not into temptation.” But now we see temptation as the adventure of faith! For it is this necessary negative on which the positive of Christ is built. That’s why I can say with James that I “count it all joy” (a strong, total word—*count*, not feel) when I have my various temptations.

Let us look a little more closely into how James gives us the remedy for the assaults of all kinds of double-mindedness, in his strongly practical letter. Here we will see works not as antagonistic to faith, but as its fulfillment. The basic question will be, How

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Furthermore, He is *other love* who can reverse my temptation to an illicit love, and can cause me to love that one for his or her own benefit and not for my self-gratification.

do we add the right kind of works to our faith?

In this epistle it looks as if we believers have a constant struggle. James speaks of us having the problem of two minds (either believing or wavering); having two standards in our brotherhood relationships (one for the rich but another for the poor); using two tongues (for blessing and cursing); holding two friendships (for the world and for God); having two motives in prayer (self-interest and for others). James mentions all these doubles and

presents us as having a conflict between them, with the negative usually overwhelming the positive.

This is a two-nature struggle, all right, and it’s set forth in a letter to believing brethren! But now look more closely at the beautiful remedy James slips in for those eager enough to search it out and find it—or, shall we say, who are open to its God-given reality. In the first chapter he speaks of God’s goodness in “begetting us with the word of truth”—his expression for the new birth (1:18). But then, he continues, we get mixed up with all kinds of disturbing self-reactions, not yet knowing the remedy for the “self” problem. He calls this “all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness” (1:21). So what is the answer? We experience it when, by faith, the living word of truth has not only begotten us but is also engrafted into us—his way of describing the vine-branch union relationship—and we become inwardly fixed. This fixedness comes as we see ourselves in union with Christ—that we are forms by which He is manifesting Himself. James calls this blessed insight “the perfect law of liberty” (1:25).

Now he gives this subtle illustration. While we are still in the old self-effort illusion and don’t yet know Christ in us as us, we are like a man who looks into a mirror and sees himself just as his normal, helpless self—with no hope of any means of changing himself (1:24). So he just goes away and forgets about it. But, James says, when we know the inner union, He in our form, then when we look into the mirror we no longer see our human, failing selves, we see ourselves as who we *now are*: human

expressions of that perfect law of liberty, Christ Jesus, who is the Spirit of other-love. So now we can go out into life with confidence, because we are no longer just ourselves, we are Christ in us as us.

So now we understand the conflict of these doubles not as the contest of two natures, one pitted against the other; rather, we see the temptation as something not within us but something seeking *to draw us away from who we are*. So we “resist” that drawing not by denying or fighting it but *by recognizing Christ in us as us*. Thus He uses the temptation for a new manifestation of Himself by us.

So, James says, life will always consist of endless trials and temptations, because they are the negatives by which He the positive can reveal Himself. Therefore, when we lack wisdom in a situation and ask for it, let us take it for granted that He is in the process of giving it to us. But along come questionings. Will He really show us what to do? Now if we were in the old two-nature conflict, we should be swinging between faith and doubt; but we, knowing we are He in us, dissolve the temptation by saying, “I’m not taking that temptation to doubt. That is an external assault on me. I’m not double—I’m single. And Christ is my wisdom.” The stand of faith dissolves the doubt.

The same is true with our new tongues, says James (3:1–18). Our old tongue is a filthy one; our new tongue glorifies God and blesses man. So what then when our tongue slips back into some negative speaking?—if instead of blessing God we curse men, who are made after the similitude of God? Have we then two tongues, and

must we always swing from the one to the other? No, says James, for we are like a fountain of water which can’t produce “both salt water and fresh” (NIV). We know we are a fountain of fresh water. Therefore, the salt was just something which got mixed up with the water as it flowed out of the fountain. The defect cannot be within the fountain itself, nor can it be in us. So we recognize the wrong things we said as a slip into temptation—not affecting the purity of the fountain in our union reality—and remedied by a word of repentance and cleansing. We no

We are Christ-minded, not sin-minded. We walk so confidently in our new union-relationship that John says, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin...he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (3:9). We cannot return to sin as a principle, but if we do slip into a sin there is the immediate remedy.

longer live in a struggle between two kinds of speaking, good and evil discourse. We speak positively and lovingly from our love source with what James calls “the wisdom that is from above,” rather than from beneath.

Then he raises the question of our motives in prayer (4:1–4). Are they sometimes double, and mainly for our own self-interest? Once that was so, and it caused us to question what we were asking for, as if we lived with double motives. But now we don’t. Our motives are pure from their pure center, and we go boldly forward in our prayer requests, asking, as Jesus

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this magazine is to further the great high calling of the Lord Jesus to carry His Gospel to the whole world. This calling is known in the Christian world as the Great Commission. Our interpretation of the Gospel is that Jesus Christ is the second member of the Trinity, fully God, made manifest in the flesh. He was tempted in all points as we are, but totally without sin. He was crucified for the sins of the world, was buried, and rose from the dead on the third day, according to the Scriptures. He gives the power to become the sons of God to all who receive Him.

Beyond this forgiveness of sins, *The Intercessor* is committed to proclaiming to every creature the mystery of the Gospel, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27). The outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Church at Pentecost means that Christ has joined Himself to us as one spirit (1 Cor. 6:17). Thus we see that Christ has reproduced Himself in our flesh, and we Christians are really Christ living as us (Gal. 2:20).

Therefore, there is not only the forgiveness of sins but also a life in Christ of knowing we are dead to sin (Rom. 6). Furthermore, we are dead to the Law (Rom. 7), since the power of sin is through the Law. Christ is the only Lawkeeper (Rom. 8), and there is no independent human nature that can keep the Law, though we are continually tempted to believe so.

Belief in an independent human nature is Satan’s lie and the root of sin. Non-Christians are really Satan-indwelt, expressing his lusts (John 8:44), just as we have come to learn that Christians are Christ-indwelt, expressing His righteousness (2 Cor. 6:16). Humans have no moral nature of their own, meaning that we are simply expressions of the indwelling deity nature, either of Christ or Satan (the fallen created being who is the spirit of error). Sin in a Christian is a result of believing again Satan’s lie that there is a human nature which can do good or evil.

Our full restoration, then, is to see ourselves as Christ in the world and to labor and travail to see Christ formed in others according to the mighty working of the Spirit. This is “intercession,” the definite laying down of our lives to present every man perfect in Christ (Col. 1:28). *The Intercessor* is committed to this great and thrilling commission, the cost of bringing it about, and the resurrection joy of reaping the harvest!

said, “whatsoever we desire.” So we have become established in this glorious fixed reality wherein we see ourselves as the expression of the perfect law of liberty, that law which James also calls “the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.” And we are that! And we remain unchanged through all the temptations. “I am single, not double.” The assaults of doubleness are only attempts to divert me from my basic singleness. That is why temptations are always such an adventure of faith, and the means of perfecting my faith so that I “count them all joy.” Finally, James calls on the brethren to move into this faith union in Christ, and out from that apparent double-mindedness. “Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded” (4:8).

There is one further question which is always being asked about the temptation issue—a favorite question. “But what about sin? Do we still commit sins?” Why do people always bring that up? Because, until we have found a way out, we are so congenitally sin-minded. We have become so used to our struggles and failures and guilt—and perhaps we also want some excuse for our continuance in sin!

The usual scripture on which people base that question is 1 John 1:8–9, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves....If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins....” But our anxious concern about sin is what gives us away, for the whole point of this summit letter of John’s on the union is not about sinning, but our *union reality*. We are in the light as He is in the light (for He is the light in us). We walk as He

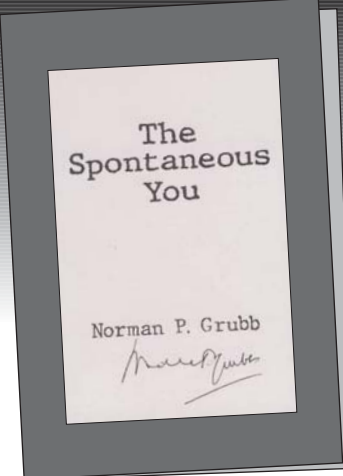
walked (for He is walking in us). We know all truth (for the Spirit is the knower in us). We live the right life, as He does (for the sin spirit in us has been replaced by the Holy Spirit). We love as He loves (because He is love and dwells in us). We believe as He believes (with the world-overcoming faith of the Son of God). *We are as He is* (“for as He is, so are we in this world”—1 John 4:17). It is the total union level. The totally positive level. We are! We know we are! Yes, *I am*.

But because we have our real, temptable humanity, John started his letter with these *sin* statements. He declares that there is sin, and that if we sin there is this immediate remedy in Christ’s blood. If it is quick sinning, it is quick cleansing. Indeed, we add sin to sin if we don’t immediately replace the sin and guilt-consciousness with a total forgetting of it in Him of whom it is stated that “our sins and iniquities He remembers no more.” We go right ahead praising, and indeed use a sin “slip” once again to magnify the grace of God. The loss turned to gain! But then John also adds, “These things I write unto you that ye sin not.” That is all that John has to say in his whole five

chapters about the possibility of our sinning. It is a detail to him. We are Christ-minded, not sin-minded. We walk so confidently in our new union-relationship that John says, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin...he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (3:9). We cannot return to sin as a principle, but if we do slip into a sin there is the immediate remedy. Confess it and forget it; don’t rehash it or ask sin questions. Talk Christ union and live it...because we can’t help it.

—Yes, I Am

For many years after his retirement as General Secretary of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade, Norman Grubb traveled extensively sharing the truth of our union with Christ. He also carried on a huge personal correspondence with individuals throughout the world. He was the author of many books and pamphlets, a number of which are available through the Zerubbabel Book Ministry. Norman lived with his daughter, Priscilla, in Fort Washington, PA. Norman P. Grubb entered the Kingdom at 98 years of age.




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Editor's Note

To say that “not I but Christ” is living in and as me, revolutionizes every understanding we have of God and His eternal purpose for us. This issue of *The Intercessor* explores two interrelated foundational themes: 1) the purpose of temptation and trials in the Christian life, and, 2) the underlying sin of unbelief and how to spring back to faith, if we have sinned.

In the lead article “What about Temptation and Sin?”, Norman Grubb draws from the letters of Paul, James, and John to thoroughly examine the purpose of temptation in the Christian life—particularly for those of us who know union with Christ. “Temptation and Its Beneficial Effects” traces God’s use of temptations in Jesus’ life, including a deeper perspective on the necessity of Satan in fulfilling God’s ultimate purposes. “It Remains Tough” reminds us that the trials of our faith in the demands of daily living bring us to maturity as we “become experienced letting Him through in the enemy’s territory.” “Every Man is Tempted,” taken from Norman’s classic, *The Liberating Secret*, provides a deeper look at sanctification and the way of faith by which alone we can be stimulated to refuse the evil and choose the good. It is especially insightful on temptation as attraction/love, and that temptations are our spiritual battleground: no warfare—no victory. “Adversity? Or Adventure?” is not the usual answer to the universal cry, “Why me?” This encouraging article reveals how to handle trials, the difference between temptation and trials, and God’s purpose in them. (It’s not just about me.)

Much of Satan’s success in tempt-

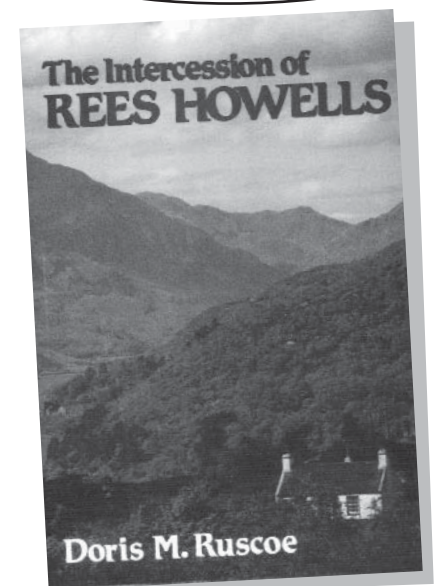
ing Christians to sin can be traced to a basic misunderstanding rampant in the Church today. This issue’s Bible Study, “Real Deliverance from Sin: Is it Possible?,” addresses the false idea (often also used as an excuse to sin) that Christians are flawed, unable to live up to God’s standard of a sinless life, and that God understands and forgives—basically, the lie that sin is inevitable and full deliverance not possible in this life. This penetrating article takes us back to biblical facts: that in Christ we are truly dead to sin, but very much alive to temptation, and can walk in victory now. Further probing the issue of sin in the Christian life, “Free At Last” explores how Satan tricks us into believing that *feeling* the pulls of temptation is sin, rather than that sin occurs when we believe we are independent selves who should not have those pulls. “False Condemnation” describes in detail how all sin is ultimately a result of believing we are independent selves, which immediately traps us in the powerlessness and condemnation of Romans 7. This is often compounded with the lie that we have returned to a permanent “old condition” just because we are caught out by the flesh on occasion. “Quick Down, Quick Up” provides the remedy when we have crossed the line into sin and the good news that once sin is recognized and repented of, our emphasis is on the walk of faith: living in the present and praising God that Jesus Christ lives out His righteousness in and as us.

Two personal accounts demonstrate walking by faith through temptation—without sinning. “To Believe is to Have,” taken from Norman Grubb’s *After C.T. Studd*, describes Norman’s temptation to let fear and doubt move

him from his word of faith—and then God’s faithfulness. A letter of encouragement, “Temptation and Sin—at home,” is the timely, personal advice by a mature believer to a young Christian wife and mother on facing the temptations and trials of everyday modern life.

We believe this issue dedicated to temptation and sin will shed light not only on the scriptural facts about this topic so crucial to the believer, but the practical application of how to handle both areas in our daily lives.

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Every Man is Tempted

by Norman Grubb

However rich our experience of Christ in salvation and sanctification may be, one fact remains patently the same for all: we live in a constant environment of temptation.

One great New Testament letter—to the Hebrews—has that as its main theme: how to be tempted and go through. Temptation was the downfall of the first Adam, and the victory of the last Adam. Its purpose, as well as its profoundest analysis, is given us by James. It is the only road to perfection: “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.” We must be tempted, because only by that means can we discover what is in us, and can we make our choices which finally fix our character and destiny.

If life is response to environment, and I live in two rival environments, those of flesh and Spirit, then each must keep appealing to me, keep drawing me, in every part of my being which still responds to its appeals. I must be tempted, and should be tempted, wherever I am still temptable. Only by this means can I learn and relearn the areas of my life in which I need an ever more complete deliverance, and can I be stimulated to refuse the evil and choose the good, and practise the way of faith by which alone that can be done.

It is plain that this life is probationary and progressive. It is from grace to

grace, from faith to faith, from glory to glory: and temptation is the continual proof that God uses even Satan for these sanctifying purposes. God tempts no man, but from the beginning of time it has been by the devil’s temptations that He has proved us, humbled us, taught us of ourselves and Himself; that He stimulates us to seek for victory, and finally perfects us. Even His own Son suffered, being tempted, and was only made perfect through “learning obedience by the things which He suffered.” Let us then brace ourselves to this unalterable fact. We shall be tempted at all points by all means to the last day of our pilgrimage on earth. These temptations are our great blessings in disguise. Woe betide us if we were to be without them; rather let us obey the command of James and count them all joy, whether they are the grosser temptations which assault us all through the desires of the flesh and the mind, or the trials that come through our daily circumstances and sphere of ministry.

Temptations are our battle grounds: no warfare, no victory. We see temptations from a new angle when we recognize in them ever fresh conquests for the Saviour over Satan, ever more glory to His name, ever new opportunities for exploits of faith and for testimony to others.

Temptation is enticement, and the channels by which temptation reaches us are always within ourselves. We may blame the thing that entices us. We would be wiser if we frankly recognized

that temptation gets its grip through stimulated natural desires. Lusts, as James calls them: “every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.” As we become less susceptible to stimulation in various areas, so temptation in those areas will have less appeal to us. Instead, therefore, of blaming the stimuli to temptation about us, we should do well to seek and find an ever deeper integration in the Spirit, resulting in an ever greater occupation with God, and quicker rejection of the first stirrings of false desire. It is equally true, however, that the closer we draw to Him, the more deeply we find ourselves to be sinners in other areas in which we had not formerly recognized any sin, for we find sin to be anything, even one per cent short of His perfection, any coming “short of the glory of God.” So in that sense too we move from sin to sin, and, praise God, from cleansing to cleansing. But the track is always leading upwards, to that glorious conformity to the image of His Son, and to the day when it will also be true of us as of God Himself, that we cannot be tempted with evil.

A closer examination of the mechanics of temptation, as given us by James (1:14, 15), emphasizes, as we have already said, that its power is in its incitement of our desires in some illicit direction. Temptation makes us want to do a thing. It “entices” us. It makes us like it, and that like soon turns to love, and we are gone, for life is governed by love. What we love we inevitably do,

unless we get that love redirected to a worthier end. We lust because we like to lust. We are angry because we want to be angry. We hate because we think we have good reason to hate.

None of these appetites or faculties are wrong in themselves. They were all in Adam, and all in Jesus, who “was tempted in all points like as we are.” To be tempted does not affect the purity of our hearts or the reality of our relationship of union with Christ. Being wholly alive in spirit, soul and body, we are wholly susceptible to all forms of appeal: and the world sees to it that they are plentiful and blatant.

Temptation is not yet sin. “Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed.” Young Christians must recognize the fact that the tempter is also the father of lies, and with all the various forms of temptation will constantly whisper the lie that because this or that continually pulls at us, we are therefore slaves to it, or that we are not truly delivered, and that our testimony to sanctification is a farce, and our claim to purity of heart a deceit. As we have already said, we must learn a clear and constant differentiation between the inner centre of the heart, purified by the blood of Jesus, where Spirit dwells with spirit, where thoughts and intents are now set on God, and the outer garments of the flesh through which all temptation reaches us, and which must be maintained by faith as crucified to us, and we to it.

Temptation passes over into sin when like becomes love. James says, “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.” Conception presupposes a marriage union, and in this case an adulterous one, through a guilty passion. We are married in heart to Jesus:

He has won our love. Along comes the tempter up some avenue of our personality and entices us to a guilty liaison—to love ourselves, to love a lust, to love a retaliation—and we consent. For a season our hearts have married that false desire, and the fruit of the union is sin: pride, anger or uncleanness. It is for this reason that later in his letter James boldly calls Christians “adulterers and adulteresses.”

We need to watch that fact, that the power of sin over us is that we love it. It captures our affections. If we are born of God, John says, we cannot keep committing (and therefore loving) sin. Our hearts are now set on Him. But we see how a temporary attraction of pride, self-pity, unbelief, lust, resentment, can capture us. And sometimes it is possible to be sorry for a fall into sin, and to repent for the act, yet not to have recognized that behind the act is the love of it. Down deep we still do rather like to do that kind of thing, or feel that we had justification for that kind of attitude. Dig down to that false love. Expose it as the root of sin. Condemn it before God and ask that, as we have God’s love in our hearts, so we may also have His holy hatred (Heb. 1:9).

We face the raw fact that sudden sin, almost before we know where we are, does get an entry quite often in most of our lives. We suddenly realize that we are a bit hot in an argument, a bit hard towards or jealous of another, depressed through fear or unbelief, disturbed or strained instead of restful, self-pitying or self-conscious, stirred in mind or desire by lust, malicious or exaggerating in our words. Sin has got its lodgment. We may say to ourselves that perhaps it is only on the temptation level, and has not yet become accepted

sin in our hearts. Maybe. The line between them is often very fine. But generally speaking, the thing which is not at once rejected and from which there is not the sense of immediate and complete deliverance, has got some hold, and must be regarded as a motion of sin in our members, needing repentance and the cleansing of the blood.

When sin does enter, above all, let us not be hypocrites. Jesus had special warnings for such. If we have taken our place in union with Christ by faith and assurance, if we have testified to this full salvation, it is very tempting to us to seek some means to avoid calling sin by its proper name. This is a special danger for any—and there are many thousands—who hold what commonly goes by the name of holiness teaching, including such doctrines as the destruction of the carnal nature, the removal of indwelling sin, the blessing of perfect love. They need to be specially watchful lest, in their God-given emphasis on the crisis of sanctification, they do not always strike a proper balance between the crisis and the ensuing walk, and face squarely the way by which sin can and does find re-entry into all lives. In maintaining the validity of the holiness experience, there is always a danger of calling by some other name, such as infirmity, what is in fact a sin in the daily life, a coming short, by however little, of the glory of God.

With the temptation, Paul says, God “will make a way of escape.” The general way is what we have been learning: the counteraction of Gal. 2:20. I am enticed. If I don’t know the way of crucifixion with Christ, my only defence will be to try and resist the temptation. But the more I resist, the more my attention is focused on the enticing object,

and the more it grips me. I am back in Rom. 7, and defeat is inevitable. I am already in the "liking" stage, and I have nothing with which to resist it except a negative, "Thou shalt not."

But when I know and practise the secret of release, I inwardly take my stand of faith, "I have been crucified with Christ." I say to Satan, "I am not here to respond. I am dead and buried

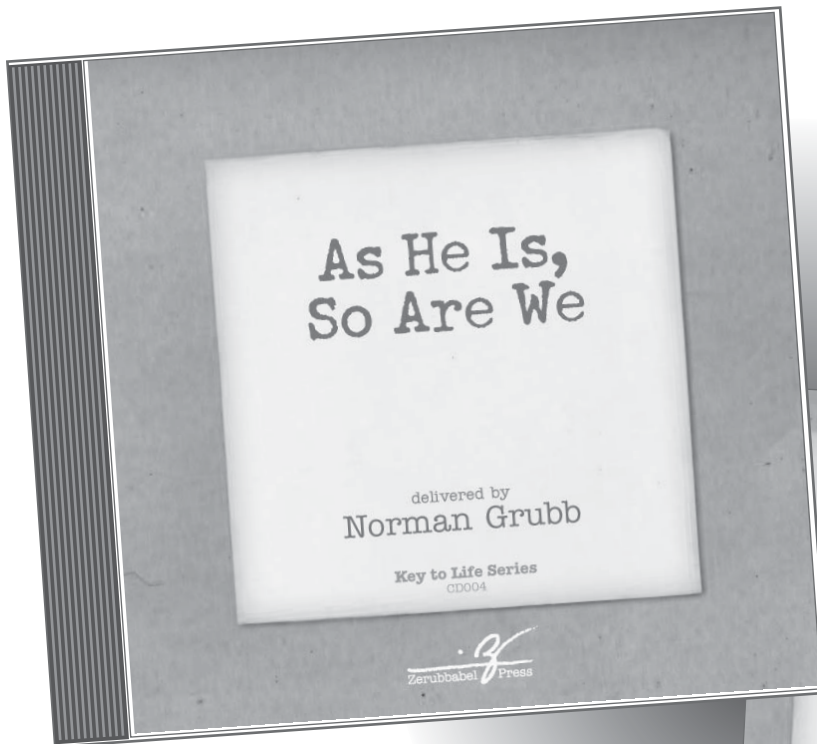
with Christ." And as I say that, another realization will rise within me: "Christ liveth in me." It will be as the child said, "When Satan knocks at the door, I send Jesus to answer it."

The moment I realize His presence I am free. My heart has a counter-attraction, greater than the attraction of the temptation. My love for Him, my joy in Him cancels out the contrary pull. The

more we live in Gal. 2:20, in the consciousness of the relationship it describes, the more we have a steady shield of defence in daily temptation, and the more accustomed we become to the natural use of it, "the shield of faith wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."

—*The Liberating Secret*

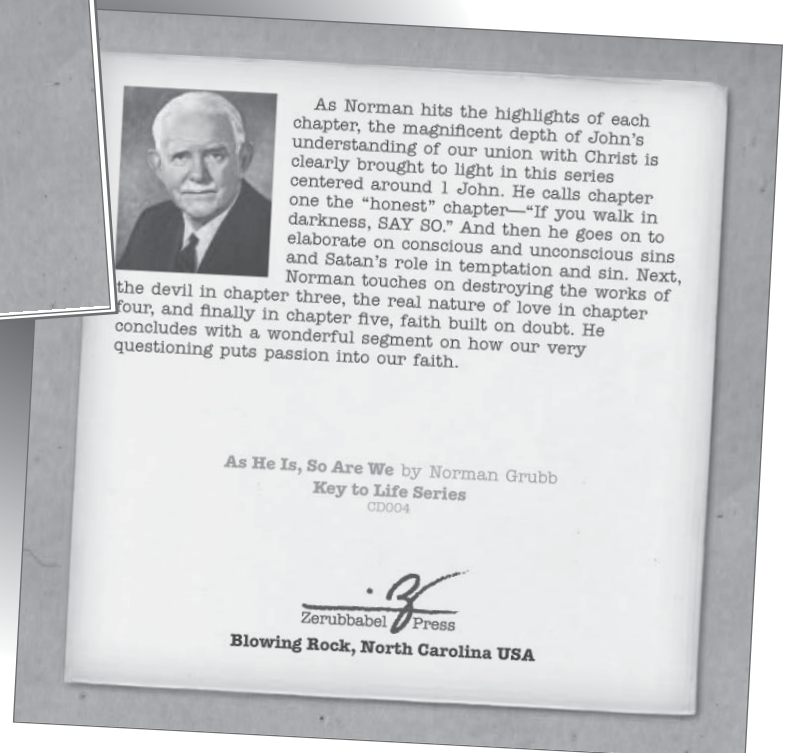
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Victory In The Every Day

by Kim Langley

It was Monday morning and it was a gray, rainy day, when I was heading to work in my car thinking, “Well, this is perfect! This is the perfect time to apply the truth of who I am in Jesus Christ.” Leaving for work that day I felt down-hearted, tired and discouraged! Not much like I thought I *should* feel. However, I knew that this was exactly the opportunity I needed to believe the truth about myself.

I am a Christian, which means I have accepted Christ as my personal Savior. God says that I am “joined to the Lord one spirit” (1 Cor. 6:17). We also know from Galatians 2:20, that since my death and new birth in Him, Jesus Christ is actually living His life through me. The *independent* I that I thought I was, which was really Satan living as me, was crucified with Christ. This means that in situations when I feel negative, I can know that this is just going on in my soul, but the reality is that Christ is right there, as me in my human form, and He is the positive. This is just one small example of dealing with an everyday soul reaction which we all have all the time over lots of different daily situations.

A current situation for me is working toward starting my own business. Not only is this an incredible opportunity to own a business; I will also have the privilege of working within a hugely successful international Christian organization and

servicing other women in my community. Whilst this is such a great chance, it is also a big step from anything I have done before and has presented me with some faith challenges. Most commonly I have felt inadequate and as though *I* don’t have what it takes to do what is required. The truth is that there is no such thing as just an *I* that can do anything!

At times in the past when I have fallen for that lie and acted on it, which is sin, Satan has just confirmed it all the more. If I say, and then act on, “I am inadequate,” the problem is with the “I.” When I believe this statement, because I have bought into an independent I, Satan takes over and lives out via my members (Romans 6:13). He then lives out the very thing that I have believed about myself, in this case, that I am inadequate and can’t do whatever I need to do to start a business. Satan makes this a reality by acting those things out and confirming the lie that I have believed.

However, when I make a choice to obey God and to believe what He has said about me, this confirms Christ as my reality. I may still *feel* the same way in my soul, but I can rely on Christ as sufficient to do whatever the next thing is that needs to be done. I can trust Him to live out however he chooses, whether it looks successful to me or not. The irony is that once, by the faith of the Son of

God, I have affirmed God’s truth about myself and overcome the temptation to believe the lie, then I get on with the task at hand, knowing that it is really Christ as me.

Just to be clear, before I can move into this right believing with Christ living out freely, if I have chosen into sin then I must confess and repent of this first. Now I am free from the bondage of sin and instead of focusing on my own inadequacies, I focus on what I am doing at this moment. I trust that Christ can handle the job through me and that He is the sufficient One. Then if I start to panic and feel overwhelmed by what I might have to deal with in the future, I just remind myself that there is no “just me” and Jesus Christ can handle whatever comes up, moment by moment.

As I write this, it sounds so simple and the truth is, it is! In the midst of all our doubts and negative feelings about ourselves or any given situation, our only responsibility is to recognize Who we really are, Jesus Christ, which is what God says about us. Our gray, rainy Mondays are just the negatives that we need to show up the positive One in us!

Kim lives in Cambridge, England with her husband Jon. She is a new owner of a successful ladies fitness club.

Adversity or Adventure?

by Norman Grubb

Temptation touches us where we need to be touched, for its origin is our own stimulated desire (James 1:14). Temptation, therefore, establishes us in sanctification; it presses us into Christ. It exercises us in conscious abiding; it compels us, by trial and error, to find our helplessness with no hope outside of Christ living in us. We shall continue to be tempted where we are

God's will and its outworking in our lives is not permissive, but determined. That makes a decisive difference to our outlook. When even Satan is only God's agent, and evil men only fulfilling His foreordained plan (Acts 4:27, 28), then we can start off by praising God for adversity, and counting it (not feeling it) "all joy when ye fall into divers trials."

most vulnerable, that is God's right way with us, until at last it dawns on us that appetites do not change, human responses do not change, temptations do not change; there will never be a hope of relief or release, not after

forty years any more than after one year, except in the Absolute Other within, who is the Positive that negates the negative, the Light that swallows the darkness. That fact only will stabilize us in the only way of deliverance, the daily walk of faith.

Trials are for another purpose. They come from outside and for outside objectives. They are the normal pressures of life upon us. Right from the time of our new

birth, we are told to glory in "tribulations," which in the original means pressures. All of life is surely pressure. The question is why? The answer is redemptive opportunity. Temptations are for our redemption, trials are for the redemption of others. Every negative situation—this need, this frustration, this catastrophe, these difficult people, this church, family, business tie-up, is the very place where light will shine out of (not into) darkness. They are the negative which has as its polar opposite the positive, as south has its north. It is a dialectical relationship, where the two are related to each other, belong to each other and fulfill each other by being the opposites of each other. Need linked to supply, weakness to strength, problems to their solution, and the rest. This is what turns life into adventure; but it is the adventure of faith—not of sight. Disasters, disappointments, shortages don't look like adventure; but it is the same old story. This life is repetition, the repetition of faith. The world which lives on the surface of things must always have novelty, for repetition is sameness and sameness to them is boredom. Children of the kingdom within never have boredom, for the same daily activities are always new; for they are God appearing in new guise for new ventures of faith. The sensational novelist always makes a lot of courtship and marriage; it is something new. A serious writer will examine how forty years of married life work out, for he knows that real life is repetition. Can every day have the freshness of the honeymoon? Yes, every day with Jesus is new,

and therefore new with one another.

How can this be? By handling our circumstances in the same way as we handle ourselves or our temptations. We move back from appearances to reality, from the external to the internal. Who puts us in this situation? Man? Devil? Our own foolishness? Our own disobedience? No, that is not taking it far enough. The Bible makes it plain that God as purposively sends the unpleasant as the pleasant. No reader of the Old Testament, or of the comments made on God's foreordination in the New, can call that in question. God's will and its outworking in our lives is not permissive, but determined. That makes a decisive difference to our outlook. When even Satan is only God's agent, and evil men only fulfilling His foreordained plan (Acts 4:27, 28), then we can start off by praising God for adversity, and counting it (not feeling it) "all joy when ye fall into divers trials." That means we have transferred our attention from the situation and our natural dislike of it, to its underlying source, and we only do that by the act of faith. So we are back again to our familiar friend—faith in the absurd—that adversity is prosperity in disguise; and the assaults of Satan, or "the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune," or the contradiction of sinners, when our eyes are opened, are Christ walking to us on the waters.

Paul calls that "always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," and being "always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake." That means that we are accepting unpleasant situations or daily pressures rather than resisting them, even as Jesus accepted Calvary; indeed, that it is He Himself in us continuing His death-process—"the dying of the Lord Jesus"—in our daily lives. This is nothing to do with the death relationship we have with Him in His once-for-all death to sin, which is never to be repeated in Him or us. That death was for our deliverance. These daily deaths are for the deliverance of others through us. That was the death of the old man. These are the daily deaths of the new man. It is not wrong that we dislike difficult situations; it is merely human. But these are deaths to our human reactions. We deliberately accept these things as ways in which God, not Satan or man, is coming to us, and therefore all we

can do is to give thanks. "I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong."

Consider this and come to your own conclusion on Bible evidence. It is important externally, just as it is important internally. We are only free within, if we are unified, Christ and I without inner rival, though there are plenty of attempts at invasion. And we are only free without, if also we are unified: that is to say, if what comes to us comes from one source only, with one purpose. I cannot think that it is sufficient, nor indeed Scriptural, to keep calling unpleasant situations "the permissive will of God." God does more than permit. That is not the kind of God the Bible portrays to us. There we have a God of an eternal purpose.

He does not stand by and allow a thing to happen. He ordains it. If He passively permits things, may He not be equally passive about removing them? But if he sends things, then I can at once rise up in spirit and say, here is a purpose of God. What is it? And I can assuredly start praising, for, "as for God, His way is perfect."

Life is unified. First we see Christ only in ourselves through grace. Then we see Christ only in all men, either shutting men up in their unbelief that He may have mercy on them (Rom. 11:32), or being formed in those who have obtained mercy. Finally we see Him only in all things, working them all after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11).

If we have this settled in our minds, and appropriate it by faith in each given situation, then we are ready to ask another question. For what reason does God come to us in adverse circumstances or in contradictory people? The answer is that it is *not* for our personal benefit, for

God is wholly outgoing through all eternity. We have begun that life for eternity, for He lives in us. What a vista! And God specializes in giving Himself for those who are most unpleasant to Him, sinners and enemies; and now He specializes in doing it through us. That puts meaning and content into every possible situation a human can be in.

our testing or further sanctification or something. We are so used to relating everything to ourselves in the spiritual life as much as in the material, that we tend to interpret everything in that light—what is God doing or saying to me through this? Not at all. God, who is pure outgoing love, has other ends in view. We are now His body, and a person has a body, not for feeding or clothing or coddling, but for using. So Christ in His body. He lives over again in us in all sorts of circumstances to reach others by us. Now that turns adverse situations into adventure. They are not for the dreary purpose of some more self-improvement (an impossibility anyhow!), they are the outflowing of the rivers to others. It is pitiful to hear so often even elderly saints still regarding their trials, physical or material, as some further lessons from which they are to learn, instead of the freshness of the outlook: here is God, even in old age, opening further doors for sharing Him with others.

God is wholly outgoing through all eternity. We have begun that life for eternity, for He lives in us. What a vista! And God specializes in giving Himself for those who are most unpleasant to Him, sinners and enemies; and now He specializes in doing it through us. That puts meaning and content into every possible situation a human can be in. Love is unstoppable. There is always opportunity to love. This is “the life also of Jesus manifest in our body,” which Paul says (2 Cor. 4:10-12) always replaces the death. In the death we accept conditions we would naturally reject, and in doing so, we “die” to our reactions.

This now makes possible seeing things as He sees them and thinking about them as He thinks; and His thoughts are always redemptive and reconciling. This is the risen and ascended Person living in us. It affects us physically and mentally. Just as the fire of God in the burning bush refuelled the bush, so He in us quickens us, body and spirit. A quality of life is manifest in us, though we may not know it. Faith and love in a person cannot be hidden. The medical profession today tell us plenty of the effects of mental attitudes on the physical; then how much more when it is the Spirit of God in us producing the laugh of faith, peace and poise, a relaxed

outlook, freedom to bear other people’s burdens.

But that is only incidental. Christ’s risen life is manifested in our bodies. His ascended life flows out of us to others. So Paul continues, “So death worketh in us, but life in others.” We do not make that up. Flowing is effortless. Once we have taken the place of death in daily situations, accepting them as sent of God, there arises in us spontaneously the realization of Him in His outgoing love. He has a purpose for others in this. What? He will doubtless shew us. It will certainly bring faith to birth in us, for the next verse (13) speaks of having “the spirit of faith” (not, therefore, our faith, but the believing Spirit within); and it will be faith that the God who has put us in a place of need already has the supply on the way, for our timeless God has things the opposite way round to us. We think there is the need first, and that we must now seek the supply. God has the positive supply first, and sends the need to be the receptacle for the supply. The negative, the need, the problem, the frustration, is only the means of manifestation of the positive, which was already there. Bible prophecy is one form of the unveiling of those supplies which have been there long before the need, and are revealed “in due time.”

So every situation is a situation for faith and love. It may not at all be a matter of a great crisis. It may just be daily living. But as we said, daily living is repetition. Faith is always a necessity, for all life is a series of appearances. Things and people seem to be what our outward eye sees them to be—and that is ordinary, the same, maybe the wearisome, the tiresome, the boring, the irritating, the carnal. But faith sees differently. Faith sees Jesus in them, either seeking the door of entry into their hearts or growing up in them. Faith sees Jesus resolving problems or providing needs that are beyond man. And love means that God has put me just there to love through me, not to pester, not to judge, not to drive, but freely to give myself—patience, meekness, service, sometimes faithfulness; and in the secret of my spirit always “calling the things that be not as though they were.”

-God Unlimited

Quick Down, Quick Up

by Norman Grubb

I do not always leap upwards in faith under my pressures. I sometimes jump down. That is when I sin. My human reactions, though negative, are not sin. They become sin when I follow them through negatively: my dislike for a person, instead of being replaced by God's love, continues unchecked as hate: I fear, and, instead of exchanging fear for faith, I take flight and run away from God's will: a feeling of impatience or resentment is expressed in the angry word or lost temper, instead of being swallowed up by God's patience or quiet acceptance of His way. Anger is right when expressing genuine concern for others: it is wrong when, as so often, it is to compensate my own hurt feelings. Pride is expressed in magnifying Christ ("making my boast in the Lord," as the Bible calls it) or it can be in making much of myself.

Though even at this spot we have to beware of the bondage of false condemnation. We are real selves as well as it being Christ in us: therefore, we do have pleasure as well as giving Him pleasure: we do have motives as well as being motivated by Him. If a person thanks me because something I have said has made Christ more real to him, I have no necessity every time to stop him short and say, "Give the thanks to God." In thanking me, he really means as a channel, and I as a channel am rightly also pleased that I

have been a channel for Him. I must not accuse myself of pride because I do feel pleased.

Equally, when my main motive in some action has been believing it to be God's will, yet I discern also that I had a personal motive of the gain or enjoyment I also get from it, I must not therefore condemn myself. As a real self, I have my pleasure, my motives, my sense of personal gain in a thing. The point is

My human reactions, though negative, are not sin. They become sin when I follow them through negatively: my dislike for a person, instead of being replaced by God's love, continues unchecked as hate: I fear, and, instead of exchanging fear for faith, I take flight and run away from God's will...

that that is not my main motive. God's will, God's work, and God's glory is my main objective; as it is He by me, I too anticipate pleasure, satisfaction and gain from it.

This is how it is with God Himself. Years ago I began to justify my conscious egoism by discovering that the Bible said of God that "for thy pleasure they are and were created," and of Jesus Christ that "for the joy set before Him He endured the cross." "Then God does things for

selfish reasons," I said, "the same as I do." Of course, I had missed the point which I saw later, when my own self-centredness had been exchanged for God-centredness. I saw that true living is when the purpose is for others, and the secondary effect is the pleasure or gain I have from it. False living is when my pleasure or gain is primary and the purposes of my living incidental. This is true in all life's activities, such as the simple difference between eating to live (and incidentally getting pleasure out of it), and living to eat!

God's pleasure, Christ's joy are an outcome of His giving Himself, not pleasing Himself. True pleasure is when my self-pleasing is fulfilled in self-giving, and my self-love finds full satisfaction in other-love. There is total self-fulfilment. Self exists to be fulfilled, whether God's self or ours. There is self-sufficiency and a consciousness that we can be what we should be and do what we should do. But, as Jesus said, we find ourselves by losing ourselves in God's love activities, and the reflex effect of such living is the pleasure, gain and satisfaction it brings us. Paul said it: "As dying and behold we live": "As poor yet making many rich": and yet finally returning its rich treasures on us who, though having nothing, yet find we possess all things.

God's everlasting joy "and the

good pleasure” He finds in His will, and all the outpoured adoration seen by John around the throne in the Book of the Revelation is the response to Him, Father, Son and Spirit, of a creation which has its being in His self-giving love, and a redemption which was Himself in His precious blood going to final limits in redeeming His enemies by dying for them.

We, the redeemed, though we do not live a life of continued sinning, do commit sins, usually sudden and unpremeditated. What then do we do? We have not broken relationship with God, but have interrupted fellowship from our side of the relationship. We have asserted our freedom by acting as if we were not one with Him; but were once again our independent selves and going our own way. Just because we are one with Him, we are guilty and know it. The way back is as simple and plain as on our first coming to God. If there is quick sinning, there is quick cleansing. It has to start at the point of my personal freedom, where I went wrong, and I must express that freedom in honest confession. That is all I can do about it, but that I must do, and that means my brokenness. It may involve confession to man or restitution, but it certainly means admission to God of my sin. When I do that, it is as if God says to me, “Yes, you sinned, and honest confession and repentance were necessary. But as for the sin, I settled the whole sin question 2,000 years ago in the atoning death of my Son. Through Him sins are no more. I have forgotten them. You can forget them.”

At this point we have to be care-

ful not to add a second sin to the first. The first was the sin itself, the second and greater is if I don’t believe at once that what God has cleansed, He has cleansed. Not to believe in the efficacy of the blood

If there is quick sinning, there is quick cleansing. It has to start at the point of my personal freedom, where I went wrong, and I must express that freedom in honest confession. That is all I can do about it, but that I must do, and that means my brokenness.

of Christ is a worse sin than the first, for unbelief, Jesus said, is the only real sin (John 16:9).

Some are also troubled by the repetition of sins in their lives. How can they be delivered from doing it

Don’t then be concerned about constant repetitions of the same sin. Deliverance from repeated acts of sin is not to be had by looking at the sin or at myself, and wondering how repetition can be avoided; it is by the daring look to Jesus, and the leaving of the problem of repetition to Him.

again and again? The answer is that Christian living is not in the past or the future, but only in the present. The Bible word is “walk,” continually used in the New Testament. Walk is present tense and can only be a

step at a time; and the walk is with a Person, with Jesus. Therefore we do not find deliverance by looking to the past or future for some fool-proof formula; but forgetting our search for deliverance, we become occupied by the simple walk with the Deliverer. Put it this way, as some African Christians said: “Leave the past under the blood, leave the future with God, and get walking!” Live in the present. Again—if we sin, take the way of repentance and get cleansed. Don’t sin what the Africans call the second sin, which is not believing the immediate efficacy of the precious blood, for unbelief is the worst sin of all. Praise and thank, whatever one may feel, for praise is the verbal demonstration of faith.

Don’t then be concerned about constant repetitions of the same sin. Deliverance from repeated acts of sin is not to be had by looking at the sin or at myself, and wondering how repetition can be avoided; it is by the daring look to Jesus, and the leaving of the problem of repetition to Him. The past is no longer there through Christ, the future is not my business; so if at this moment you are walking with Jesus, be thankful. If and when the sudden fall comes, get in the clear again with God, and walk on—looking neither to past nor future. Walking with Him is the way (“I am the way”), and we are much less likely to be tripped up in such a simple single-eyed walk than if we are tense about the past or future and holding on to some supposed formula of deliverance.

Even if we are bound by a habit, or even if we are not willing to be

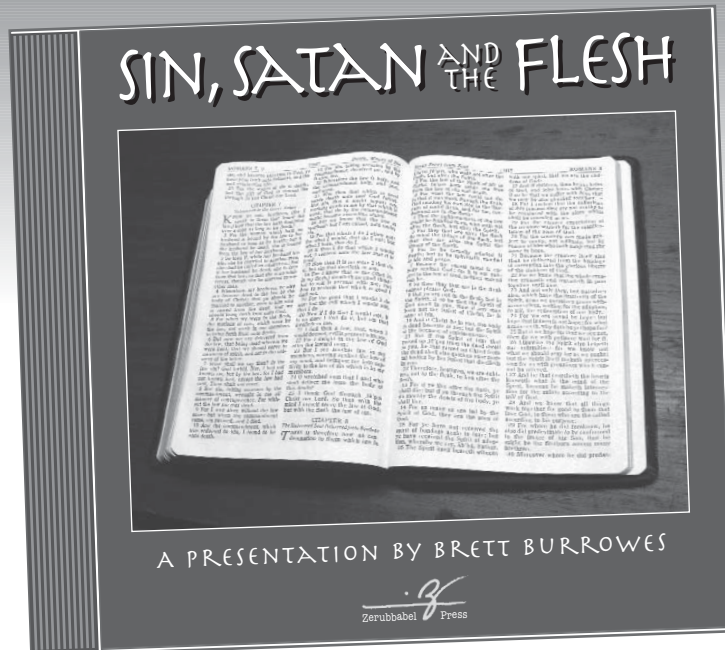
delivered from a habit, the deliverance or the change of will to make us willing can never come by our attention being centered on the habit; but only again by a daring leap of faith which affirms that God is our deliverer and that He is the one who makes us “will and do after His good pleasure,” therefore we take it by faith that this has happened here and now, though we feel no difference, and we boldly walk out on the settled fact.

Sin, indeed, is not the real problem, but the guilt that follows, which condemns and binds us. This, again we say, is Satan’s secret weapon. He will trip us up by some subtle temptation. Having got us down, his real purpose is to keep us down by the pouring on of condemnation. We must, therefore, know how, when tripped, to get up quickly, to get standing again in the armour of God and keep walking. Faith is the means. Faith which is action, and by which we boldly thank God that the sin is no more. We may go on feeling guilty or stained, but we turn our attention away from the feelings and we replace them by faith. We replace guilt by praise, and walk on with Him as before.

-The Spontaneous You

SIN, SATAN AND THE FLESH

A PRESENTATION BY BRETT BURROWES



A compelling study of Romans 7, and how St. Augustine introduced into Christian teaching the mistaken idea that believers have a “sinful human nature.”

SIN, SATAN AND THE FLESH

For Brett Burrowes, what began as a personal quest for answers, taking him through seminary and the writing of a PhD dissertation, became a radical discovery of how early church theology changed significantly in the early 5th century. This affects how we interpret Paul in modern translations today.

Brett presents the main points of his dissertation on Romans 7 and 8 in a clear, easy to follow manner. He delves into the original language of the Bible to unravel the truth about Sin, Satan and the Flesh. Brett discusses questions such as: What is the identity of sin? What is the meaning of the word flesh and the

phrase “old man”? How does Christ redeem us from the power of Sin? And what does the indwelling of the Spirit mean for the believer?

Brett hones in on the views of one particular early church father—St. Augustine. All of western Christian theology, Catholic and Protestant, is based on Augustine’s interpretation of the Bible. Brett builds a compelling case to show that until Augustine, the early church fathers believed that sin was an evil spirit that expressed itself through human beings. Augustine reinterpreted sin as a corruption of human nature which had profound effects on Christian theology thereafter.

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Dealing with Temptation— In the Home

Paul instructed older women to train younger women in the ways of the Lord (Titus 2:3-5). The following exchange of letters is a good example of how this principle can be applied in daily life. In the first letter, a young mother and wife is reaching out to an older, spiritually mature, woman for guidance on how to handle situations mothers and wives face every day. In her response, the older woman is able to show how the truth that Christ lives His life through her filters down even into common, everyday circumstances.

Dear Page,

How are you? You are in my thoughts a lot! I've been listening to your tape, "A Pinhole of Light," and I was glad to get to know you better. You did a good job of giving your testimony. I was able to relate to you a lot. I knew that I am a lot "nicer" to people outside my home than I am to the ones I claim I love.

While I was listening to the tape, I came to a conclusion. You said you took your Christianity seriously. I know I've not taken much in my life seriously, certainly not my faith. I want to know how long after you met Norman Grubb and you knew he had an answer, did the total truth become real to you? I ask that because most of the time I know I'm mean to Bob and the children and I want my behavior to change. I say, "Well, Christ is living my life"; but because my behavior has not changed, somehow I must be in sin. Then no specific sin is revealed so I call my behavior Christ.

When I do that, I then think, "How

can I call myself Christ when my life has been so full of sin?" I've seen how I've felt like I "know it all." I'm quick to commit to change and as soon as the change becomes uncomfortable, I bail! I've tried to fix my life so I would look good; but I can't fix anything. The picture I have of my life is so screwed up. When I try to fix it, I fall flat on my face.

Something was different in me when I was with everyone at Camp. I had more energy than ever. I can't describe the difference. I knew I needed to keep my mouth shut and learn.

Now I'm tired again. You may say it's because of my family obligations but I feel it's more. I wish I could bottle what I had in Boone!

As I listen to your tape I also realize that what Norman taught is different than what the church teaches. I used to think that the message at the Baptist Church was basically the same and that our fellowship had found a way to make the truth work in daily life. Now I see that not only is this message not taught, but a lot of people are in a bad way because they don't know the basic truths in the first place. It's scary.

I was at a parent-teacher meeting for Molly, and her teacher read a poem about her philosophy for teaching. It went something like this:

If a child lives with criticism,
he learns to criticize,
If a child lives with violence,
he learns to fight.

Then it goes on and lists positives. I drove home mad. I was yelling in the kitchen and then Bob started yelling at me because I was yelling. I shut up until dinner was over. He then asked me what was wrong and I told him about the poem. I know that what the children face daily through me are the negatives. I started to cry and told him that I want so badly to believe what I read and what I hear on tapes and that I begged God to make the truth real to me. And somewhere in the conversation I used the word try and Bob said, "You're trying too hard and not trusting at all." I knew he was right.

I wish I could see you all more than two times a year. Please know I think about you a lot and I hope you're all doing well. I will keep in touch.

Love,
Susy

Dear Susy,

Thank you very much for writing. I was very happy to hear from you. I will make an attempt to share with you truth that has been not just helpful to me but life-changing. Also, I am glad that the tapes you have listened to have been of help.

Yes, Susy, my interest in the things of God started at a fairly young age. When I was five I worried about going to hell. I knew that there was a wonderful place called heaven where good people went when they died. (I erroneously believed in salvation by works.) On the

other hand, I knew that there was a terrible place of fire called hell where bad people went when they died. Needless to say, I wanted to go to heaven, but I knew that I was not good enough. Then when I was 17, I heard the true gospel of salvation by grace through faith, and I subsequently accepted Christ. This made my salvation sure, and it put the heaven/hell issue to rest for me.

After this, the Holy Spirit shed His light on the Bible for me, and there I saw that God was the answer to all of life. It was also clear that He promised abundant life to all believers who obeyed Him and put Him first.

But the harder I tried to make Him the heartbeat of my life, the more I failed. I was desperately and hopelessly defeated. I fully identified with my brother Paul in his famous Romans Seven where he cried out for deliverance from his wretchedness of not being able to do the good he wanted to do and repeatedly doing the evil that he hated.

After finding from experience that I was unable to change myself, I took the tack of attempting to surrender my life and will to God in an effort to get Him to change things for me. I, like you, wanted Him to change or take away anything in my life that I found painful or difficult. I knew that I was the crux of all my problems — “me” — so I wanted “me” changed more than anything.

I think that this brings us to about where you are saying you are, Susy, so I’ll begin to share with you some of the truth that I learned and dared to believe that began to set me free to be the person I knew God wanted me to be.

To do this, let’s take a look at what you have written. You said in your letter that you are mean to Bob and your children. This sounds very familiar, but it is a

terrible place to be. Saying that you are mean is another way of saying that at all cost you will get someone or pay him or her back for not treating you the way you want to be treated. We both know that all of this is sin and needs to stop.

We know from Scripture and from personal experience that the self-effort “try harder to live right” creed is impossible to fulfill. So we know we must have another answer. We need to look at the root of sin to find the answer that will set us free of its ongoing trap. The Bible teaches that sin began with Satan’s lie that he would be equal with God and operate independently of Him. In other words, he would be his own boss. This betrayal of God and His truth brought about Satan’s fall.

Satan infected the entire human race with his lie when, in the Garden of Eden, he convinced Adam that it would be in his (Adam’s) best interest to ignore God’s warning and to take his (Satan’s) advice. Adam’s choice to disobey turned the tide of all of history. From that day, the spirit of error became the inner boss of unredeemed man.

Part of the reason we have a problem with Satan still being able to get us to do his bidding today is that he has kept his role as the operator of the unredeemed a secret. He does not want lost people to know that he runs them and that the deeds they do are of him, their father, the Devil (John 8:44). What I am saying is that Satan does not openly say to anyone, “Hello, it’s me—Satan. I am your inner boss. Just stick with me and I will live out my deeds through you, and you will have a great life. Everything will be all for you, and you will never have to give up anything you are or have for anyone. It is very important that you stay away from your creator, God, who lies to you

when He tells you that He loves you. He is also lying when He tells you He will give you an abundant life here on Earth and a home with Him in Heaven when this life is over and that all you have to do is to trust Him as your Lord and Savior.”

Instead Satan tells you the same lie he told himself. I mentioned it earlier. Satan simply tells you that you are an independent, self-operated self and that you can do as you please and suffer no consequences.

Satan loses his place within us when we choose to go God’s way by trusting Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. When we make this choice, the Holy Spirit enters us and joins Himself to us. He is now our new boss. But all of this is not clear to us at the time, and we remain in the illusion of our being independent. As wonderful as our salvation is to us, we find in time that our love for God grows cool and we are not able to live as we know God requires us to live.

Our problem arises from the same old Satan lie. Even when we become children of God, we continue to fall for it, and when we do, Satan is free to boss us from without on the flesh (soul/body) level.

The way out is simple. All we have to do is to recognize the truth. And the truth is that we experienced a revolution when we accepted Christ. Without realizing it, we had an overthrow of inner government. Our right boss, Jesus Christ, threw out our wrong boss, Satan. He took over at our spirit center, and He is there now to live His life through us.

Now how does all this boil down to an answer that can help you in the unhappy mess in which you find yourself? When situations arise between you and Bob or you and your children that you

BIBLE

Real Deliverance Fro

by Brett Burrowes

Sooner or later we come to the realization that we are powerless to live the Christian life. When we first believed in Christ, we knew the joy of being reconciled to God, of having our sins forgiven and the assurance of an eternal destiny in heaven. But soon we discovered that there was another side to the matter: we still experienced all the old pulls and temptations to do the things which we know that the Bible says are wrong and we still don't experience the outpoured love for others that God expects from us. We know that we are lacking and even though we are saved, we still fall short of the glory of God. Many Christians mistakenly stop at this stage and assume that this is supposed to be the case: that we are just imperfect and that we will continue to sin regularly until heaven, when we will finally be delivered. In fact at the Christian college where I teach theology, this is such an unquestionable idea that either I encounter strong opposition if I contradict it or else they do not comprehend that I am really disagreeing with them.

American Christianity seems to have accepted a belief that "we are okay just the way we are," that "God understands and forgives," and that "we're just imperfect." God does forgive, but He doesn't "understand" or feel sorry for us when we sin: we just project onto God the pity we feel for ourselves. We are addicted to a softer, easier way and change our theology to fit our behavior. A seminary friend of mine, struggling with a particular sin, was told by an elder of his church that we are imperfect in this world and that we should learn to accept such imperfection as part of this present age until Christ returns or we die and go to heaven. Somehow, though, this seems unaccept-

able to me, since God promises a full deliverance from sin in the Scriptures. Let us look at these promises.

If we have been Christians for a while, we all know the great chapters on the Christian life written by the apostle Paul, Romans 6-8. I won't try to go over every verse of those chapters here, but I will make a few comments. One of the first surprising things we notice is that Paul says that we are to consider ourselves dead to sin (6:11) and on that basis we are not to let sin reign in our

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mortal bodies (6:12). I grant that sin is still a threat and that Christians can still sin or else Paul would not warn us to not allow sin to continue to rule us. At the same time he says we are to consider ourselves as having died to sin when we were first baptized or became a Christian (6:4-7). We can't consider ourselves something unless it is actually true. I cannot consider myself a professor at a college unless I actually am a professor. To consider something true that is not true is to deceive myself. If I considered myself a great football player, my friends would quickly point out the fallacy of such a belief,

and the reasons why it was wrong. So when Paul says we are to consider ourselves dead to sin, he is speaking about a fact from a Biblical perspective. We are dead to sin, but Satan is still trying too convince us that such is not the case, and so gain reentry into our members to work his sinful deeds through us. The lie is that sin is very much alive and present in us to work through us—no, that is Satan tempting us, trying to get back in, perhaps not into our spirit core where we are joined to Christ, but into our bodily members where he can work his evil.

But how can we be dead to sin when we feel the temptation so sharply at times? First of all we have to get back to Biblical facts, which always take priority over any feelings we might have, or our personal experience. Feelings are not a reliable guide to the truth, if they are a guide at all. My father had high blood pressure, but high blood pressure may not manifest itself in any specific symptoms: a person may not feel bad at all. On the other hand, many of the medicines, especially in the past, often had bad side effects and can make you feel a lot worse than you do without them. So many people with high blood pressure stop taking the medication because they feel better without it. But it is a medical fact that although the medicine makes them feel bad, it will prolong their life, whereas not taking the medicine will shorten it. Sometimes we have to trust the facts as our doctor tells it to us and not how we feel. So we have to take God at His word first: trust the Biblical facts even if they contradict our experience and our feelings. God through Paul has told us we are to consider ourselves dead to sin: who are we to contradict Him?

We are dead to sin because Christ died on the cross not only in our place to pay for our sins, a basic Biblical truth, but to deliver

STUDY: In Sin: Is It Possible?

us from the Satanic spirit of sin which indwelt us and to which we were joined spiritually. Paul says that "the old humanity was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin." The Greek word for old man does not refer to an old nature that believers still possess, since the "old man" was crucified and whatever is crucified is dead and no longer alive. The old humanity refers to the whole human race apart from Christ infected with Satan's spirit of sin (see Rom. 8:15 "spirit of slavery" and Eph. 2:2 "the spirit now operating in the disobedient"). When Christ died on the cross, in God's eyes all humanity died there (see 2 Cor. 5:14, "one died for all, therefore all died"). As inconceivable as this might be to our human common sense, it is a Biblical fact. When Christ was on the cross, He was made sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21). He took that Satanic spirit on Himself and through death destroyed the body dominated by sin (Rom. 6:6). On the cross, Jesus died to the Satanic spirit (Rom. 6:10) and then rose in triumph from the dead, free from the curse, and because we died in Him, we share in the benefits of His death and resurrection. Because of that death, the Spirit of life which caused Jesus to rise from the dead now lives in us too and frees us from Satan's law of sin and death (Rom. 8:2). These are the Biblical facts. If our experience doesn't match up it is because we do not take God at His word and believe the facts.

But what about Romans 7? Isn't Paul describing the Christian life there? In a word, NO. First of all, prior to St. Augustine in the early fifth century, no Christian interpreter ever understood Paul as referring to the Christian life. Without exception they understood Paul to be referring to the Jews under the old covenant law and that Paul was warning the Christians in Rome not to try to

fulfill the law independently (an impossibility). The situation of Romans 7 is the result of self-effort to keep the law; it is not the "normal Christian life." Paul writes vividly as if this were his present experience in order to get us to identify with the horrible slavery to sin he is describing so that we will reach a point of despair in ourselves and so cry out with him "Who will save me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" In Romans 8:1-13 he talks about the deliverance from sin available to us through the indwelling Spirit of Christ,

Only when we realize that He alone is light and love and that we are not independently operating selves will we finally overcome the evil one. Only then will we stop the continuous cycle of sinning and forgiveness that characterizes the stage of immaturity that John calls being little children.

who is now present within us to live out through us if we take God at His word. The only thing stopping us is our stubborn refusal to believe.

Let us turn next to the apostle John. In his first letter, he says to the church: "You know that He was revealed to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin (3:5). Now this we all know, Jesus came to take away our sins by bearing the punishment for them on the cross, and that He was able to do this because He Himself had never sinned and was a pure sacrifice to God." The next verse, however, goes far beyond this basic gospel message: "No one who abides in Him sins; no

one who sins has either seen Him or known Him." How contrary to typical evangelical experience is this verse! John is saying not only that sinning is not the typical experience of the believer, but that the true Christian is characterized by their lack of sinning. Some interpreters have tried to water down the verse by interpreting it to mean "No one who abides in Him sins as a practice" or as a general rule. Even if that interpretation is granted, this still does not match typical Christian experience or theology.

But John goes further than this and states in 3:9 that "all who have been born of God do not sin, because His seed is in them, indeed they cannot sin, because they have been born of God." So John doesn't simply say that we don't sin as a general rule or that we don't sin as much as when we were unbelievers, but that those born of God are not able to sin. This requires some explanation, since this certainly contradicts the experience of most Christians. It will not do to explain the verse away by adding "as a general rule" because that is not what the Greek says. At the same time John is aware that sometimes Christians do sin, for at 2:1, he said: "If anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" and that he was writing to them that they may not sin. So John is well aware of this seeming contradiction in his words.

The key to understanding what John is saying is found in 2:12-13, where he distinguishes between children, young men, and fathers in Christian faith. Children enjoy the forgiveness of sins: they continue to sin because they do not yet know how to overcome the evil one in their lives, since they continue to be deceived by his lie of independence and try to live the Christian life by self-effort. John writes to them to assure

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Temptation and Its Beneficial Effects

by Norman Grubb

Nowhere is the true significance of temptation more clearly seen than in the historic forty days on the mount of temptation. There “see the Christ stand” we might say with Browning. We watch that tremendous scene, the last Adam, the Word made flesh, come to fight and win the battle that the first Adam lost. We see Him with His human instincts, passions and powers, true Man in spirit, soul and body. We watch the battle raging over forty days, the last word that can be spoken on the subject of temptation and its proper meaning and value. We see this Man complete in manhood’s powers, forty days “tempted of the devil.”

Temptation had started before then, of course. We catch a previous glimpse of it, when by a subtle solicitation through the channel of His enlarged and illumined spirit, the young lad of twelve might have been led away by the devil in disguise to follow the trail of false favour in place of filial obedience to His parents. But now He was a Man in the fullness of His power, and the only Man in history to whom those tremendous words had been or could be spoken, but a few hours before: “Thou art My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Consciously anointed by the Holy Ghost, knowing in Himself that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him to fulfil the greatest commission ever given

to man; to be the world’s Saviour, to be the Man of Destiny whose Name had been on the inspired lips of sage and prophet since the world began, the longed-for Messiah, there was still one thing needful: a final, irrecoverable choice of free will, a voluntary self-dedication of every power of spirit, soul and body to this one end. And for that the devil was necessary!

Consciously anointed by the Holy Ghost, knowing in Himself that the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him to fulfil the greatest commission ever given to man; to be the world’s Saviour, to be the Man of Destiny whose Name had been on the inspired lips of sage and prophet since the world began, the longed-for Messiah, there was still one thing needful, a final, irrecoverable choice of free will...

As light cannot be seen to shine except in contrast to darkness, nor heat felt to warm except in contrast to cold, so man cannot know his nature fixed Godward except by his refusal to fix it devilward. So Jesus met Satan on that mount. His body had natural instincts. Only through a right use of these

instincts could He be preserved fit for its exacting ministry: He must eat, drink, sleep. In the fierceness of the conflict and the choice to be made, He had not eaten food for forty days. He was hungry; and then the suggestion stabbed home to Him: “Your new powers over nature. Use them. Make bread.” In a moment the battle was joined. Was His body to be master or servant? Was He to move at its dictates, or was it to move at the dictates of the Spirit who controlled Him? The word was spoken. Not a powerless negative, a mere “No” which leaves the nagging temptation unrelieved; but a triumphant positive that swallows up the negative: “Man lives by every Word of God.” That temptation was the highway, the only highway to bodily victory. It “drove” the Saviour to a choice: that Spirit should control body, not body Spirit. It was settled. Henceforth His body was an instrument for God’s glory: His appetites were the natural means by which it could be kept in working order.

Soul greater than body, as spirit than soul. In the soul repose all the vast powers of the personality—to think, to will, to feel. All the mighty achievements of man, in art, in science, in literature, in action, flow from the soul. The genius, the leader, the inventor, the discoverer, have all great souls. And none so great as the human Jesus. Satan knew this; for to only one Man has he offered com-

plete world dominion and promised Him the attainment of His objective, showed Him “all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time”; said to Him “all these will I give Thee.” The condition? That He commit Himself into the hands of “the prince of this world” (as He later calls Satan), absorb the spirit that is in the world, and act according to “the wisdom of this world”; for what we worship we assimilate and incarnate.

In other words, all the powers of that greatest of human personalities, mental, emotional, volitional, would become the vehicle of world dictatorship, based on the age-old methods of conquest and compulsion, the only technique of government known to man and the spirit that works in man.

The alternative? The worship and service of God; and that meant the subordination of these same soul-powers to the ways of His Spirit, to the carrying out of an alternative technique of ultimate world dominion which was in the wildest sense improbable and fantastic, and as totally removed from the way of the natural man as light from darkness. Truth, love, self-giving, meekness, faith, expressed through the concentrated soul-forces of a personality totally given to them, without weapon, without possession, without name, without friend at court, involving even the ignominious death of this “self-styled” king, were to establish a kingdom that would swallow up all other kingdoms and crown Him King of all other kings and Lord of all other lords.

What a drama was enacted on that high mountain, worthy of the pen of the greatest of poets. History was in the balance, and that temptation of the human soul was the material from which the

plan of the ages took its shape, in which the foundation of the kingdom of God was laid. It was the choice that fixed a destiny; not just His own, but of a multitude which no man can number, of a kingdom that shall never be destroyed.

Yet spirit is deeper than soul. It is the inner ego. It is the essence of a man. It is that which expresses itself through body and soul. It is the “I” which talks about myself. God is a Spirit, and the Father of spirits. It is the spirits of just men made perfect who dwell with Him. It is the centre of my being where God walks and talks with me; His Spirit bearing witness with my spirit, joined unto the Lord, one spirit. And if body and soul must be fixed in God through the stabilizing processes of temptation, so also must the spirit. Body and soul may be in God’s service, yet even in fulfilling His will in our innermost spirit we may still seek to be in the centre of the picture; glory must come to us; people must be drawn to us; our honour and dignity must be upheld; and the impress of the servant, more than of his Lord who sent him, is left on the service rendered.

So Satan sought to reach the spirit of the Saviour, when he could not touch body or soul. Let them flock around Him as the miracle worker, as He descends through the air upheld by supernatural power. Let them all see who He is: the Son of God with power. The masses will be at His feet. The ear of the nation will be open to Him. They will be as clay in His hands, to be moulded to His pattern. The alternative? To give Himself to show forth Another as life’s final meaning; to point to Another; so that from thought and word and action stands forth the outline, not of the visible Jesus, but of the invisible Father. “He that hath seen Me hath seen

the Father”; “I have manifested Thy Name unto the men Thou gavest Me...I have given them the words Thou gavest Me...and they have known surely that I came out from Thee, and they believe that Thou didst send Me.”

To worship any flesh, even the flesh of Jesus, is idolatry. To revere the human Jesus as provider of bread and healer of sicknesses would save no souls, found no new kingdom of the Spirit. To do this, in His flesh, His words, His works, they must see not a man, but God the Spirit, the Word made flesh. And so, on the one hand, He even tried to distract attention from Himself as a miracle worker; on the other, when at last acknowledged by Peter as Son of the Living God, the triumphant cry burst from Him: “Blessed art thou, Simon, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in Heaven”; adding, as He foresaw through the centuries the world-wide Church which was to be founded on that same principle of inner revelation: “And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock (a man who has by revelation concerning Christ penetrated through flesh to Spirit) will I build My Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Thus, on the pinnacle of the temple, that final battle of the spirit was fought and won. Satan’s weapon of temptation was turned to his own confusion and made the means of confirming the Son as the Servant of the Father. The high road to man’s salvation was now opened. The body was not for self-indulgence, nor the soul for self-aggrandizement, nor the spirit for self-exaltation; but the whole Man, Christ Jesus, driven by the Spirit to face Satan’s plausible alternatives, by virtue of the very

conflict and the choices entailed, came out of that forty days confirmed in His own consciousness and declared before heaven and hell, in spirit, soul and body, to be the Son of God with power, His Father's willing Servant and the world's Saviour. Only once more had such a battle to be fought; shorter, sharper, even fiercer, in three hours of bloody sweat; this time to gather strength by conflict and conquest to be the offering for the sin of the world.

Temptation Analysed

From this one perfect insight given us into the meaning and mastery of temptation, we learn several important points. One is that temptations met and mastered are the only high road to stabilization of character and spiritual progress. Temptations always touch the vulnerable point. That is their chief use, as well as their great danger. In a two-way world, laid open to the illegal knowledge and contrasting claims of good and evil, every instinct of body, soul and spirit has to go through the crucible of temptation, and go there again and again, until it can come out purified and fixed in God.

We may be sure that every temptation that comes to us comes because it exactly suits our condition, for we are only temptable at the points where we are sensitive to that particular type of appeal. In fact, in one sense we draw our temptations to ourselves. Out of all life's innumerable stimuli which reach out a beckoning hand to us, we automatically select and respond to those with which we have affinity. They draw us.

But for every attraction in one direction, in the nature of things there is a counter-attraction in the other. If one is of the flesh, the other is of the Spirit, or

vice versa. Thus a choice is forced upon us. We make it. If we know the secret of the Spirit, we do not meet the pull of the carnal with an ineffective "No" (the "thou shalt not" of the law), which leaves the conflict unresolved, or at best gives victory only by the skin of the teeth; but we meet it with the positive, sublimating alternative of the gospel, the "Christ hath delivered us from the curse of the law"; the ringing declaration that the "I" who might respond to the temptation is "crucified with Christ," and now "Christ liveth in me."

Temptations always touch the vulnerable point. That is their chief use, as well as their great danger. In a two-way world, laid open to the illegal knowledge and contrasting claims of good and evil, every instinct of body, soul and spirit has to go through the crucible of temptation, and go there again and again, until it can come out purified and fixed in God.

A victory is won which is real and complete; the draw of the temptation disappears, swallowed up in the greater attraction to the soul of the Living Christ. The instincts of soul or body which were previously divided, part drawn out in affection to the lower and part to the higher, are now all centred and satisfied in Christ. There are none left still to feel the pull of the lower. The temptation has disappeared, not that the stimuli are not still present in the world or the capacity to respond in soul or body not still there, but the counter-

attraction of Christ has occupied the whole man. The joy of the Lord is his strength.

His choice, stirred into action by the temptation at the point at which his nature was still responsive to that particular temptation, has integrated or reintegrated his nature in God. A further stage forward has been taken in the formation of spiritual character, a further release given for spiritual service, an invisible victory won which undoubtedly has its hidden repercussions through the whole world, and reverberates through eternal history, for "he that ruleth his spirit is better than he that taketh a city."

In some instances, in one great contest with temptation, as with Christ on the Mount, a choice of such magnitude and intensity is made that the soul passes completely out of the range of that temptation, and in that matter becomes fully fixed in God. In others, particularly in the lesser temptations of daily living, repeated contests and choices, often interspersed with defeats, form a gradually ascending pathway to habitual victory and ultimate immunity. At the same time, we are clearly warned that many assaults of temptation are our own fault. If we maintained a close walk with God, our hearts would remain so filled and thrilled with His presence that there would be immunity in the moment of assault. "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." Christ wrestled while the disciples slept, and, when the awful moment came, Christ was in calm mastery over His very captors, while the disciples fled.

It is right to fear temptation and not meet it, still less welcome it, in a spirit of bravado, lest it overwhelm us with the suddenness of a cloudburst; daily we

are to pray: “Lead us not into temptation”; but, at the same time, we can learn and see that temptation is our battleground and opportunity. Such an understanding will give us a healthy, hopeful, not repressed, defeatist or resentful, attitude to life’s conflicts.

Temptation or Sin?

One other point is of great importance. It is to have a clear insight into the fact that temptation must by no means be confused with sin. In no case is the actual temptation sin, even though at times we have come within its influence through neglect. We have tried to make it clear that all human instincts and capacities are by their nature neutral, neither good nor evil in themselves. The good or evil resides in the heart and will that governs and directs the instincts. Thus, to be drawn by an instinct (whose function is always to respond to stimuli and thus originate action) is natural and normal; whether it be by fear or its substitute faith; anger, or its substitute gentleness; pride, or its substitute praise of another; lust, or its substitute love. It all depends on the choice made. It is at that point that the sin comes in.

James, the analyst of human nature, makes this plain. Temptation, he says, comes from an evil source: it is a legacy of the fall. Man is in the environment and atmosphere of this evil thing, proceeding from an evil being, the devil, through his evilly-infected agent, the world. The way temptation works upon us, then, is this, says James: an instinct, a natural desire (called in the text a “lust,” which can give a wrong impression, for the word “lust” is in the original just a neutral “strong desire,” not nec-

essarily evil or good) is stimulated by some object. It “draws” the man and entices him. No wrong in this, except it be the general wrong of a fallen condition which has corrupted man’s instincts and made them all too prone to “inordinate affections.” But, continues James, the crisis is in the choice; not in the instinct which draws and entices, but in the will of the man who either responds to the temptation or alternatively cleaves to the highest stimulus of an indwelling Christ, and thus lifts his troublesome appetite on to a new spiritual plane of satisfaction in Him. It is here, he says, that sin enters: “When lust hath conceived”; in other words, when man’s free will, his power of choice, has been married to the enticing instinct; when he has consented to it, joined himself to it, then the child of that marriage is sin.

This is a liberating thought for many Christians, for many endure much inner condemnation and bondage through constantly feeling that they have guilty desires, and that as a consequence their Christian profession is hypocrisy because their inner condition is a secret contradiction to it. Not so. It is natural for instincts to be the instrument for temptation. The tempter is the evil one. The sin is in the response, not in the instincts; but, alternatively, victory in the temptation fixes those instincts more and more definitely as agents for revealing God to the world. Let us, then, be free and unafraid in Christ, healthily recognizing what is the battleground, what the enemy, what the weapon of victory, and what the outcome.

—*The Law of Faith*

Dealing with Temptation— In the Home

continued from page 19

start to think are unfair or hurtful to you—in other words when something comes up that begins to make you feel angry—you need to STOP, LOOK and LISTEN! Take a second and look and listen to what you are saying to yourself. I think that you are probably self-talking (thinking) that you are just Susy and that you have to make some defense for yourself. Here is the much-discussed lie that you are a “just you.” As I have already said, the minute Satan can get you off the truth (that you are in union with the spirit of Christ, and therefore you don’t need defending because He doesn’t) and on to his lie, he has the freedom to temporarily misuse you as your outer boss. You can be sure that he will use you to do his prideful, self-for-self stuff through. When these thoughts begin to come into your mind, you need to simply replace them with the truth. Correct your self-talk by saying that you are perfectly alright because there is another there (Christ) who loves Bob and your children perfectly, and He can and will do that through you as you trust Him to do it.

Give my love to Bob and your children. Let me know if you need any further clarification of anything that I have written.

Much love to you,
Page

FREE at last!

by Norman Grubb

At last we are clear. We are free, because we know ourselves as nothing but the expresser, vessel, branch, temple, body member and slave of the Deity self, His Spirit joined to our spirits. And we have moved in by the recognition of faith, as in Romans 8:2 and Galatians 2:20, to being right self-conscious selves, conscious of ourselves being Himself in expression. We act freely as ourselves because He has of His own choice by grace joined, fused and identified Himself with us as ourselves. We are “driven” people, driven by His self-for-others deity nature. And we live freely in His keeping in our soul-body reactions as much as in our spirit (1 Thes. 5:23).

So then, what about those continual pulls that we still have to that old opposite—those invasions of fear, hate, worry, lust, self-seeking and weaknesses? Now we are alive to Satan’s subtlest assaults on us. The subtle trick occurs when we feel those constant pulls on us and we go back to the old habit of thinking we ought not to respond to them. Bang! We have been caught out in the old habit of thinking we are independent, and thus need to respond to an “ought to” or an “ought not.” This is the subtle trick. Those pulls make us think we are independent human selves again, and the moment we think that, back comes the law saying, “No, you

ought not to.” And we are caught right up into false condemnation. That “ought not” only reaches us because we have slipped back into thinking we should be watching ourselves, running our own lives and combating the wrong pulls. That is where Satan has his laugh on us. There we are, inwardly condemned as if

The subtle trick occurs when we feel those constant pulls on us and we go back to the old habit of thinking we ought not to respond to them. Bang! We have been caught out in the old habit of thinking we are independent, and thus need to respond to an “ought to” or an “ought not.”

we ought not to fear, hate, anger, lust, or to want or react to these negative desires. And there we are struggling and condemned, or maybe following through to some actual sin.

Why? Here comes Satan’s final subtle trick. *We are tricked into thinking that having those pulls is sin; whereas the real sin is the unbelief of thinking we are again independent selves who should not have these pulls.* But independent self is really Satan-self again having his hold on us,

and we then again “carnal, sold under sin.” That means we are back again under the law with its “thou shalt not.” But we are bound and unable to keep that law because our false sense of independent self, to which the law addresses itself, is really Satan as us with his temporary control of us.

Paul puts the essence of Romans 6, 7 and 8 into three verses to the Galatians—Galatians 5:16-18. “Walk in the Spirit,” he writes, “and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.” We are Spirit people, but still in our flesh-humanity, and thus open to all Satan’s pulls on us in our soul-body emotions and appetites. So now what happens? We become conscious of flesh pulls, for, says Paul, “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other.” These contrary pulls make us conscious of the antagonistic opposites, “the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.” We are Spirit people bearing Spirit fruit and loving to be so, but we now also feel the pulls and desires of the flesh—Satan’s agency in this Satan-filled world for attracting us back to his self-for-self ways.

This consciousness of the flesh-Spirit antagonisms is the danger spot. Satan thereby seeks to drag us back to that separation through the Fall, in which we again think we are independent selves instead of Spirit-united selves. This independent self outlook is really the touch of the old Satan-union on us. It also means that we immediately put ourselves back under the law again. And with what consequence? We are bound by that Satan-self in our separation and cannot respond to the law or Spirit, and so Paul says, “Ye cannot do the things that ye would.” Thus we are under the condemnation of the law and experience guilt that we cannot fulfill it. Being in the lie of independent self temporarily

puts us back under Satan's control. Therefore, we cannot do the things that we would. Properly caught, properly bound and condemned!

But now Paul says, "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." In other words, if we are temporarily in unbelief, which has resurrected the lies of the independent self, we then suddenly remind ourselves of who we really are—Spirit bound and Spirit led, our self expressing Himself. We then say, "Wait a minute. Of course I am not an independent self feeling these pulls of Satan. That is his lie. No, I am a Christ-self." I do not deny or fight the reality of my flesh pulls (and those are precisely what my Elder Brother equally, continually had according to Hebrews 4:15).

I accept and recognize the reality of these flesh pulls, but I am dead to them in Christ ("always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus" as in 2 Corinthians 4:10). They can shout at me by temptation, but have no hold or right to me (Rom. 8:12). I am alive unto God, a Spirit person and led by the Spirit. The only law on me is what I now instinctively fulfill, that "law of the Spirit" by which I spontaneously do the things of the Spirit. Through Christ, the Spirit has replaced that old "law of sin and death" by which I spontaneously did the things of the flesh. So I go free—back to who I really always was. This is Paul's definition of daily freedom under daily flesh-assaults or pressures. It is what James told us to be very thankful for—good constant practice in the application of our faith walk. We admit those lying pulls back to unbelief, but now we are spontaneously faith-conscious of walking as Christ as us. Therefore, we "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free" (Gal. 5:1). By admitting *Satan's* right to pull at us through the flesh, we are also free to affirm our right to our faith-conscious-

ness of being Christ as us. Thus we express Christ's nature of love, joy and praising. We swallow up the negative pulls, or rather use those very pulls to express His pulls: love replacing hate; faith, fear; rest, strain; strength, weakness; self-giving for self-gratifying; and so on.

**WE WILL REPEAT
ABOUT THIS INDEPENDENT SELF**

Because of its importance, and because it is the main reason for this whole "walking in the Spirit" sharing, I will address again what we do in meeting the assaults of the flesh. The answer is that we do not fight temptation or take

We recognize that the real temptation is to make me think I am the independent self that I am not. Then I am again "under the law," yet cannot fulfill it, because independent self is really Satan as me (Matt. 16:23). It is the sin of unbelief.

condemnation for it. The very opposite. We recognize that the real temptation is to make me think I am the independent self that I am not. Then I am again "under the law," yet cannot fulfill it, because independent self is really Satan as me (Matt. 16:23). It is the sin of unbelief. What then do I do? I quickly recognize that the problem is not my having flesh-temptation, but rather my temporarily forgetting (2 Pet. 1:9) that I am no longer an independent self. Who I am is simply and solely an expresser of Christ in His nature.

Therefore, as quickly as I can, I *accept* the fact of being tempted, for we live in a totally tempting world. Accepting that, I don't deny or resist the *temptation*.

Instead, I resist the *tempter* (James 4:7) by saying, "That's not me you are pulling. That's only my outer soul emotions and bodily appetites, which of course are open to all that can reach me from your outer world (for his is 'the spirit of the world'—1 Cor. 2:12). But I am not a bunch of outer responses: I am Christ as me. He is the real Self expressed by my human container self." As I do that, I am in fact doing what Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:10: inwardly recognizing my place of death in His death to those old pulls of Satan on my human self. In place of these temptations, I am seeing myself in my true self-relationship of Christ in me as me. As I do that, the consciousness of myself as a Christ-expresser swallows up the negative consciousness of Satan and his pulls on me. Satan flees (James 4:7). I resist him by replacing false belief in him by true belief in who I really am—Christ as me. Light swallows up dark. We don't fight the dark; we recognize its right to exist, but we replace it by turning on the light.

Our danger, then, is not the fact that temptation pulls us. We shall always have plenty of that on all levels. The danger is that it tricks us back into thinking we are the selves who must respond to these pulls. But now we know that trick of Satan. We accept the pulls as normal and right on our humanity. And then we say, "That's not my real me. Those are only pulls on my outer clothing of soul-body. My 'me' is Christ as me, and the light is on and the darkness swallowed up." And if we are tempted to think, "But yes, we are constantly assaulted by the same things," then we equally say, "And yes, that gives me continual practice in recognizing again and again who I am—Christ as me!"

—No Independent Self

False Condemnation

by Norman Grubb

Let us underline the danger of constant condemnation through the law, of which warning is given in Rom. 8: 1. It is probably the most prevalent cause of unhappiness and ineffectiveness among God's people. If the thunders of the law have ceased to terrify us through the peace of justification, the pointing finger of the law at our daily shortcomings is a constant discomfort. For we do "come short of the glory of God," and do so daily. What are we to do about it? We can liken ourselves, our renewed selves in Christ, to a piece of elastic. We are hidden in Him, we abide in Him, but Satan and his unclean demons, using all methods of allurements and disturbance that this distorted world affords, find plenty of means of pulling at the elastic! We are "drawn away of our own desires and enticed," and often the enticement leads on to consent, and we have sinned (James 1:14, 15). Not the blatant sins of our past life, not certainly persistent sinning, for those who do that are not born of God (1 John 3: 9); but wrong attitudes of heart and mind, the quick word, selfishness, impatience, sins of the eyes, sloth in witness, the finer points of failure in holiness, which we had never even noticed in our insensitive days; these we fall into and mourn our fall. And the moment we have been spotted by the flesh, if we don't get clear at once, the law is in opera-

tion and we are condemned; for we have slipped back into that self-law sin realm of Rom. 7.

Then how get out, and how learn to get out quickly? First, there is the big lie of the Accuser of the brethren. He will cast doubts on our crucified position in Christ, and try to tell us that our "old man" is still very much alive in us. That is a falsehood. But many accept it, and drag their feet through life on the

So we have to learn not to accept the big lie of our return to a permanent old condition, just because we are caught out by the flesh on occasions: nor to live in the bondage of a false, but very commonly held conception of being two people at once, with a civil war within, a good and bad nature, and who will win?

false assumption that they have a divided self, a divided heart, a divided nature. Their conception of Christian living is a continuous struggle, a losing battle between their old nature and their new: "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, the spirit against the flesh; these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." But that does not mean two co-equal natures battling in the

believer one against the other. We have only one nature at a time; we cannot have more, for our nature is our very selves. We were by nature the children of wrath, we are partakers of the divine nature. That is the death and resurrection in Christ. No half measures about that! The old nature is the old man which has been crucified with Christ. The new nature is the new man, which is we risen with Christ and Christ living in us. This verse of Gal. 5: 17 on flesh and (the human redeemed) spirit is a concentration in a few words of the teaching of Rom. 7.

We live and walk in the Spirit, led by the Spirit (Gal. 5: 25, 16, 18). We are not then walking in the flesh (independent self), which we have crucified (5: 24). Because we are not walking in the flesh, the law has no claim on us, for it only presents its demands to independent self (5: 18). Because the law has no hold on us, the lusts of the flesh (the motions of sin in the flesh) are not stimulated by its challenge to impose their demands on us (flesh lusting against spirit), and to dominate our helpless self (ye cannot do the things that ye would). While we abide in Christ, we are dead in Him to law, and therefore dead to sin which is by the law.

But if we do not walk in the Spirit, then we return again under law, into the flesh and self-effort, and therefore under the dominion of

sin in the flesh. That is not a question of an old and new nature, which was settled at the new birth. This “flesh and spirit” matter is a question of the daily walk, and the possibility of slipping back any time for a visit to the flesh and thus to sin, law and condemnation.

So we have to learn not to accept the big lie of our return to a permanent old condition, just because we are caught out by the flesh on occasions: nor to live in the bondage of a false, but very commonly held conception of being two people at once, with a civil war within, a good and bad nature, and who will win? No. Let us confess with the same assured voice as Paul that “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath set me free from the law of sin and death.”

But then equally we must not

stay, even temporarily, under condemnation, when Satan has caught us out. It is the easiest thing to do, and our distressed feelings are really self-pity and pride. It is not so much

We must not stay, even temporarily, under condemnation, when Satan has caught us out. It is the easiest thing to do, and our distressed feelings are really self-pity and pride. It is not so much that we have grieved *the Lord* that disturbs us, as that we have failed.

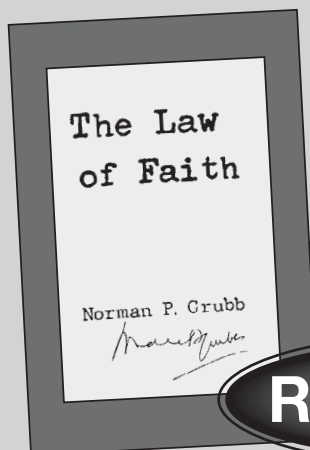
that we have grieved *the Lord* that disturbs us, as that *we* have failed. The acceptance of condemnation is a form of self-righteousness. *God* has told us, when we sin, to get quickly

to the light, recognize and confess the sin, and then He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse our consciences from all sense of unrighteousness. “The cleansing fount I see, I see; I plunge, and oh, it cleanseth me.” To remain in condemnation, therefore, is really disobedience and hurt self. We can learn many lessons from simple believers who keep short accounts with God. They are tripped up, they humbly recognize it, they claim the cleansing blood, and go on their way rejoicing; and often they use their testimony to such daily simple experiences to be a blessing to others. The elastic of the new self has been stretched by temptation; let it snap back into place.

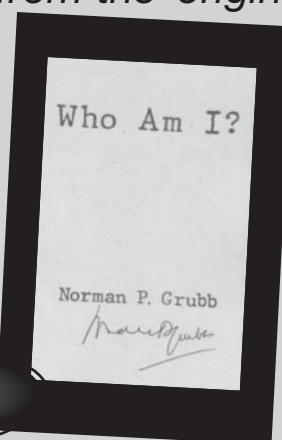
—*The Deep Things of God*

Norman Grubb's Who Am I? and The Law of Faith

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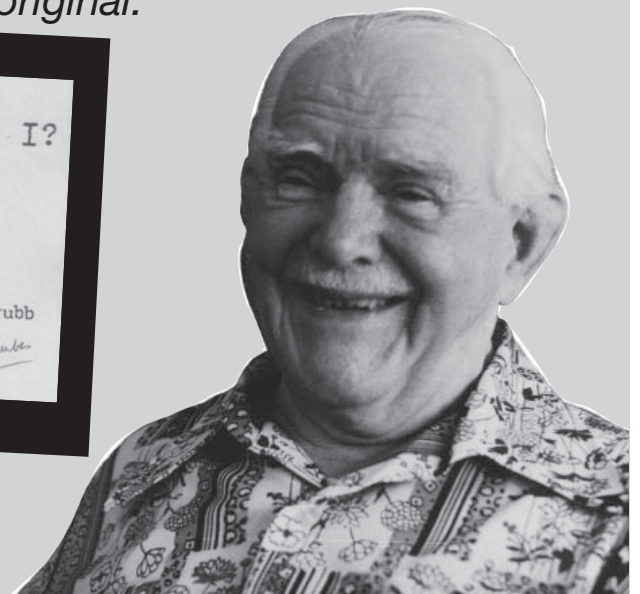
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Daily life is by no means just easy smooth-running times. It is constantly disturbed by small things or big. Something lost, something gone wrong, responsibilities to fulfil, demanding children, finances, sickness, clashes of personalities, differences of viewpoint, decisions to be made. And at these many moments, self doesn't remain spontaneous! It comes very much alive and we have our human reactions. It is at this spot that we find it hard to grasp that this is precisely God's purpose that His sons should be involved in disturbing human situations. The positive must have its negative to manifest through, so we must learn to the full what it is to be a negative. It was said of Jesus Himself that though He was a Son, He yet learned obedience through the things which He suffered, and thus knew that the Son could do nothing of Himself. We ask a useless question and mistake the meaning of life if we say, "Will there be no let-up from continual pressures?" No. Let me face this in the full depth of its implications. If I am to function in my proper place as a son and inheritor of God's universe in my eternal destiny, I need to learn first how a son functions in adverse circumstances. A swimmer grows strong against the tide, not with it. So my privilege is to feel the impacts on my negative humanity of all that can disturb me. It is tribulation, Paul said, which works in me finding and experiencing the God of deliverances. It is the trial of my faith which works maturity in me, says James. There is a funda-

It Remains Tough

by Norman Grubb

mental principle here, and when we see that, we can expect and welcome what the world calls problems and frustrations. If in our future destiny we are to be at ease in letting God through in friendly areas of responsibility, it can only be because we gradually became experienced in letting Him through in the enemy's territory. So these years in the world against the tide are no mistake. They are not something which need not have been. They have to be. If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. We must first learn therefore, and accept with praise as the adventure of adversity, the reality of life's pressures and our constant negative human reactions to them. By this means only, first finding how earthen our vessels are, shall we then by stages be ever quicker, as Jesus so wonderfully was, in knowing how to replace our negative with His positive. That way we become at home in the eternal fact that His strength can only be made perfect in our weakness; and find Paul's secret that "when I am weak, then am I strong." This is of vast importance because we so mistakenly have got used to thinking that we are wrong when we have these negative reactions. No, they must be.

So we shall always start by feeling human hurts, fears, dislikes, unwillingness, coldness, powerlessness, lusts, angers, jealousies, and all the list of them. Start, we say, because the start of such reactions is not sin. A

human must be human, and Jesus himself had to feel temptation to be tempted in all points. Sin is not in the start, but in the continuance. Negative reactions are not sin. They are the negative stirrings which are the jumping off point for faith. Sins are when, instead of taking those jumps of faith, we continue in the reaction. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." When we "marry" the self-reaction, accept and continue in it, then the child is sin. We have already quoted how Paul went as far as to "take pleasure" in those experiences which hurt us humans: what he named as feeling his weakness, being hurt or insulted by others, having personal needs, being persecuted, having insoluble problems: "for," he said, "when I am weak, then am I strong." Note, not "then I shall be made strong or become strong or seek for strength." No, "then am I strong," because all he had to do was to recognize who he really was, Christ in him. So to have negative human reactions is not sin, but our opportunities for faith. Sin is when we continue in the reaction, as we all do at times, and then act out some form of "the works of the flesh."

It is this balanced understanding of our daily living which will save us from false condemnation. We shall not say we were all wrong because we felt so and so—a very ordinary day, no great victories or guidances, no particular elevated feelings, the pressures of daily events, the children's

problems and the work conditions, attacks of depression, no answers to situations. "Surely I should have been brighter or more effective or a better witness. Haven't I missed opportunities and not been courageous enough?" And so the self-searching tears us down. Cut it out! Praise the Lord. Recognize that if you have a sin, it is the sin of unbelief in doubting or questioning whether He was being Himself in you despite feelings or appearances. Believe and praise!

And where these have been conscious sins, or we feel they may have been sins, it is here John tells us that there is daily cleansing in our daily walk. The Epistles constantly use the word "walk," and that points us to step by step, because that is the only way a person can walk. So when in our walk, we feel we have missed the mark, even if we are not sure whether it is over the line into a committed sin, or just one of these attitudes, the way out is simple: admission to ourselves and that is of course inwardly to God; bold recognition that all the sins of all the world

ceased to exist in God's sight (and

therefore in ours) by the shedding of the Blood of Christ

two thousand years ago:

the word of faith which

we say within ourselves

that therefore that sin

exists no more: praise in

having the cleansed conscience: then walking on

as if the thing never hap-

pened. Quick sinning. Quick

cleansing.

cleansing.

—Who Am I?

Negative reactions are not sin. They are the negative stirrings which are the jumping off point for faith. Sins are when, instead of taking those jumps of faith, we continue in the reaction. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." When we "marry" the self-reaction, accept and continue in it, then the child is sin.

Bible Study: Real Deliverance From Sin: Is It Possible?

continued from page 21

them of the Father's forgiveness so that they will not be doubly trapped by the evil one: first by the fact of sinning in the first place, and secondly by the condemnation the devil heaps upon us as the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10).

But John goes on to describe another level of maturity: young men, who are those who have just reached adulthood and who are in the prime of their life, at the point of greatest physical strength. Of course, since John is drawing an analogy to the strength of young adulthood, it is spiritual strength that John means here. These young men are described as having overcome the evil one, and as having the word of God abiding in them. The last phrase is particularly crucial. Compare it with 3:9, where John says all who have been born of God do not sin, because God's seed abides in them. God's seed refers both to God's truth and to Jesus Christ Himself, the Word of God. The young men are those who have overcome the evil one by walking in the truth of God.

But what is that truth? Nothing less than that Jesus Christ is present within them to live His life through them. That is what it means to be born of God—that we derive our entire spiritual life from Christ as the individual branches draw their life from the vine (John 15), and realizing that apart from Him living his life through us, we can do nothing but sin (see John 15:6). Only when we realize that He

alone is light (1 John 1:5), and love (4:8), and that we are not independently operating selves will we finally overcome the evil one. Only then will we stop the continuous cycle of sinning and forgiveness that characterizes the stage of immaturity that John calls being little children. In fact John makes it clear that we were never independently operating selves, even when we were unbelievers or when we sin: "Everyone who sins is of the devil" (1 John 3:8), that is they have their spiritual source in the devil, who inspires and motivates their actions. Believers, of course, do not have the devil in the spirit-core of their beings, but the devil is the great deceiver and always seeks to keep us or convince us that we are still self-operating selves with the responsibility and ability to fulfill God's law in our strength. That way he gets to condemn us when we fall flat on our faces. Such self-effort is really Satanic, and those who have reached maturity know this and overcome the evil one because they have the inner-knowing that it is really Christ who lives through them.

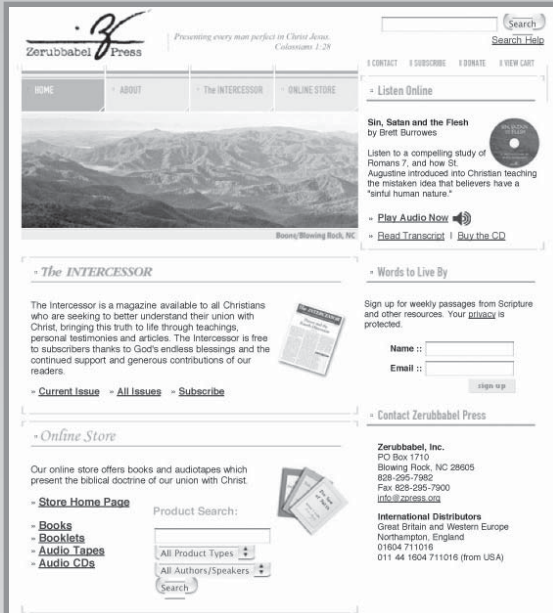
But how do we get such an inner-knowing or a deep spirit-conviction of this Biblical truth? The same way we acquire knowledge about anything. We choose to pursue something as a goal, and eventually it takes us. For example, Norman Grubb used to speak of the process of learning the African language Bangala. At first he stumbled through the language, and had great difficulty speaking and understanding what the natives were saying. Eventually, however, what he took (the language) took him over and operated him and he was speaking the language as if it were his own tongue.

Eventually he did not have to think every time he opened his mouth, the words just flowed naturally. But the key is that he persevered in his attempts to learn the language. He did not let go of the goal, but pursued it until the language "took him over." Now this might sound like self-effort all over again, but it is not. I am not saying we are to pursue perfect behavior as if we were the ones in control of and responsible to be perfect. No. We have the Perfect One already in us, ready to live through us if we only trust Him. But that is the catch. As with learning a language, there is a process of learning to believe the Biblical fact that Christ is the one living through us and until we learn the truth we will stumble over Satan's lie that we operate ourselves. And we continue to stumble until we learn the truth and the truth, Jesus Christ Himself, takes us over.

The author of Hebrews commands us to strive to enter God's rest (Hebrews 4:11), a seeming paradox. But what is it that the Hebrews are to strive to do? Believe! It is those who believe who enter God's rest and rest from their own labors! (Heb. 4:3, 10). We exercise faith by taking every thought captive which contradicts God's truth (2 Cor. 10:5). By speaking back to every thought of unbelief that raises itself up against the Biblical facts of what God has said is true about us, we exercise the faith that God expects of us. It is not easy, but very simple. So simple that the devil is able to steal it away from the hearts of many Christians. But the Biblical fact is that we don't need to wait until heaven to enter God's rest. We don't need to wait another second.

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No temptation too great...

No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.

—1 Corinthians 10:13

(*New American Standard*)

Words to Live By...

...the temptation, these first negative feelings, become the stimulus to faith. They stir us to the action of “looking off unto Jesus.” We affirm Him, as He thinks His thoughts in us, looks through our eyes on the situation as He sees it, handles things Himself. We do not necessarily at once lose the feelings of disturbance: that is a soul-condition; but we have moved back by faith to where we truly are and what we truly are—Christ in us.

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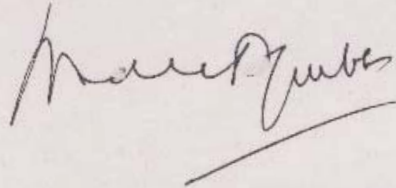
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