

## WHY TEMPTATIONS ARE ESSENTIAL!

28/6/09

*As much as we don't like to face them, temptations are essential. Temptations build strength, build faith, develop character... open up the power of God and produce overcomers. Temptations are not just enticements to act upon weaknesses... they include pressures, doubt, fear, low confidence levels, uncertainty, time constraints, etc. Life holds many blessings, but it also assures us of many difficulties as well.*

**Sometimes, struggles are exactly what we need in our life... they are blessings in their infancy.**

**JAM 1:2** My brethren, count it **all joy** when ye fall into divers temptations; Blessings are on the way.

**3** Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. The key is revealed here... temptations challenge faith... faith will either grow or shrink, it depends upon our response... thus patience is required.

**4** But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Patience is the key to blessing... the key to overcoming temptations... the key to every success, in or out of the church. Many fail in life because they quit too soon.

**The best example of the benefits of temptations is in this verse.**

**HEB 5:8** Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered;

**9** And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; We sometimes forget that Jesus had to learn to face human life and all its pitfalls with the same pain and disappointment that we do. Notice how Jesus learned to deal with life?

Jesus not only set the example for us by overcoming temptations, he also revealed how to deal with the type of temptations that lead to prejudice and favouritism, etc. He was often criticised because he spent far too much time with the "low life" of his society. He responded to these criticisms with obvious parables like the lost sheep and the prodigal son, but the following parable of the sheep and the goats adds a new dimension to facing temptations. The problem with the 'goats' is not listed as a series of sins (stealing, lying, murder, adultery, etc.), rather, the goats didn't attend to their Christian duties.

**MAT 25:41** Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

**42-45** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the **least of these**, ye did *it* not to me.

**46** And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal. Their real sin was that they failed to serve the Lord's people... the emphasis is on the 'least' of the saints. Who are these? Some Christians were tempted to judge them as being unworthy of their support, perhaps unworthy of fellowship. This temptation to act as a judge or critic rather than a servant cost them their lives! Others would have been too busy or too self consumed to do the work of the Lord. As we see, there is much more to temptation than falling to an obvious weakness. If God allowed us to go through our life without any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as we could have been. We would never know what true blessing was. Consider the butterfly before it is fit to fly. It spends hours chewing and wriggling to get out of the cocoon. The restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening, were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings, so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon. Without the struggle, it would wither and die!!

**\*If you want to be strong in the Lord and in life... it is the difficulties that will strengthen you.**

**\*If you want to be wise in the Lord and in life... God will give you problems to solve.**

**\*If you want to be prosperous in the Lord and in life... give and you will receive.**

**\*If you want to be courageous in the Lord and in life... you need fear and obstacles to overcome.**

**\*If you want the love of the Lord in your life... go and help troubled people... provide the love.**

**\*If you want favours in the Lord and in life... it is the opportunities that will strengthen you.**

**Temptations teach us to trust in God... as we do this others also learn to trust in God as well.**

**2COR 1:3** Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;

**4** Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.