

SUBJECT: Temptation (225)

TITLE: The Hour of Temptation

PROPOSITION: To study about temptation.

OBJECTIVE: So that we will be better prepared to resist the temptations that come upon us daily.

The Hour of Temptation

INTRODUCTION:

1. Revelation 3:10--Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.
2. Temptation is a part of every Christian's daily life.
 - a. There has never been a man so good that he was exempt from trials and temptations.
 - b. Even our Lord was tempted by the devil.
 - c. As I prepared this sermon on temptation I consulted two excellent articles written by a brother on the subject, but I am sad to report that this brother was evidently better at **WRITING ABOUT** temptation than he was at **RESISTING** it.
 - d. Mark Twain wrote about the subject of temptation that, "It is easier to stay out than get out."
 - e. He also said: "There are several good protections against temptation, but the surest is cowardice."
3. How very thankful we ought to be that the Bible not only warns us about temptation, tells us what the consequences of yielding to it are, provides us examples of those who were successful and not successful at resisting it, tells us how to resist it, **BUT ALSO** gives us the knowledge that we **DO NOT HAVE TO YIELD TO TEMPTATION!**
4. The faithful saints at Philadelphia, toward the end of the first century A.D., must have been greatly comforted by the words of our Lord, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience; I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation,..." (Rev 3:10).
5. Refer to S T P O.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE CHURCH WITH THE OPEN DOOR (Rev 3:7-13) .

- A. The church of Christ at Philadelphia, near the end of the first century, was given an **OPEN DOOR** for spreading the gospel message.
 1. We cannot know precisely **WHAT** that door was, nor **HOW** it had been provided by the Lord.
 2. We are told that such a door existed.
- B. This term "open door" suggests opportunity and the idea is used more than once in the New Testament.
 1. Paul and Barnabas, after returning from their first missionary journey, gathered with the church at Antioch and "rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had **OPENED THE DOOR** of faith unto the Gentiles " (Acts 14:27).
 2. Paul wrote that "a great **DOOR** and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries" (1 Cor 16:9).
 3. Also, "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a **DOOR WAS OPENED** unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit because I found not Titus my brother " (2 Cor 2:12-13).
- C. The city of Philadelphia was founded in the middle of the second century B.C. by Attalus II.
 1. The name of the city is said to have come from the love that Attalus had for his brother Eumenes (thus the Greek, *piladelphos*, brother-lover).
 2. Because of geography, it was designated the "GATEWAY TO THE EAST."
 3. Likely, part of the reason for the founding of the city of Philadelphia was toward the end of spreading **GREEK CULTURE** in Lydia and Phrygia.

- a. SADLY, many of them were more zealous in their "Hellenizing" efforts than Christians are in evangelizing.
- b. The location was recognized by men as a good place for spreading a message of the superiority of Greek culture and the Lord Jesus Christ recognized it as an ideal location for the spread of the gospel.
- 4. Philadelphia was also located on the slopes of a volcano with the volcanic ash providing fertile soil for a large grape-growing industry.
- 5. Not surprisingly, the god of wine, Dionysus, was a chief god of the city.
- 6. Philadelphia was a city of many temples and the pillars that were part of those structures were used to honor "favorite sons" by putting their names on them.
- D. So far as the establishment of the church at Philadelphia, we have no record--It was one of the two churches with which the Lord did not find fault.
- E. Primarily the Lord identifies Himself to the church at Philadelphia as the One that has the key.
 - 1. Jesus stands in a special relationship between mankind and God.
 - a. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus " (1 Tim 2:5).
 - b. "...no man cometh unto the father but by me" (John 14:6).
 - 2. The church at Philadelphia is challenged to present to that part of the world the fact that access to God is possible only through Jesus Christ.
- F. What the Lord revealed from His inspection of this church would have been an encouragement.
 - 1. They had a little strength (3:8).
 - 2. They had kept His word (3:8).
 - 3. They had not denied His name (3:8).
 - 4. He loved them (3:9).
 - 5. He would keep them from the hour of temptation (3:10).
- G. Jesus urges them to hold on to what they have and they will be crowned with victory and honored (3:11-13).

II. "...I WILL ALSO KEEP THEE FROM THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION..." (Rev 3:10) .

- A. This passage gives a clear statement of the conditional nature of the promises of God-- "BECAUSE OF . . . I WILL ALSO KEEP."
- B. Brother Harold Littrell translates the phrase, "the word of my patience," as "the word of my steadfastness," and notes that this is another way of saying that they need to "abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9)" [*English Study Bible*, p. 401].
 - 1. The word for "patience" is-- *hupomone* in the NT the characteristic of a man who is not swerved from his deliberate purpose and his loyalty to faith and piety by even the greatest trials and sufferings.
 - 2. Certainly it would be necessary for these saints to continue to abide in the doctrine of Christ in order to receive the conditional promise of overcoming temptation (Rev 2:10).
- C. Coffman says that what the Lord promises here is "**safety through trials, not exemption from trials**" [Coffman, p. 81].
 - 1. Without doubt the Bible teaches that so long as we live upon this earth there will be temptation (1 Cor 10:12; 16:13; 1 Pet 5:8).
 - 2. These saints could expect to continue to be tested severely, but the encouragement from the Lord is that they do not have to yield.
 - 3. If they continue reacting to temptation as they had done thusfar, they could be and would be victorious.
 - 4. Through their faithfulness and the providence of the Lord they would be able successfully to meet all trials.
- D. This passage is abused and twisted by the premillennialists.

1. They seek unduly to emphasize the word "FROM" to imply that the church will be raptured and not have to endure the so-called "great tribulation."
2. They seem to ignore the BECAUSE OF in the first part of the verse.
3. Because they had already proven themselves strong and faithful IN TIME OF TRIAL, Jesus would be faithful to them.
4. Also, it seems strange--even if such a false idea were true--that the Lord would choose to make the statement to only one congregation if He intended to include all faithful Christians in this "rapture."

III. CHRISTIANS TODAY CAN/MUST RESIST TEMPTATION.

In order to do so, Christians must. . .

- A. "Keep the word of Christ's patience" (Rev 3:10). [Really, all of the following points are summarized in this one statement from the Lord].
- B. Know the Bible (Psalms 119:11).
- C. Be godly (2 Pet 2:9).
- D. Look for the way to escape temptation (1 Cor 10:13).
- E. Remember Lot's wife (Luke 17:32).
- F. Use the "Spiritual EPA" (Phil 4:8).
- G. Follow the Example of Jesus (Mat 4:1-11).
- H. Pray (Mat 26:41).
- I. KNOW that we are ABLE to resist (1 Cor 10:13--There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it).
- J. Don't allow temptations to discourage and then destroy (1 Pet 5:6-7--Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: {7} Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you).
- K. Refuse to allow Satan to create doubt in your mind about what God has said or what He really means (Gen 3:4-5).
- L. Refuse to believe Satan's lie that something good will come from doing something evil (Gen 3:4-5).
- M. Do not allow Satan to use your God-given ability to envision, visualize, and fantasize to create a picture of the pleasure of sin--these pleasures are seasonal (Gen 3:4-5; Heb 11:25--Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season).
- N. Remember that when God says NO to something it is NOT to diminish your pleasure, but to ENHANCE it (John 10:10).
- O. Remember this world is not your home (1 Pet 1:17--1 Pet 1:17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear).
- P. Think about the NEW ways God can use you as you choose not to yield to temptation (Hebrews 11).
- Q. THINK about how much might be riding on the decision you are about to make (Mt 16:26).
- R. Realize that it is OK to be angry about SIN (John 2:13; Mark 3:5)--Personalize the enemy: **SATAN.**
- S. Beware of your STRENGTHS (1 Cor 10:12--Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall). ILL: "Rain," "Summit is closest to the abyss."
- T. Shift your energy from preoccupation with life's inconveniences and your own pain to GOING TO WORK FOR THE LORD--Put on the Lord Jesus (Rom 13:14).
- U. Know that the way out of temptation is THROUGH it--Patiently endure it and do so with JOY (Js 1:2--James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations).
- V. Understand that the Bible speaks of SINS OF IMAGINING (e.g., Mt 5:27-28).

- W. Do not waste time devising evil plans or making provision for the flesh, BUT rather put on the Lord Jesus (Rom 13:14).
- X. Do not forget about the OMNISCIENCE OF GOD--Some day all that you thought was secret and hidden will be made manifest and made known (Luke 8:17--For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither any thing hid, that shall not be known and come abroad).
- Y. Appreciate and use the DISCERNING POWER OF GOD'S WORD (Heb 4:12--For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart).
- Z. Bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor 10:5).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. We **CAN** meet temptation with Christ.
 - a. We have a **HEAVENLY EXAMPLE** (Mat 4:1-11).
 - b. We have a **HEAVENLY ASSURANCE** (1 Cor 10:13; Rev 3:10).
 - c. We have a **HEAVENLY PRESCRIPTION--THE WORD OF HIS PATIENCE** (Rev 3:10).
- 2. Christians should be of good cheer--CHRIST OVERCAME THE WORLD and we through Him are MORE THAN CONQUERORS (Rom 8:37).
- 3. "**Worth While**," by Ella Wheeler Wilcox. . .

It is easy enough to be pleasant,
 When life flows by like a song,
 But the man worthwhile is one who will smile,
 When everything goes dead wrong.
 For the test of the heart is trouble,
 And it always comes with the years,
 And the smile that is worth the praises of earth
 Is the smile that shines through tears.

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