

Receiving the Victory!

2004

Although Jesus when on earth was hounded by the devil from birth to grave, there are certain times in His life where He went through intense temptation. It was not by chance that this happened, it was part of the plan for our salvation.

Most people know about Jesus' trial, mocking and death on the cross. Many also know about the terrible struggle of Gethsemane, when the whole destiny of a lost world trembled in the balance until Jesus' pale and trembling lips uttered the words, "Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done." He made the Choice at that time that even if He ended up separated forever from His Father, He would go through it to save us.

In order for the following to make any sense at all, it is first necessary to realize that Jesus WAS born in the same kind of flesh as you and I. He was born in a human body that was subject to the weakness and temptations coming from generations of sin. Very few Christians today believe this, instead they prefer to accept some form of the Roman Catholic idea that He was born with some kind of 'holy flesh', not subject to temptations as we are. Sort of a 'pretend' savior.

This is not true according to the Bible. Notice:

"Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Hebrews 2:17.

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:15.

In fact, we are told that believing that Jesus did not come in human flesh, flesh subject to the tendencies to sin, is a sign of antichrist. It gives us a false Christ, a make-believe Savior, But we have a real Savior:

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world." 1 John 4:3.

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." 2 John 1:7.

Jesus was not play-acting when He lived on earth, His was a terrific struggle, harder than any of us will ever be called to face. He had the same 'flesh' as we do. He could have sinned. He did not fall. True He was also Divine, however, He did not use His Divinity on His own behalf, not even once.

So why did He not fall? He lived a sinless life through connection by faith with the power of His Father. We can overcome sin through connection by faith with Jesus, our Great High Priest. He did not use any power that is not available to us through Him.

The third great struggle that Jesus went through for you and me, was actually the first, it was the temptation in the wilderness. It had been planned as part of salvation for man that Jesus would go through temptation on the very points that Adam and Eve fell on. These points were appetite and lust, coveting, desire for power and fame and presumption.

Jesus was led into the wilderness for this test right after He was baptized and anointed by the Holy Spirit for His ministry. For forty days he fasted, until humanity was weakened almost to the point of death. Satan came on the scene, determined to trick the Savior, the only one who stood between him and total conquest of the earth.

He tempted Jesus to use His divine power to provide for His own needs and also to prove something to Satan. In other words to show off. Jesus refused and answered Satan with the God's Word- 'It Is Written' Lu 4:4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

Jesus was there in the wilderness under the direction of His Father, He would trust and obey, even to death itself.

Satan came back with other temptations, all connected with the way in which Adam and Eve fell in Eden. They had been strong, well fed, had perfect minds, no excuse at all to sin against their Creator, yet shamefully they fell.

Now Jesus was passing over the same ground, but He was starving, weak and had a body/mind that had the effects of many generations of sin and degeneration. But He was doing this to provide a way out for us. He was showing us how to overcome; He clung by faith to His Father's power and He used the Living Words of Scripture to defeat the devil.

You can read about the temptation in Luke 4 and Matthew 4, twice more Satan came with schemes to trick Jesus. Once he even used cleverly twisted scriptures himself, hoping to trick Jesus into presumption. He offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, if He would just yield to him even once. How often are we tempted to think, 'just once, doesn't matter!'

Jesus refused and each time relied on the power of the Bible to defeat Satan. Finally in the name of the Lord Jesus ordered Satan to leave, and he had to run from the Word of the Father. Even in a starving and dying condition, even when He used no power not available to us, Satan could not overcome one who kept His faith on God and clung to the words of the Bible.

Jesus fell fainting to the ground after this mighty battle, but He had won the victory; He had passed over the very ground where Adam fell and even though Adam had every advantage, and Jesus every disadvantage, the victory was won.

What was this victory for? It was for you and me! Yes, when we are tempted, and we will never be tempted as badly as Jesus, we can choose to do right and call to God in the Name of Jesus to give us the Victory, and that very Victory is ours just as if we ourselves had won it.

Yes, this is the secret of overcoming any bad habit or sinful practice, the Victory of Jesus! We fool ourselves, we think we can overcome ourselves and thus have something we can boast about or be proud of. We try real hard and we often do seem to succeed for a while. Satan is not worried a bit! He knows that it is just a matter of time and we will fall again and feel so discouraged, he can get his hooks into us even worse.

I know, I have experienced it hundreds, yea thousands of times! But when we admit our weakness and call to Jesus for His Victory, for HIS power and we too lean on the Word of God and TRUST God in the Name of Jesus to save us and keep us, then Satan trembles! Soon he has to flee from that Name and the Victory of Jesus is ours.

Battles are not just fought once and that is it, temptation comes in many forms, just like it did to Jesus when here on earth, but He won the victory and He gives it freely to all who will have it. It never wears out, it never can fail. If we choose, and cling by faith asking for that mighty victory, we will have it. The weakest soul who clings to Jesus and the Word is more than a match for Satan and all his hosts of darkness.

Why then do so few find this victory? Part of it is they don't choose to have it and they don't ask for it. They don't want to choose to totally let go of sin, they want to keep the door open so that when an excuse comes along, they can run back to the sin.

We can pray to the Lord to make us willing to make the choice, we can tell Him we are willing to be made willing. His Spirit will work with us. What about lack of faith? We can cry out as the man in the Bible, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief."

When we feel we cannot hold on, we can cry out as did Peter when sinking in the water, "Lord save me, I perish".

Every blessing we can possibly need is ours for the asking. Not one soul need continue in sin. Not one soul need fall into bad and harmful habits over and over. There is a Victory and it is yours for the asking.

Never let Satan tell you that because you have fallen over and over, the Lord is fed up with you and you need not ask, He won't hear you. That is a lie, our Savior hears the weakest cry and His hand is stretched out to save. For as long as human probation lasts, His hand is stretched out to save to the uttermost.

When you are tempted, look away from self and what you are being tempted about, look to your Savior. See Him on your behalf alone in the desert, starving, weak, almost at death's very doorstep. See the cruel foe trying to trick Him, coming as most cowards do, when Jesus was at His weakest point. See your Savior clinging by faith to the power of His Father. See Him driving the mighty devil away with the Word of God, the simple scriptures. Then ask for that Victory and cling by faith to that Savior. You can never fall when you do this. Never!