

THE



"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)

July 2018

No. 391

SIN AND TEMPTATION

It is truly a marvelous blessing to be able to touch (with our faith) the forgiving blood of Jesus Christ in the watery grave of baptism (Acts 2:38) to arise as a new creature (Rom. 6)! No human being earned or deserved this grand opportunity to be redeemed from sin. God extended his wonderful *agape* love via his son Jesus Christ because He so loved us (John 3:16)! The inspired Paul expounds very plainly the seriousness of NOT obeying the gospel. In 2nd Thessalonians we read,

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty an-

THE HARVESTER
141 County Road 474
Woodland, AL 36280
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



gels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. (2 The. 1:7-9)

God's power unto salvation is the gospel (Rom 1:16). We are added by the Lord to His Church once we have obeyed the gospel (Acts 2:47). Please note: we do not "join" the church. We are added to the Church by the Lord when we obey the gospel!

Once we have become savable members of the Lord's church does that mean that we are eternally secure? Absolutely not! The Apostle Peter teaches us,

And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. (2 Pet. 1:5-7)

We are to walk in God's word and add to our faith the aforementioned graces. If we don't we will fall from Grace! Peter goes on to say,

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. (2 Pet. 1:8-10)

Our calling and election will be unsure if we fall from grace by not growing and continuing in grace as the inspired Apostle vividly teaches!

Why would one fail to grow in the grace of God after having been sanctified from sin? One can fall from grace by giving in

to temptation! Sin is stepping across a fixed boundary. Temptation is being solicited to step across a fixed boundary. Is it sinfully wrong to be tempted? No! Jesus was tempted yet without sin (Heb. 4:15). It is a sin to give in to temptation. James has the following to say about sin and temptation:

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. (Jas. 1:14-15)

For the sake of simplicity let's allow a fresh baked batch of chocolate chip cookies to be a metaphor for (represent symbolically) sin and temptation. We come in from school or work and the house is seemingly vacated. On the kitchen table we both see and smell a most delightful batch of hot and fresh baked cookies and a very cold glass of milk sitting close by. At this point we are so very tempted and drawn to the tasty delight sitting before us. Have we sinned yet? Not necessarily. If we passingly see and smell the dessert before us and quickly walk to another room and leave the temptation behind, no, we haven't sinned! We were only briefly solicited to step across the line. Yet we didn't! We sin if we continue to look at and smell the cookies and ultimately give in and indulge in our desires. We have sinned if we eat the "cookies"! At this point sin is "conceived" as James told us. We were solicited (tempted) to sin and we gave in! We are now in a very dangerous position before the Lord and may very well have fallen from grace! If we let this sin be "finished" without repentance we will then be lost and if we die in that condition we will be cast into outer darkness where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth in a miserable Devil's hell! As much as we may like to eat delicious baked desserts, we must avoid the temptation.

Let us now leave the metaphor of baked cookies and consider being tempted to real sins. The Holy Bible (the mind of God) condemns sin. When children of God sin what are we to do about it? We are to admit the sins, confess them in prayer to God, and ask for forgiveness.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. (1 John 1:8-10)

We are to be “broken” and “contrite” (Psa. 34:17-18) when we COMMIT sin intentionally or OMIT doing the right thing either willingly or in ignorance. We will never be “sinless” as long as we live. We are, however, to work very diligently to “make [our] calling and election sure” (2 Pet. 1:10). We are to “get a grip” by humbly submitting ourselves to God’s word instead of our earthly desires. We will always be in a fight with our earthly desires and passions, We are to LOVE God and not the things of this life.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (1 John 2:15-16)

Words are cheap. We can say, “oh how I love Jesus,” and not do the things he has commanded us to do. Jesus said “*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*” (Luke 6:46) If we LOVE (*agape*) God by doing what He says do by a working faith (John 6:28-29; Jas. 2:14-26) we will be in a savable condition and thus be ready for life ever lasting in that eternal city in Heaven not made with hands. John tells us we must “do” what God says do in order to go to heaven: “*And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever*” (1 John 2:17). To avoid temptation to sin we must first have strong faith in God. With

THE HARVESTER is a monthly publication intended to encourage all men everywhere to become laborers into God’s harvest (Luke 10:2). This paper is mailed free of charge to anyone who wishes to receive it. Please submit name, address, address changes and all correspondence to:

The Harvester

141 County Road 474 * Woodland, AL 36280

Phone: (256) 449-9221* Email: raymcmanus@hotmail.com

Web Page: www.churches-of-christ.org

our strong faith we are to LOVE God by doing what he says. We must hide His word in our hearts so that we might not sin against Him (Psa. 119:11). Decent God fearing people sometimes commit horrible sins. David committed sins by having sex with another man's wife and then having the man put in the heat of a battle so that he would die in order to cover up what he had already done. In the final analysis with David he was broken and contrite and repented of his sins. God forgave him. While Bathsheba was taking a bath on her roof when David saw her, he should have quit looking at her. He could have gone into his house and prayed that he would not be further tempted. If she bathed in this manner on a regular basis, David should have avoided any further observation altogether. We must love God and avoid lust. We must create barriers so that we can avoid sin as much as we possibly can. Yet we will sin via lust or pride. Sometimes we gossip and back bite one another. Whatever our temptations are we must work at getting rid of them on a daily basis. Sometimes even though we know right from wrong we will give in to sin. Paul said: "*For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I*" (Rom. 7:15). We must be sanctified daily by prayer and forgiveness. We must run with patience the race that is set before us and lay aside every weight that easily besets us (Heb. 12:1). We must fight the good fight of faith. Paul said near the end of his journey

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Tim. 4:7-8)

Are we "hiding" God's word in our hearts so that we might not sin? Do we love God more than lust and pride? Are we running the race before us with patience? Are we fighting the good fight of faith? As the beautiful Christian hymn says, "Oh can we say we are ready"?

TIM ELDRIDGE
(Woodland, AL)

WORD SEARCH

Can you find thirty (30) books of the Bible in this paragraph?

There are 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them? This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket, on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus; there really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. God Bless.

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH...

COPIED from <http://home.snu.edu/~hculbert/hidden.htm>

BE YOUR BEST SELF

The good you find in others is in you too.

The faults you find in others are your faults as well.

What you see in others, shows you yourself.

See the best in others, and you will be your best.

Love, and you will be loved.

Seek to understand, and you will be understood.

Listen, and your voice will be heard.

To change your world, you must change yourself.

To blame and complain will only make matters worse.

Whatever you care about, is your responsibility.

Give to others, and you give to yourself.

Appreciate beauty, and you will be beautiful.

Admire creativity, and you will be creative.

And finally, show your best face to the mirror,
and you'll be happy with the face looking back at you.

ANONYMOUS

Excerpts from article titled "Be Your Best Self"

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Where was Abraham born?
2. What was the name of Samson's father?
3. Who went back to Jerusalem after the captivity to encourage the people to build the walls of the city again?
4. According to the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, "a city that is on a hill cannot be..." what?
5. In the vision of Jesus in Revelation, what came out of Jesus' mouth?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH...

(cont. on page 8)

GOSPEL MEETINGS

DATES	PLACE	SPEAKER
June 29 - July 1	Owens Road Prattville, AL	J. D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
July 8 - 12	Templehill Smithdale, MS	Joe Hill (Hagerhill, KY)
July 13 - 15	Freefield Stateline, MS	Joe Hill (Hagerhill, KY)
July 15 - 20	Oak Grove Woodland, AL	Bill Prince, Jr. (Oxford, AL)
July 22 - 27	Napoleon Woodland, AL	Allan Daniel (Woodland, AL)
July 27 - 29	Verona Verona, KY	J. D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

(cont. from page 7)

...and remember last month's questions?

1. How many people were saved in the ark?
EIGHT (1 Pet. 3:20)
2. Which two sisters married Jacob?
RACHEL AND LEAH (Gen. 29:28)
3. What was the first plague the Lord sent upon Egypt?
WATER TURNED INTO BLOOD (Exo. 7:20)
4. What happened to Jesus on the 8th day of his life?
HE WAS CIRCUMCISED (Luke 2:21)
5. With what was Jesus' side pierced? SPEAR (John 19:34)

<p>WHEN SATAN REMINDS YOU OF YOUR PAST, REMINDE HIM OF HIS FUTURE</p>
--