

## THE TEMPTATIONS OF FAITH

Lincoln Park Baptist Church, West Newton, Massachusetts  
February 7, 1965

Scripture – Matthew 6:13; Mark 14:32-42

### Introduction:

Our texts for today are two:

Mat. 6:13 – *“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*

Mark 14:32-42 – *“And they went to a place which was called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, ‘Sit here, while I pray.’ And he took with him Peter and James and John, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled. And he said to them, ‘My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch.’ And going a little further, he fell on the ground and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might have passed from him. And he said: ‘Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt.’ And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter: ‘Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’ Then he went out and prayed two more times.”*

[prayer]  
[distressed & troubled]  
[sorrow, death, the devil]  
[pray to do thy will]  
[disciples asleep]  
[watch & pray]

### I. Jesus was subject to temptation

- A. At the beginning of this ministry, (Mk. 1:12) after his baptism, *“The Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. And he was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan, and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered to him.”*
- B. Throughout his ministry. (Heb. 5:7) *“In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear. Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him.” “He was tempted in every aspect as we are, yet without sinning.”*
- [prayer]  
[death]  
[obedience]  
[suffering]  
[tempted like us]

Jesus when faced with temptation, (1) fasted, (2) prayed, (3) watched.

The source of his temptation is considered: (1) Satan, (2) death (Satan is the one who has the power over death.)

In every case God provides the victory. It is not an automatic victory, but one attained

through struggle and prayer. It is doing God's will that is at stake.

## II. The Christian was and is subject to temptations

### A. Temptation to fall away from the faith

The congregation of Thessalonika was in danger of falling away from the gospel. Paul writes when he hears: (I Thes. 3:1-5) – *“Therefore, when we could bear it no longer, we were willing to be left behind at Athens alone, and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's servant in the gospel of Christ, to establish you in the faith and to exhort you, that no one be moved by these afflictions. You yourselves know that this is to be your lot. For when we were with you, we told you beforehand that we were to suffer affliction; just as it came to pass, and as you know. For this reason I sent ... that I might know your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and that our labor would be in vain.”*

Danger: Abandonment of the faith in the face of persecution and tribulation. Paul's answer:

- (1) Tribulation and affliction are to be expected. [work of the tempter and the devil]
- (2) Send Timothy to establish them in their faith.
- (3) Prayers – fight is with Satan (3:10) *“praying earnestly night and day that we may see your face and supply what is lacking in your faith.”*

Are we in danger of falling away from the faith?

- (1) We tend to dismiss tribulations and sufferings as part of the lot of Christians. This is falling away from the faith.
- (2) We grow weary. We come to consider life merely in terms of possessions and physical well-being.
- (3) We are not ready to face ridicule for our faith.
- (4) Temptation of secularism – actual denial of the reality of God: the material is the ultimate.

### B. Temptation to shrink back from our responsibilities.

- (1) In Galatia, forget to restore the weak. *“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.”* Exercise love and kindness.
- (2) We modern Christians. It is a temptation not to bear one another's burdens.
  - (a) The problems of Mississippi and Alabama are our problems
  - (b) Problems of the church: (1) polity, (2) reunion of the saints – *“not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near.”*

Conclusion:

Remedy for temptations –

- (1) Prayer – *“Let us not come under attack, into the danger of falling”* Tear us out of the power of Satan.
- (2) Count always on God’s help – *“God is faithful, and will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but at the time of the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”*
- (3) The pastoral exhortation – (I Thes. 3:17) – *“But since we were bereft of you, brethren, for a short time, in person not in heart, we endeavored the more eagerly and with great desire to see you face to face; because we wanted to come to you – I, Paul, again and again – but Satan hindered us. For what is our hope and joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? For you are our glory and joy.”*

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