

October 08, 2017 - I John 2:16-17 - "The Roots of Our Temptations"

Introduction:

Donald Trump emerged to make a statement about the Las Vegas massacre. "It was an act of pure evil," he said, mentioning God seven times in his brief comments. He also referenced the Scriptures, made mention of prayer, faith and the dichotomy between darkness and light. The devil is a liar and does not care who he destroys in the process of seeking to impose his evil plans. The high price of human suffering shows the great contrast between Lucifer and Jesus. John 10:10 "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Temptation is an enticement to do evil. There are several things every believer should know about temptation, beginning with...

From the day we were born until we leave this physical world, we have a constant companion called temptation. Whether or not we sense its presence, temptation is always there stalking us like a lion stalking his prey. No matter how long you walked with God, temptation is always a potential danger in your life. For you younger member the realm the unknown or untried can arouse curiosity and a greater enticement to do evil so beware and take heart.

If I am going to face temptation all my life, then I had better understand what it is and how it works. Only in doing so can I ever hope to control it and defeat it. Thus we must begin by discovering where temptation comes from and clearly defining it in our minds.

I. Recognize the Roots of Temptation (2:16).

All temptation can be quickly recognized because it comes to us in one of three ways. John lists the three basic categories of temptation, which are the only three ways we can be tempted. You should number them in your Bible. Let's look at them:

1. The lust of the flesh. The word translated lust means "desire." God has given us certain good desires, such as thirst, eat, rest, and sex, but the evil world perverts them. Thirst is good, but drunkenness is a sin. Rest is rejuvenating, but laziness is a sin. Sex is God's way for us to express our love and to procreate, but the world system tries to get us to satisfy this desire in sinful and immoral ways both in and outside marriage. We yield too often to Temptation. James says: Temptation is the pull of man's own evil thoughts and desires." **But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.** -

2. The lust of the eyes. One of God's greatest gifts to us is sight, and much of what we desire is the result of what we see. We want what is pleasing to our eyes. In the Garden of Eden when Eve sees the forbidden fruit is pleasant to the eyes (Gen. 3:6), she wants it and takes it. When King David sees Bathsheba bathing and sees she is very beautiful, he wants her. King David lusts drive him to do kill Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba. This true illustration reveals this truth.

Drug traffickers used a propane tanker truck entering El Paso from Mexico. They rigged it so the propane gas was released from all of its valves. They used the truck to conceal 6,240 pounds of marijuana. They were clever, they were lustful, but they were not bright. They misspelled the name of the gas - company on the side of the truck and were pulled over. Satan always has a shortcut for us to get what our eyes desire. That's why people cheat, steal, lie, and lust to know what is none of their business not to mention having sex outside marriage.

3. The pride of life. This is what causes us to try to impress people. Some become workaholics, ignoring family and God as they try to impress people with promotions, possessions, and prominence. It is an obsession with status and image.

1. Pride also includes doing things to draw attention to our faith or spiritual activities. People who live only to please themselves or have a yearning for preeminence and dominance have always caused discord and strife. When pride gets lodged in our heart it will make our focus unclear and we will see others very poorly and have a negative view of them. When this problem occurs we magnify the faults of others and ignore our own faults or are totally blind to them. We are very gracious to give ourselves the benefit of the doubt, but we do not extend that courtesy to others. If this issue is not dealt with biblically it will destroy our life and contaminate all of our relationships.

We all search for something to fulfill us and make us happy, whether it is people, objects, position or power. When we get what we desire, we feel a certain emotion we call it happiness or pleasure but it is far from the happiness that God wants for us. Triumphant over temptation requires we realize the reason for temptation, recognize the types of temptation, and ...

III. Third, Resisting these Temptations (2:17).

1. What is God's will for us when we are tempted with such desires? We resist temptation by remembering the world passeth away, and the lust thereof (2:17a). The world and its pleasures are only temporary so we must look at the eternal, not the temporary. That's what Moses did.

Hebrews 11: 25.

2. James told us to resist the devil, and he will flee from you (4 v. 7b). The word resist is a military defensive term which means "to stand against," like in combat. Never in the Bible are we told to attack the devil. He will do the attacking, we must do the resisting. If we do resist, the promise of Scripture is he will flee from you. When attacked by the devil how do we put up a resistance? Jesus is our example. When Satan tempted Christ in the wilderness, how did Jesus resist according to Luke 4:4, 8, & 12). It is written...

He refuses Satan's temptation because He will only use His powers to fulfill God's purpose for His life, not for selfish reasons.

Illustration:

One little girl found a unique way to successfully overcome sinful desires in her heart. She applied a visual game that went like this: "When Satan comes knocking at my heart's door I

send Jesus to answer the door ... when Satan sees Jesus he says, 'oops, I am sorry, I must have the wrong house.'" Instead of dwelling on the desire she turns it over to the Lord!

3. Loving the pleasures of this world is like building a home on the Titanic, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever (1 Jn 2:17b). Regarding the world, Jesus asks this question: For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? (Mk 8:36). In this life the workaholic is never fulfilled, the greedy never have enough, and pleasure-seekers are never satisfied. The possessions and pleasures of this world are empty shells.

Don't put yourself in the place of temptation. This is exactly the way Satan operates. Get away from the source of your temptation. One thing that is different about this generation that we live in now, that no other generation has ever live in is in the area of sensual temptation. Never in the history of the mankind would we have had access to the sensual immoral things like we do in this world today.

If you are tempted to drink, don't hang around liquor stores. Learn to say no. If someone keeps pushing you away from God, get away from them until you have conquered your temptation. If necessary, stay away from people and places that are pulling you down. Know what your weakness is and avoid it.

Conclusion:

Temptation and evil are parts of life. We pray that God will guard us from its disastrous effects and help us stand against it. Unfortunately many of us follow the example of the majority of people and follow the path of least resistance. You will never have the edge in spiritual battle without the sword of the Spirit - do you have it strapped on? We fight with the Word of God! The only offensive equipment Paul mentions is the sword - and it is the representation of the Scriptures! Are you saved to get yours?