

Overcoming Temptation

Key Verse: *“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”*
—I Corinthians 10:13

Selected Scripture:
I Corinthians
10:12-22

AT FIRST GLANCE, WHEN

we read the words of our Key Verse concerning temptation, we might get the thought that God is the source of enticements to be led astray or do something wrong. However, we know this cannot be a correct thought based on the words of James 1:13. This verse reads: “Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.” God does not tempt “with evil.” Another meaning attached to the word “tempt” is to “try,” “test,” or “prove.” It is in this sense that temptation is spoken of in our Key Verse. God does, indeed, prove us and allow try-

ing experiences to come to us. He even supervises these things, as borne out in our text. In none of this, however, does he ever entice us toward sin.

Satan is the true tempter of mankind to do evil, endeavoring to snare into wrong paths and wicked conduct. He also is the enemy of the followers of Christ,

and tries to draw us under his influence through our fallen human nature. As we see from the words of our text, however, the Heavenly Father is continually watching over us. He will help to keep us from falling if we are submissive to his leadings and are striving to be pleasing to him in all things.

To put on the character of Christ requires that we transform our minds from the fleshly to the spiritual. This transformation necessitates much in the way of testing and proving, and at times even “fiery trials,” so that our faith and depth of consecration can be fully ascertained before God. With this must come the realization that there is nothing of eternal value on this earth, or in our flesh, which we should desire. Paul said, “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”—Col. 3:2

In the next verse, we are told that our “life is hid with Christ in God.” (vs. 3) Our life is “hid with Christ” in the sense that the Heavenly Father’s plan for our testing and proving is being accomplished upon the basis of the ransom merit of Christ, which has justified us. By God’s grace “he hath made us accepted in the beloved.” (Eph. 1:6) Being thus accepted, we can claim the promise—“Now are we the sons of God.” (I John 3:2) In the next verse, John continues, “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” To benefit properly from the trials spoken of in our opening text, and to resist the temptations of the Adversary to sin, we must continually purify our hearts and minds, cleanse our conduct, and take heed to the “doctrine of Christ.”—II John 9

There is a direct relationship between faithfulness under trial, and sharing with our Lord Jesus in his future kingdom for blessing the human family. It is by our trials and testings at the present time that we are learning to become merciful and sympathetic high priests. Much mercy and sympathy will be necessary in the next age as mankind is gradually brought back to perfection of mind, heart, and character. ■