

The INTERCESSOR

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

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What about Temptation and Sin?

by Norman Grubb

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 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,

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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.

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.

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 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 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

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!

are pure from their pure center, and we go boldly forward in our prayer requests, asking, as Jesus 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, for his seed remained in him: and 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 was the author of many books and pamphlets, a number of which are available through the Zerubbabel Book Ministry. Norman P. Grubb entered the Kingdom at 98 years of age.

Editor’s Note

For the Christian, there is no more important question than how to effectively face temptation. All other matters of faith or of doctrine must fall a distant second. This issue of *The Intercessor* definitively answers this central question as we continue our systematic walk through what we boldly call The Total Truth. In a profound surprise, we learn that the answer comes not from dreading temptation and less from resisting or fighting it. As God so often does, He turns man’s wisdom on its head—the answer lies in acceptance and faith. We accept Satan’s right to tempt us in this fallen world, but we exercise our right, through faith in Christ, to replace the temptation with His own life lived out through our vessels. The temptation doesn’t disappear, but it is replaced by Christ’s perfection—His strength made perfect in our weakness (2 Cor 12:9-10). So every temptation is a God-given opportunity for us to “agree with our adversary quickly” (Matt 5:25) about our weakness but, at the same time, to affirm Christ’s life in us and really as us shining out for others. In this way we can, with James, count it ALL joy!

Trials are Adventures, Temptations are Opportunities

By Norman Grubb

There arises that constant question of our formerly sin-conscious selves: What about sin and temptation? This is where the revelation of there being no human nature but only the two deity natures (we having been formerly Satan-I but now Christ-I) answers our questions. The key is that temptation becomes asset instead of liability, just as James leads off his most practical of letters by saying, "My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into diverse temptations [trials is the same word]." How can that be? Because we are now loosed from that former suspicion that temptation is sin, and that therefore my responses to it are sin. Both are false.

The temptation question is plainly settled by that invaluable letter to the Hebrews where we see Jesus in His full human nature, particularly in chapters 2 through 4 with the one outstanding word in Hebrews 4:15, "Jesus... the Son of God... tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Perfect Jesus, perfectly tempted. And sinless. Thus temptation is a necessary part of human living. The reason is obvious. We live in a world which is shot through with every form of self-sin solicitation, as we have said, so that in our mortal bodies we remain as light in a dark world, for we meet the same flesh-world assaults as all do. But we know how to turn them into assets and can show the way to others.

The vital difference is found in our new-mind consciousness. We used to mistake temptation for sin and were also suspicious of apparent sinful tendencies in our flesh. We rapidly took condemnation with every "drawing" of temptation on us (James 1:14). Actually, the "lusts" are just the normal strong desires (the correct meaning of that epithymia word in the Greek) by which the universe, on all levels, surges forward all the way from Einstein's equation which proves that all mass is really energy ($e=mc^2$), right up to the love-drives of personhood in God and man. So temptation is merely by whatever form our human desires of mind and body are excited to respond by the drawings of the deity spirit through our flesh (depending on which spirit). The philosopher Spencer rightly said, "Life is response to environment." We say, "Which environment?"

Now with our renewed mind—knowing that all humanity (flesh) was created "very good" by God and has no negative or positive inherent pull in it, but responds without condemnation to what draws it—we by infinite grace have been drawn to God (John 6:44). Equally, we often are drawn in our present life in the world by the lusting Satan-spirit, but the vital point is that we take no condemnation for such negative sin drawings. We live in the no-condemnation reality of Romans 8:1. If Satan can get us into taking condemnation for tempta-

tions or get us to believe again that we are independent selves, then what we believe holds us. But if, instead of being tricked into such negative believings, we accept temptation as Satan's right by all his emissaries of people and things (for we are within his camp to rescue his captives), we then do not deny or oppose any forms of temptation. We recognize that they do not issue from our flesh, but from the sin-tempter of our flesh, and then we take no condemnation.

By this we are able to pull Satan's teeth, and he becomes a roaring but toothless lion (1 Peter 5:8)—unless we give him teeth by responding by fear or condemnation. We "agree with our adversary quickly" as Jesus said in Matthew 5:25, or he will imprison us. If we agree with his right to attack us, we have well blunted his sword. By thus freeing Satan to exercise his rights, we are equally now free to exercise our own. We answer his assaults by affirming who we are, Christ, in us/as us, which really is practicing the daily death-resurrection process of 2 Corinthians 4:10. The light, of expressing ourselves as Christ, (light through lamp) swallows up the darkness. Where we are tempted to hate, we love with God's love, including enemies. Where tempted to fear (which is really negative believing in evil), we have the faith of God for the situation: anxiety with assurance; depression with affirmation of Him as our joy, though soul feelings may last. We "resist the devil," as James says (James 4:7) by submitting to God, and in that affirmation, that coward of a devil flees.

We replace all negatives (without condemnation for feeling the pull of them, and thus accepting Satan's right to pull) with the positives of Christ as us, and we as expressions of God as love, power, peace—recognizing who we are, Him as us, and we loving as He loves, walking as He walks, overcoming our world as He did by faith, just as John says in his letter. We even turn an infatuation for someone into a positive faith action so that, instead of being overwhelmed with condemnation that we should not have such an infatuation, we by faith see Christ, forming Himself in that one. Depressions, tensions, compulsive jealousies, hurts and bitterness—perhaps going back a long time ago into our earlier life are all transformed when they are not resisted with false condemnation (as if we were independent selves) but rather are received as temptations meant by God and which we therefore "count" (though we do not feel) as "all joy" (James 1:2). We deliberately replace all negative reactions by seeing them as His set purpose (we will later see how God "means" all things). We meet them by reversing our negative believing—and affirming that He works all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11) and that there is no power but God. ■

—To All Believers: It's As Simple As This

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 favor 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 fulfill the greatest commission ever given to man; to be the world's Savior, 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, irrevocable 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!

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 Savior 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 ac-

tion, 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 complete 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 do-

minion 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 center 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 almost 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 center of the picture; glory must come to us; people must be drawn to us; our honor and dignity must be upheld; and the impress of the servant, more than of his

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 center of my being where God walks and talks with me; His Spirit bearing witness with my spirit, joined unto the Lord one spirit.

Lord who sent him, is left on the service rendered. So Satan sought to reach the spirit of the Savior, 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

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 Savior. 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. ■

—The Law of Faith

Dealing With Temptation— *In the Home*

by Page Prewitt

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 listened to your tape I also realized 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 Eve that it would be in her (Eve's) best interest to ignore

God's warning and to take his (Satan's) advice. Adam and Eve'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 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

What About Sin?

By Page Prewitt

The Bible simplifies sin when it makes the bare bones statement that everything not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23). Or to put it another way, all unbelief is sin. (Unbelief means that we do not believe what God says about us—that as Christians we are joined to Christ, and He is one spirit with us). In view of this fact, the first thing Satan must accomplish in his effort to get any believer to commit a sinful deed is to tempt him and get him to believe he is an independent self-operating self. In other words, to see himself as an “alone I” or “just me.”

When/if Satan is able to lure us by this lie into the sin of unbelief, he gains the power to boss us on the soul/body level and lead us into any sin deed he chooses. Our union with Christ is not broken; however, our sin temporarily blocks the Holy Spirit from living through us. Confession and repentance on our part is the only way we can receive God’s grace and forgiveness and once again walk in the light—in actual fact, have Christ live through us.

The good news is that we can avoid the Satan sin trap by simply remembering and, if necessary, stating the truth that thoughts and feelings are not the real us. They are factual but not real in the eternal Spirit sense. This is the way the Bible says it: *The things that are seen are temporal [fleeting] and the things that are not seen are eternal [everlasting]* (2 Cor. 4:18). I am not saying that we are to ignore our thoughts and feelings. To the contrary, it is very important that we look at them honestly, and if necessary, talk about them to someone, but as quickly as possible, move past them and begin to reflect on who we are in our spirit center—we joined to Christ rather than how we feel.

Paul uses the marriage analogy in Romans 7 to help clarify this issue. He says in this passage that we must consciously enter into the reality of not only our cut-off from

our old husband Satan, but also our marriage to our new husband Jesus Christ. Until we do this, we will remain under the illusion that we are independent. This puts us, unknowingly, under the outer control of our old husband Satan. And as a result, defeat and guilt are our lot.

For do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to her husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God (Romans 7:1-4).

How Temptation Really Works

The above applies to me in relation to my writing this booklet. In spite of the fact that I have known from the beginning that the task of writing this is something I have been commissioned to do, I have been plagued with the feelings of inadequacy and fear of being unable to do it. And not to be left out, my thoughts go hand in hand with my feelings—I think over and over, I am not good at writing; this is too hard so I will just quit and leave the writing to those who are good at it.” Along with thoughts like this, I feel very inadequate and fearful to attempt such a task.

Satan tried to use this approach when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness (John 4:1-11). He began his discourse with Jesus, not as we would expect, tempting Him with food (Jesus was hungry because he had fasted for forty days) or with power. He tempted Him with pride. Satan preceded all his specific temptations with this piercing statement: *If you are who you say you are*, you can turn these stones into bread or you can throw yourself off the temple and God will send angels to save you.

Jesus could have come back with, “Of course I am who I say I am; I am the Christ, the Son of the living God”—the “I” meaning that He had what it took in and of Himself to do what Satan tempted Him to do and go Satan’s self-for-self way. The truth, and He made it quite clear, is that He and His Father are One, and He does only what He sees His Father do (John 14:10). His strengths and His abilities are operated only in love for others, just as are those of His Father.

Let’s pick up where we left off a couple of paragraphs back with our discussion of my problem writing this paper.

Is my struggle with what I am thinking and feeling? Or do I have a much bigger problem? Look at my sentence for a minute: “I am incapable of getting my thoughts organized and written down and I feel inadequate and fearful.”

Remember that Satan begins all temptation by trying to get us to see ourselves as independent or, “just me.” But as we have said again and again, there is no independent or just me individual in the universe. For that reason the answer to the question is obviously NO! Nevertheless, if I continue to repeat Satan’s lies, I put myself in danger of disobediently crossing the line from being tempted to believe I am independent to actually believing I am. If/when I do this, I commit the original sin of unbelief. This gives Satan the freedom to take control of me on the soul level, thus blocking Christ from living His life in and through me. At the same time, Satan gains the freedom to misuse me through my members (body/soul).

Avoiding the Sin Trap

The course of action I must take to avoid this Satan trap is very simple but not easy to do, because it takes my giving up my idea of the situation and saying that I am wrong. Next, I stop saying all the negative things to myself that I have been saying, and instead I say the truth about myself—and that is, “If I am Jesus Christ in my particular form and He is my operator, then what I am thinking and believing about my inability to organize and write down my thoughts cannot be true.”

What I am thinking and believing may be the way things appear to my human senses, but they are merely appearances, and we are admonished in Scripture not to judge by appearances (John 7:24). I must look through appearances to what is true in the realm of spirit. This is how Jesus lived. He saw past the outer human need to His Father, the total supply, though invisible to the human eye, right in the midst of the negative circumstance.

Next, I begin to say by faith (none of it will be fact at this stage) what I know to be real in the realm of the Spirit. The truth is that Jesus Christ through me can write anything that He wants to write as long as He is the one in control of my life. As we discussed earlier, Christ regains His rightful place as Lord (Boss) of my life when I confess my sin of unbelief and then affirm and stand in the truth: that Jesus Christ, who is my spirit operator, can and will do it through me. My responsibility is to trust Him to do so and not give up, but to continue on writing.

To go over this one last time in hopes that this further discussion will help you become very quick in dealing with

your thoughts and feelings, here is an example that I hope will help you.

What To Do About the Turmoil of Feelings

We say that we are shy or fearful or smart or ugly (use your own example). Let’s pick “shy” and write it out: “I am a shy person. I have all the traits that portray someone who is shy. I have always been this way. I have been told I was shy since I was a small child.” All this is true on the body-soul level, and Satan has been free to live out shyness because my wrong believing about myself has given him the freedom to do so. But (and it is a big *but*) the truth is that I know that my operator is Jesus Christ and the shy label that I have put on myself is a lie.

The truth is that Christ is not shy. If He is sometimes quiet in me, that is His business. I am wrong to call myself shy because of His quietness. At the same time, I may be *feeling* shy, but you now know that is just a soul feeling and it has no reality on the Spirit level. I speak the truth when I say, “I am *feeling* shy, or afraid, lonely, or superior, or smarter, but these are all feelings and they are not who and what Jesus Christ, who is my operator, is.” We must not think we are off-course when the feelings continue, which in all likelihood they will. We simply focus on who we are and pay as little attention to our feelings as possible.

It is crucial that we understand that sin never begins with a deed; consequently, our root problem is never our deeds. Deeds are merely the symptoms of a deeper hidden problem. But Satan has done an excellent job of tricking us and keeping us from getting to the root of sin. Because of his deception, we always concentrate on the symptom. This keeps our attention off the source of sin, which is believing Satan’s lie that I am *just me* and that I can and do operate independently of God.

Not I, But Christ

I am now finished with this booklet, but the task of writing it never became easy. I sat at the computer, trusted Christ within me putting myself at the disposal of the Holy Spirit, and simply recorded truth as He brought it to my mind. The task continued to feel impossible, but I ignored my feelings (soul) and no matter how impossible the task felt, I doggedly reminded myself of the truth – Christ is perfectly capable of getting the writing done that He wants to get done. My responsibility is to remain faithful and available to Him to use to accomplish the task. ■

–Life: The What, The Who, The Why”

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 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 sit-

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.

uation, 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 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 circum-

stances 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 refueled 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 repe-

tion. 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*

Bible Bedrock

"Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial..."

— James 1:12 (King James Version)

Temptations met and mastered are the only high road to stabilization of character and spiritual progress. Temptation always touches the vulnerable point. That is their chief use, as well as their great danger. In a two-way world every instinct of body, soul and spirit has to go through the crucible of temptation, and go there again and again, until we 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 re-

spond 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. 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."

—*The Law of Faith*

Faith Notes

'Abiding' is, in the Greek, just 'remaining'; and we remain by simple faith-recognition. The negative to God the Positive, and necessary as a negative, for only when we are consciously weak, as Paul said, then His strength is perfectly manifested. When we are fearing, He is the courage. When we dislike, He is the love.

-Who Am I?

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.

-Who Am I?

We humans never had a nature of our own but were created to contain and manifest God in His divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4).

-To All Believers...It's As Simple As This

I am not to doubt or question. It is for Him to keep what He has taken possession of. I didn't choose Him. He chose me (John 15:15), so the 'heat' is on Him to do the keeping. I might well question His choices, choosing me or you, but we are His choice, so I laugh and go free.

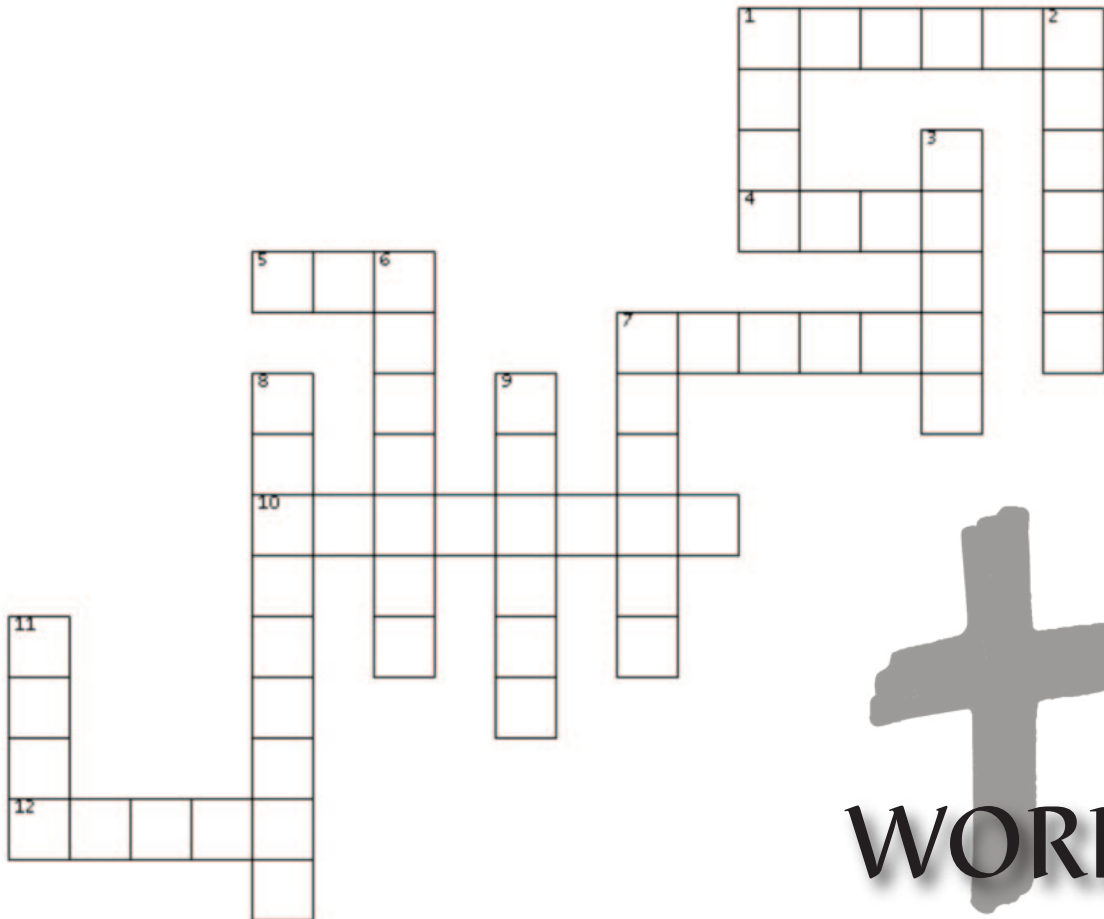
-To All Believers...It's As Simple As This

If Jesus spoke of Himself as only seeing and speaking and doing what the Father was doing by Him, and doing nothing of Himself, and finally saying that 'if you see Me, you see the Father,' then it is now the same of us. Those who see us, see Him! So Paul says, 'We have the mind of Christ' (1 Cor. 2:16); 'God works in you to will and do of His good pleasure' (Phil. 2:13); Christ 'our life' (Col. 3:4); and John, in his first epistle, caps it all by saying, 'As He is, so are we in this world' (1 John 4:17).

-To All Believers...It's As Simple As This

TEMPTATION OR SIN: THERE IS A DIFFERENCE!!

Our daily walk through life as believers can be discouraging and difficult, just as Paul described his misery in Romans 7: he found himself succumbing to temptation and then doing the very evil he did not want to do. It is critical, then, that we understand why Paul rejoiced in Romans 8—the difference between temptation and sin. The KEY to knowing the difference between the two is distinguishing between soul (where we are tempted to believe Satan’s lie of independent self) and spirit (where we can move into sin through choosing to believe Satan’s lie). The truth is that, in our spirit union with Christ, He is here to live His righteous life through us—the total answer to our struggles with temptation and sin. God promises us that He has made a way of escape in times of Temptation and that escape is His Spirit operating through us. He has set us free, by Christ’s body death and blood salvation, from being joined to Satan’s sin-spirit, and instead we are joined to the Spirit of the risen Christ who also raised us from death in sin!! How stunning is the truth that we are one with Christ in Spirit, and we no longer struggle to live under the false belief that we are independent from God, but it is His Holy Spirit that lives as us. As you work this puzzle, you will see that God gives us this truth in His word!



ACROSS

1. 1 John 5:19-20 makes it clear that God determines Satan's power in this world to fight against us, but that He also has given us deliverance in His Son, Jesus Christ, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the _____ one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life."
4. Galatians 2:20 is further proof that independence from God in Spirit is a lie, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the _____ which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."
5. In Matthew 26:39, Jesus gave the perfect example of moving from the temptation to live from his soul feelings to trusting God in His spirit, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this _____ pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."
7. 1 Corinthians 6:17 tells us the good news that happened with our salvation experience, "But he who is joined to the Lord is one _____ with Him."
10. Hebrews 4:12 says soul and spirit are so hard to separate that it takes the sharp "blade" of God's Word to distinguish between them, "For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, _____ even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."
12. Satan, the spirit of Sin, was the first to believe he was an independent-from-God "I" as Isaiah 14:13-14 records, "I will ascend into heaven, I will _____ my throne above the stars of God;...I will be like the Most High."

DOWN

1. Romans 12:2 speaks of our renewed minds in Christ where we know God's truth and say "No" to Satan's lies, "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect _____ of God."
2. Paul saw the truth about Satan's lie of independent self when in Romans 7:17 he stated, "But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that _____ in me."
3. James 1:13-15 gives a clear picture of the progression from temptation to sin, "Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth _____."
6. James 1:2-4 tells us to be thankful for the purpose of temptation in our lives, "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 _____ and entire, wanting nothing."
7. Matthew 4:3-4 clearly shows that Satan wanted Jesus to believe He was independent of God and to act on His own power, "Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these _____ become bread.'" But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'" "
8. In Romans 7:23, Paul reveals that Satan has access to believer's members (body and soul) and it is there he battles with us to draw us into sin, " But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into _____ to the law of sin which is in my members."
9. 1 Corinthians 10:13 promises us, "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of _____, that you may be able to bear it."
11. Paul thought in Romans 7:15 that he was a self, an I, who could do good, "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I _____, that I do."

Free At Last

By Norman Grubb

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 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 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 free-

dom 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-consciousness 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.

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 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 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!”

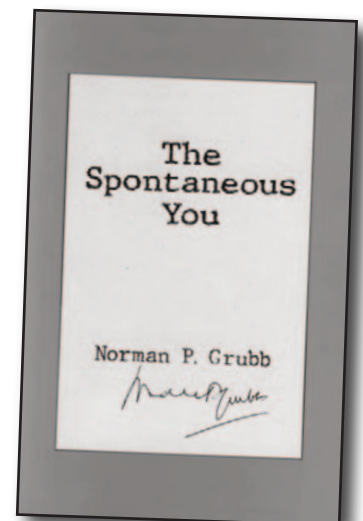
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– 1 Corinthians 10:13
(King James Version)

Words to Live By...

“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*.”

by Norman Grubb

The Liberating Secret



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