

Tempted in All Points.

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Christ offered Himself as a willing sacrifice in our behalf. He stooped from His high command in heaven to rescue human beings from the slavery of sin. The Son of God gave up His honour and glory, and tasted the bitterness of death, that man might be a partaker of the divine nature. He died that all might have another trial, another opportunity to choose God as their Leader.

"When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, . . . to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." The star of hope arose upon our world, and its brightness increased as our Saviour increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.

Appeal to Appetite.

In the wilderness Christ endured trials which no human being can comprehend. Here He was brought to face to face with Satan, the fallen angel, who tempted Him with a subtle power. The enemy began by disputing Christ's divinity. If you are the Son of God, he said, give me evidence that you are. Here you are in the wilderness, hungry, starving for food. You do not look like a Sovereign. Give me evidence that you are what you claim to be. Command that these stones be made bread.

Struggle for the Mastery.

Well did Satan know who Christ was. When the Saviour went to Gadara, the evil spirits in the two madmen there cried out, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God? Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?" As in the wilderness Christ passed through the test of the second Adam, the beauty of His divine character shone out through His disguise. Satan could see through His humanity the glory and purity of the One with whom he had been associated in the heavenly courts. There rose before the tempter a picture of what he himself then was, a covering cherub, possessing beauty and holiness. Self-exaltation had led him to strive for a place above Christ, but he had failed. Could he not now carry out his design against the Son of God? He knew that if he could induce the Saviour to yield one jot in His allegiance to His Father, he would have the world entirely in his power, and would be able to rule as only he in his changed character could rule.

But the One whom Satan was trying to overcome was the Lord of heaven, and all the tempter's efforts were without avail. Though Jesus was physically weak from His long fast, He would not yield one inch to the wily foe. His will was anchored in the will of His Father. "It is written," came from His pale quivering lips, as Satan told Him to turn the stones into bread, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Appeal to Presumption.

Satan then took Christ to the pinnacle of the temple, and challenged Him to cast Himself down, saying, "If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning Thee; and in their hands they shall bear Thee up, lest at any time Thou dash Thy foot against a stone." Thus Satan tried to lead Christ to commit the sin of presumption. He reminded Him that God had promised to protect Him by angel ministrations. But no temptation could induce the Saviour to accept the challenge. "It is written again," He said, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Christ's time to show His divine power had not yet come. He was fully aware of the glory He had with the Father before the world was. But then He willingly submitted to the Divine will, and He was unchanged now. This was His time of trial and temptation; He must endure the test however cruel and cutting it may be. He saw Himself uplifted on the cross of Calvary, having suffered a shameful rejection at the hands of His own nation. But He knew that by suffering and sorrow and a cruel death He was to bruise the serpent's head. The giving of His life was to be the price of the world's redemption.

Appeal to Ambition.

Satan next took Christ to the top of a high mountain, and there presented before Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, saying, "All this power will I give Thee, . . . for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it. If Thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be Thine." Then it was that Divinity flashed through humanity, and the fallen angels saw Christ glorified as He said, "Get thee behind Me, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

The Second Adam.

The victory was gained. Christ had redeemed Adam's disgraceful failure and fall, and had placed man on vantage ground.

"Then the devil leaveth Him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto Him." The angels had been watching the contest, but they could do nothing to relieve the Saviour until the last temptation had been resisted. The Commander of heaven, Christ, was accustomed to receive the attendance and adoration of angels. And at any time during His life on this earth He could have called to His Father for the help of the angels. But no bribe, no temptation, could induce Him to deviate from the path of God's appointment. Great cunning was shown in the tactics which Satan followed. He assailed Christ on the point of appetite. He appealed to His trust in God. He presented to Him earth's most captivating scenes. But Christ failed not. He saw a world perishing in sin, and steadfastly and firmly He moved forward in the path of resistance. He had a world to rescue. He had come to seek and save that which was lost.

Christ passed over the ground where Adam fell, overcame in our behalf. He endured every test that man will ever be called upon to endure. He met all the temptations which men will meet. He has travelled over the path in which He calls us to walk. "If any man

will come after Me," He says, "let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." As I endured the test and trial, so you may endure it. He who is at last crowned conqueror must depend, as Christ did, upon divine power. Every step Christ took was taken in dependence upon God, and not in a single point did the enemy overcome Him. He declares, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." "He that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne."

The Greatest Gift.

When God gave Jesus to our world, He gave all heaven. This gift has secured for us our adoption into God's family. The Father's promise is Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. Never will He falsify. Never will He alter the thing that has gone out of His mouth. The clouds of uncertainty and unbelief rolled back as the Saviour cried out upon the cross, "It is finished." No longer had the enemy power to tempt or annoy Him. Holiness and justice united in the completion of the great work of redemption. On the cross mercy and truth met together, and righteousness and peace kissed each other. Jesus had testified that God is true. Faith demands no more. The doubting soul need not ask, Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has He in anger shut up His tender mercies? The answer comes clear and strong, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God's word is immutable. Jesus has proclaimed over the rent sepulchre of Joseph. "I am the resurrection and the life." Today He stands in the heavenly courts as our Advocate. He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; for He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

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