

# The Old Paths

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## “Are You Warming Your Hands Around The Devil’s Fire?”

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**I**n Genesis 22:1 we are told that God tempted Abraham, yet James says, “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God...” (Jas. 1:13). Do these two verses contradict one another, or can they be harmonized?

When we understand that the primary meaning of temptation is to prove or test as in the case of Abraham, then we can understand God’s testing or giving His people opportunity to prove their faithfulness. It would be extremely difficult for us to mature without some form of test. The secondary meaning of temptation is to entice as is used in James 1:13. Hence, God does not entice His people to do evil but does allow them opportunity to express their spiritual maturity. If we are to overcome both the tests of God and the enticements of the devil, it is mandatory that we understand temptation.

### *Three Categories Of Temptation*

Temptations or trials may be placed into three broad categories. The first category may be referred to as hereditary temptations. By this, we mean those tests that come upon us because of our commitment to God and His Holiness. Immediately after He was baptized, Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness

to be tempted of the devil (Matt. 4:1-11). Unlike Lot, He did not choose the well-watered wilderness and pitch his tent in that direction (Gen. 13:12), but followed the direction of the Spirit. Likewise, trials will come upon us when we take up our cross and follow Christ (Matt. 16:24). We inherit these temptations when we place our mind, soul, and body at the feet of the Crucified One.

The second category of temptations are environmental. These are trials that come upon us because we are in the world. In Romans 12:2 Paul says, “And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” When the child of God accepts the challenge to live in this world and to let the mind of Christ dwell in him, then he will be tempted. Let us remember we are not thermometers that reflect the world in which we live, but our Master requires us to be thermostats, altering the evil environment. We have not caused or asked for these trials, but we should neither fear nor try to avoid them. They will always be present and we must overcome them.

Unlike the first two categories, the third category is self-inflicted. These temptations will be dealt with in detail in the remainder of this article.

“Self-inflicted” temptations are the result of foolish or immature decisions on our part in failing to discern between good and evil. In Genesis 13, we find Lot in an ungodly city that vexed his soul (II Pet. 2:7), but let us remember that it was a city of his own choosing. Many of God’s people today are living in tormenting conditions because they, like Lot, have taken from the proverbial shelf that which looked good, felt good, or made them look good for a very short season. The best of God’s people, like David, have failed to “pull down the shades” when women in the world, like Bathsheba, fail to “use their shades.” Though all three types of temptations will destroy our souls and taint the church of the living God; the “self-inflicted” temptations are ones we

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## Today’s The Day!

- Our gospel meeting with Joel Plunkett begins today! We have a great opportunity to hear God’s word preached by a man who loves God’s word.
- Whatever plans you have for this week — CANCEL THEM and be here for each and every service this week. Nothing should come between you and this opportunity to hear God’s word preached. Let’s be excited that this week has finally arrived! (Acts 10:33)

[Things WE can do to help during this meeting are on page 2.]

should especially fear and avoid. This is because they will destroy our own souls, taint the church of the living God, and our own decisions are the cause of it! The wise man expressed this precise idea in Proverbs 4:14-15. "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." The word of God teaches that we are in grave danger when we daily flirt with either sin or the sinner.

### ***When Are God's People Guilty Of Flirting With Sin?***

1. When we marry a worldly person in spite of the warning signals (I Cor. 15:33).

2. When we consume a daily diet of adultery, humanism, and materialism on our televisions, in magazines, and in our reading material (and now, our computers! -JJ) (Prov. 23:7).

3. When adultery, fornication, and all uncleanness become so common that it no longer vexes our souls and we tease or joke about it (Eph. 5:12, 4).

4. When the music that entertains us speaks constantly of getting high, losing control, or "if loving you is wrong, I don't want to be right" (Gal. 5:19-21).

5. When we allow our children to wear less on the street than they do in their bedroom at night (I Tim. 2:9).

6. When our friends and our children's friends are not only in the world, but are worldly-minded (Jas. 4:4, 7).

7. When we allow our children to forsake the services for work, ball games, and school affairs (Matt. 6:33).

8. When we allow our teenagers to sit in the back of the building and talk or write notes during the services (Acts 10:33).

9. When we fail to keep our marriage vows daily, and we let our mate feel that he or she is of little or no value to us (Eph. 5:21-33).

10. When we allow our conversation to be punctuated with crude or gutter language (Col. 3:8; Eph. 4:29).

In Proverbs 4:19, Solomon says, "fools mock at sin." Brethren, only a fool would do so! Let us remember that while Peter was warming his hands around the enemies' fire, his heart grew cold and denied our Lord (Matt. 26:69-75). May God give us the wisdom to identify the enemies' fire and avoid it.

(From: Guardian of Truth, October 18, 1984, p. 19)

#### Editor's Note:

This article gives us a sampling of the kind of preaching/teaching that will be done this week. I have been looking forward to this meeting for some time, and am so thank-

ful that bro. Plunkett is here to teach and preach God's word this week!

Friends, look at the list below and see what things we can do this week to make sure that this meeting is successful. There is much to do in the Lord's work, and we ought to be as prepared for this gospel meeting as we expect brother Plunkett to be!!

## **"WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?"**

Folks often wonder what can be done to help make a gospel meeting a success. Below are just a few things you can do to make sure this gospel meeting is successful:

- ✓ **Pray.**
- ✓ **Invite Others.**
- ✓ **Attend This Meeting Faithfully.**
- ✓ **Sing With Grace In Your Heart To The Lord.**
- ✓ **Listen Attentively.**
- ✓ **Search the Scriptures To See Whether Those Things Are So.**
- ✓ **Worship God In Spirit And In Truth.**

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Come and meet with the church at Southside.  
Our address is: 2920 New Hartford Rd. Owensboro, KY 42303.

#### **MEETING TIMES:**

**Sunday Morning Bible Study** \_\_\_\_\_ **9:30 am**  
**Sunday Morning Worship** \_\_\_\_\_ **10:20 am**  
**Sunday Evening Worship** \_\_\_\_\_ **6:00 pm**  
**Wednesday Evening Bible Study** \_\_\_\_\_ **7:00 pm**

Our call-in radio program is on **WBIO, FM 94.7**, Sunday afternoon from 12:30-1:00 pm. **Call: 683-9246 (WBIO)** with your Bible question.

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