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**FROM GETHSEMANE TO CALVARY AND BEYOND**

## Vicar's ten - minute reflection FROM GETHSEMANE TO CALVARY AND BEYOND



It is so easy for many of us to forget the painful path Jesus had to take before we are able to sing the glorious hallelujahs of Easter. So in this article, I intend to take us through His experience in the garden of Gethsemane. All of the Twelve were in the garden. Nine were left in a group, while Jesus took the trio of Peter, James and John into a more private huddle. It was to those three that Jesus poured out His heart about the soul-wrenching anxiety that He was feeling. Vulnerability is costly. Sometimes, when I've shared something that is deeply personal while preaching, I walk away from the experience feeling raw and exposed, because I've allowed so many people into what is essentially a private space. But there are times when it's not appropriate to wear our hearts on our sleeves, but rather reserve our most intimate sharing for those who have proven to be faithful friends. Jesus was a dead man walking, and as He prepared Himself for the harrowing events of Easter, He made sure that His very best friends were around Him. When we walk through valleys full of deathly shadows, let's do the same. He said: "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death..." Mark 14:33-34.

**...they needed to understand that truth about prayer: to be declined does not mean that we have been ignored.**

It must surely have been part of the devastation that Jesus felt. Not only was He bearing the crushing burden of knowing what the next few days held for Him, but having poured His life into the Twelve for three years, answering their questions, modelling ministry, sorting out their squabbles, and correcting their blunders, now, He had hoped that His inner circle would stay alert and 'watch' with Him. But He was to be disappointed -repeatedly. Despite stirring them, and His call to them just to stay conscious, they fell asleep three times. There's something deeply sad about His finding them asleep for the second time. Mark sums up their moment of utter shame: "When he came back, he again found them sleeping, because their eyes were heavy. They did not know what to say to him." (Mark 14:40). It's comforting to know that Jesus sometimes experienced exasperation with His friends, as Matthew 17:14-21 records graphically. -->p3



Jesus wanted His closest friends to be prayerfully supporting Him, even though He wanted solitude too. But I wonder if He wanted them to be there as He *repeatedly* makes the same requests to the Father. There's something about tenacious asking that is not about wearing God out with our persistence, but is more about continually affirming what we believe. Every few minutes He repeats the same pleading with the Father. Sometimes it's that way with me. I tell the Lord what I want to stand for, what I believe, but then anxiety creeps up on me, and robs me of the clarity that I had just a few minutes earlier. Now I have to express it all over again. Three times, a hundred times, whatever it takes. This is not the 'babbling' with empty words that Jesus warned about in His great sermon, but a resolute method of repetition that shows that we mean business. There's nothing casual about our asking in this situation.

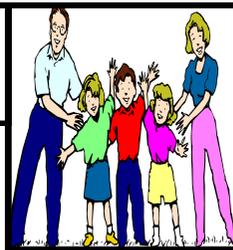
There was a maturity in the prayer that they would have witnessed, if only they had stayed awake. We know that Jesus was heard in Gethsemane but His prayer that the cup might pass from Him was not answered in the way He asked. If the trio were to have any hope of standing in the toughest times, they needed to understand that truth about prayer: **to be declined does not mean that we have been ignored.**

And Jesus was led to Calvary where He was crucified amongst 2 felons! One of the saddest verses in the Bible sums up the utter aloneness that Jesus felt, as all of His friends, including His inner circle, deserted Him, fleeing for their lives. Remember that Jesus faced His ordeal fully as a man. And His sense of being alone was to take Him to an even darker place. He sensed the abandonment of God the Father, and cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt.27:46). Even the two rogues being crucified along with Him mocked Him (Matt. 27:44).

Initially, it was boo boo from the two of them until the one on His right realised that Jesus was different. He was going to die anyway so what would he lose if he asked Jesus to take him along to wherever He was going! His song changed. He first rebuked His compatriot and asked Jesus to remember him and help him. -->p6

## **FAMILY LIFELINE**

### **HAVING GREAT FUN IN MARRIAGE**



"Couples who know how to play and have fun together develop a bonding that can carry them through the most difficult of times," writes Dr. Steve Stephens in his book, *Blueprints for a Solid Marriage*. King Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived knew the value of fun. In Ecclesiastes he advised, "Enjoy life with your wife...." Similarly, today's couples need to make time to enjoy each other. Yet most couples work too hard to really enjoy their life together," Stephens says. "They feel that if they aren't doing something useful, they are wasting time." He offers these suggestions to add more fun to your relationship.

#### **Make time for fun.**

With the hectic schedules that families have today, you need to remember to schedule time for fun. Declare one night of the week "date night," or carve out some time during the weekend to relax with your spouse. Mark it on your calendar, and protect that time slot. "If you wait until it's simple or convenient, you might have to wait a long time" says Stephens.

#### **Use variety to spice things up.**

"When people get older and when they've been married longer, they just become boring," Stephens says. "It's not that they mean to get boring, it's just that they haven't intentionally figured out what would be something fun to do." How can you avoid relationship boredom? Try something new together. Stephens says he and his wife take turns choosing what activity they will do on their date. When it is her turn to choose, he must do whatever she suggests. The next time they go out, he chooses the activity. "Therefore we try brand new things that we never would have tried before, and the rule is that we can't complain. We have to do it and have fun," he says. Trying something new can be an adventure that bonds you together as a couple. And you may discover a fun activity that you would have never thought you would enjoy.

#### **Spend time with other couples.**

Often, the friendships that spouses bring into the marriage are the relationships they have had with their single friends. -->p5

## **Family Lifeline - having great fun in marriage**

Although there is nothing wrong with this, Stephens says, single friends often don't share your "marriage" mentality or interests. They could inadvertently pull you away from your spouse rather than encourage the relationship. "If you find another couple that you can both click with, then you can go out and you can do these fun things together. What you are doing is supporting and encouraging the marriage," Stephens says. One of the best places to look for couples to hang out with, he says, is at your church. It can be awkward to be the first ones to initiate the relationship, but it doesn't need to be difficult. Suggest to the couple that they join you one night for dinner or for a movie. "There are a lot of couples out there that are just waiting to be asked," Stephens says.

### **Loan out the kids (just for a little while).**

Another advantage of developing friendships with other couples, especially if you both have kids, is that when you and your spouse do want a night alone, you can turn to your friends for your babysitting needs. Then, when they want a night out, you can offer to do the same for them. Perhaps the kids would also enjoy a night away from mom and dad.

### **Include the kids (sometimes).**

Having fun can also be a family affair. A lot of couples think because they have kids, they can't go out and enjoy themselves like they may have when they were first married. "When you add a couple more kids to the family, it really isn't that much more work," Stephens says. "Often, the kids will amuse each other, and it actually makes it easier. It's not as romantic but you can say, 'Hey, we are all going to go out and do this as a family'".

Load the kids up for a day at the park, or take them out for a picnic lunch. Have a game night at home, or watch a movie together. "A lot of times we use kids as the excuse," Stephens says, "but if you are creative, there are a lot of things you can do".

### **Do chores together.**

Even housework and garden work can be fun if you tackle it as a couple. -->p9

## **From Gethsemane to Calvary and beyond**

Continued from page 3

There and then, Jesus told him that, that very night he would be with Him in paradise! Even on the cross at Calvary, Jesus did not get preoccupied with His own pains, but had time to save another poor sinner!

After what seemed like an eternity, Jesus cried out with a loud voice "It is finished". The Father's mission is accomplished! The price for my sin is fully paid! The Man on the Cross has done what years of sacrifice of bulls and goats could not do. But while Jesus cried it is finished, Satan also must have been laughing his head off and saying his own "it is finished", as though he had frustrated God's plan of salvation.

He had been trying for centuries! For example: -He caused Cain to kill righteous Abel, but God gave Seth!. He caused Abraham in unbelief to bear Ishmael, but God miraculously gave Isaac. He caused Joseph's brothers to sell him as a slave to Egypt but God saved his whole family from starvation through Joseph's faithfulness! He caused David to sin worthy of death, but God gave him a repentant heart. He caused Herod to kill all the babies two years old and under but God directed Joseph to take baby Jesus to Egypt. Then he caused Judas to betray Christ, leading to the crucifixion of Jesus - and there was the triumph Satan had waited for - 5000 years of diabolical planning had paid off, and for three days Satan and his demons had a victory party! **But early on the third day, that first Easter day, Christ rose from the dead, and Satan was defeated! As usual, God always has the last laugh. See what the death and resurrection of Jesus has accomplished:**

### **THE POWER OF SIN IS BROKEN**

From the very beginning in the garden of Eden, man has been engaged in a battle against sin. Because we are descendants of Adam, we have inherited from him a tendency to do the things we know are wrong: Rom. 5:12 "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all have sinned." -->p7

## **From Gethsemane to Calvary and beyond**

Continued from page 6

Sometimes we don't even want to sin, because we know it is harmful to our well-being; and yet we can't seem to get the victory, because its influence over us is so strong! Paul describes this conflict in Rom. 7:15, 18-19, 24 "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do....For I know that in me (that is, in my sinful nature) nothing good dwells... The answer to Paul's question is this: Jesus Christ has triumphed over sin by His resurrection! He and He alone can deliver us! (v. 25 "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!")

By His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ provided a way by which our sin can be removed; yet it is by His resurrection (together with His blood) that God can declare us perfectly righteous in Him. Not only does the resurrection of Christ deal with our sin positionally, but also practically. As believers in Christ, we can have daily victory over sin because of Christ's resurrection. In Phil. 3:10, Paul prayed: "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection...". The resurrection power of Christ is available to every believer to make us more like Jesus; if we would but draw upon it by faith!

**After what seemed like an eternity, Jesus cried out with a loud voice "It is finished". The Father's mission is accomplished! The price for my sin is fully paid! The Man on the Cross has done what years of sacrifice of bulls and goats could not do.**

### **VICTORY OVER THE SECOND DEATH**

Because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, physical death to us is but an entrance into glory! Paul said in 2 Cor. 5:8 "We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord." To the believer in Christ, the grave is but a "flower pot out of which a beautiful Easter Lily will bloom!" So, for those of us who have received Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Saviour, the second death, or eternal separation from God, is not possible. -->**p8**

## From Gethsemane to Calvary and beyond

Rev. 20:6 "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years" (and then for all eternity).

If you have never trusted Christ alone for your salvation, you must believe that He died and rose again for you and invite Him to take control of your life. **At the moment you commit your life to Him, three things will happen: 1. Your sin will be removed; 2. The Holy Spirit will come to dwell in your heart as your protection against Satan; 3. You will have eternal life and will never die spiritually!** ("He that has the Son has life..." 1Jn. 5:12a). **WHAT AN EXCHANGE! Our sin for Christ's righteousness! Our weakness for Christ's power! Our death for Christ's life!**

Dele Agbelusi

### Acrostic for "ALIVE"

**A**-cknowledge your identification with Christ in His death and resurrection.

**L**-et Him live His life through you.

**I**-nvite His Spirit to fill you.

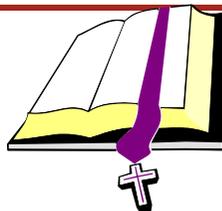
**V**-erify His resurrection by fellowshiping with Him each day.

**E**-xpect daily victory over sin and Satan

### MEMORY VERSE

"He is not here, but He has risen. Remember how He spoke to you while He was still in Galilee, saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again".

**Luke 24:6-7**



## **Family Lifeline - having great fun in marriage**

Continued from page 5

Whether it is cooking a meal, washing dishes, or working in the garden, doing the job with your spouse can make it less mundane. "You can chat while you are doing this," Stephens says. "You can have fun. It gets done a lot faster, and it's not as boring".

Working on household chores together also helps couples resist resentment that can sometimes build up if one person feels they do more work around the house than the other one does. "If you are both working at the same time," Stephens says, "if you work together and then play together, then there's no resentment".

### **Fun doesn't have to be expensive.**

Many couples think they can't afford to have fun, but they don't have to spend a lot of money to enjoy time together. Anything can be fun," Stephens says. "One of the easiest things to do is to say we're going to get a DVD tonight, and then we are going to fix some popcorn and cuddle up on the couch to have an in-house date."

In *Blueprints for a Solid Marriage*, he offers other affordable ideas:

Take in a sunset. Learn a new card game together. Listen to your favourite CD. Play charades. Talk in rhyme for one hour. Walk in the moonlight. Write a romantic poem together.

### **Let the fun begin!**

Whatever activity you choose, keep in mind that the main objective is to have fun. Resist the temptation to fill the time with conversation about work, bills, or to-do lists. Use the time to enjoy your spouse.

Remember, this time is just as important as anything else you do for your family. Start today and play your way to a healthier and happier marriage.

Belinda Elliott

**Working on household chores together also helps couples resist resentment that can sometimes build up if one person feels they do more work around the house than the other one does.**

## **ARE YOU BOB OR HAL? CHECK IT OUT**

Bob has gone to church all of his life. He thinks of himself as being a very religious man. Bob is in his mid-sixties. He has lived a full life. He hasn't let religion spoil his fun. In fact, although Bob is religious, he has no king. He has no lord. Well, that's not quite true. He does. There is only one problem: Bob's king's name is Bob. He goes through the forms of religious practice. He wouldn't miss church on Palm Sunday. Right now, he is sitting through the last five minutes of some preacher's sermon somewhere.

Bob's problem is that Bob has committed himself to himself instead of to Jesus Christ. Bob is his own lord. He gets turned off by emotional preaching that talks about hell. He wants soothing talk about heaven. He hates preaching that quotes from the Bible. He wants comforting talk about psychology. He wants no mention of sin from the pulpit. According to him, "That went out of style with the middle ages". My friend Bob gets turned off when he sees Jesus the Messiah, the humble King, coming his way.

**Bob's problem is that Bob has committed himself to himself instead of to Jesus Christ.**

Then there is Hal. Hal was a cynic. He had every reason to not believe. His life was loaded with doubts. "How in the world could God become a man? How could an intelligent person trust the Bible?"

Yes, there is a difference between Bob and Hal. Whereas Bob ran the other direction every time Jesus began to come his way, Hal stopped. Hal took a good look, a long look, into the eyes of the prophesied King. He let those eyes probe his religious pretension. He let that penetrating glance cut through the smoke screen of his doubt.

He was willing to doubt his doubts. He was willing to go back to the drawing board and read some of the great writers of the Christian faith. A scientist by profession, Hal was willing to empirically examine the claims of Christ intellectually and to experiment with them in his own life existentially. He took Jesus at His Word, only to discover this One to be his Lord and Saviour. Is your name Bob? Or is your name Hal? -->**p13**

## GOD HAS A POSITIVE ANSWER

YOU SAY	GOD SAYS	BIBLE VERSES
You say: "It's impossible"	God says: All things are possible	(Luke 18:27)
You say: "I'm too tired"	God says: I will give you rest	(Matthew 11:28-30)
You say: "Nobody really loves me"	God says: I love you	(John 3:1 6 & John 3:34 )
You say: "I can't go on"	God says: My grace is sufficient	(II Corinthians 12:9 & Psalm 91:15)
You say: "I can't figure things out"	God says: I will direct your steps	(Proverbs 3:5- 6)
You say: "I can't do it"	God says: You can do all things	(Philippians 4:13)
You say: "I'm not able"	God says: I am able	(II Corinthians 9:8)
You say: "It's not worth it"	God says: It will be worth it	(Roman 8:28 )
You say: "I can't forgive myself"	God says: I forgive you	(I John 1:9 & Romans 8:1)
You say: "I can't manage"	God says: I will supply all your needs	(Philippians 4:19)
You say: "I'm afraid"	God says: I have not given you a spirit of fear	(II Timothy 1:7)
You say: "I'm always worried and frustrated"	God says: Cast all your cares on ME	(I Peter 5:7)
You say: "I'm not smart enough"	God says: I give you wisdom	(I Corinthians 1:30)
You say: "I feel all alone"	God says: I will never leave you or forsake you	(Hebrews 13:5)

Submitted by E. A. Ogunbusuyi

## **INFAMOUS INDULGENCE LED TO REFORMATION**

Warlike Pope Julius II died in 1513, and his successor, Giovanni de' Medici, took the name Pope Leo X. If Julius loved to fight, Leo preferred amusement. His self-indulgence destroyed the unity of the western church when he bartered sin for money in the most infamous indulgence of church history. From birth Leo had been earmarked for the church. At the age of seven he was made a monk. By thirteen he was a cardinal. In between, the boy had been abbot. He became pope before turning forty.

His tastes were costly. He was only too happy to spend lavishly on himself and voluptuous entertainment. Humanists with few morals swarmed at a papal court where wit mattered more than witness. Plays and shows, ballets and games abounded. No chance for a hunt was turned down. The papal treasury funded preeminent artists such as Raphael. Julius left a full treasury. Leo drained it in eight short years.

St. Peter's Basilica was being rebuilt, but there was no money. Leo decided to solve the problem in time-honored fashion. On March 15, 1517 he declared that anyone who contributed to the cathedral would be granted an indulgence. Although in theory an indulgence was only a remission of penalties meted out in this world by the church, in practice it was hawked as if it covered the actual guilt of sins and could release souls from purgatory.

The gist of the indulgence was as follows:

"...[I] absolve you ...from all thy sins, transgressions, and excesses, how enormous soever they be...and remit to you all punishment which you deserve in purgatory on their account and I restore you...to the innocence and purity which you possessed at baptism; so that when you die the gates of punishment shall be shut... and if you shall not die at present, this grace shall remain in full force when you are at the point of death."

Sent to preach the indulgence in Germany was a Dominican named Tetzl. Tetzl got above himself in his promises, implying that the indulgence even covered the future sins which the buyer was now harboring in his heart. Frederick the Wise refused to allow the indulgence to be preached in his territory of Saxony, mostly because he was reluctant to allow Saxon coin to leave his financially-depleted realm. -->p13

## **Infamous indulgence led to Reformation**

Continued from page 12

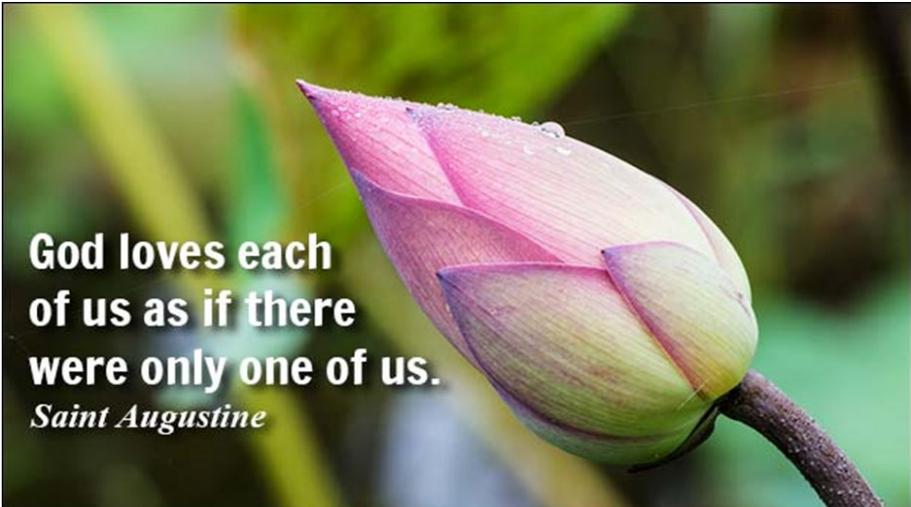
Tetzel came as near the border of Saxony as he could. Folk from Wittenberg crossed over and bought the prized papers. Afterwards a few doubted the efficacy of the writs. They solicited the opinion to a middle aged monk named Martin Luther. Luther refused to confirm their value. Instead, in an accepted tradition, he posted theses for debate on the door of Wittenberg castle church where a large crowd was expected. The sequel is well known. From those ninety-five theses the Reformation was born when Leo refused to see a problem with the disgraceful sales.

**Dan Graves, MSL**

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### **Are you Bob or Hal**

Your King has come and He is beckoning on you now. He is ready to look straight into your eyes. Are you ready for His glance? That glance demands a verdict. He wants to know whether or not He truly is your King, your Sovereign. Will you shift your glance away, or will there be that nod of affirmation which comes from one who is loyal in allegiance to the King of all kings, the Lord of all lords -- your King and your Lord?



**God loves each  
of us as if there  
were only one of us.**

*Saint Augustine*

## LAUGHTER LINES

### FATHER MURPHY

Father Murphy walked into a pub and said to the first man he met, "Do you want to go to heaven?" The man replied, "I do Father." The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall." Then the priest asked a second man, "Do you want to go to heaven?" "Certainly, Father," was the man's reply. The priest said, "Then stand over there against the wall." Then Father Murphy walked up to O'Toole and said, "Do you want to go to heaven?" O'Toole said, "No, I don't Father." The priest said, "I don't believe this. You mean to tell me that when you die you don't want to go to heaven?" O'Toole said, "Oh, when I die, yes. I thought you were getting a group together to go right now."



### AN ATHEIST

A young woman teacher with obvious liberal tendencies explains to her class of small children that she is an atheist. She asks her class if they are atheists too. Not really knowing what atheism is, but wanting to be like their teacher, their hands explode into the air like fleshy fireworks. There is, however, one exception. A girl named Lucy has not gone along with the crowd. The teacher asks her why she has decided to be different. "Because I'm not an atheist." "Then," asks the teacher, "What are you?" "I'm a Christian." The teacher is a little perturbed now, her face slightly red. She asks Lucy why she is a Christian. "Well, I was brought up knowing and loving Jesus. My mom is a Christian, and my dad is a Christian, so I am a Christian." The teacher is now angry. "That's no reason," she says loudly. "What if your mom was a moron, and you dad was a moron. What would you be then?" A pause, and a smile. "Then," says Lucy, "I'd be an atheist!"

### GOOD SERMON!

After a very long and boring sermon the parishioners filed out of the church saying nothing to the preacher. Towards the end of the line was a thoughtful person who always commented on the sermons. "Pastor, today your sermon reminded me of the peace and love of God!" The pastor was thrilled. "No-one has ever said anything like that about my preaching before. Tell me why." "Well - it reminded me of the Peace of God because it passed all understanding and the Love of God because it endured forever!"

# LAUGHTER LINES

## THE PASTOR

There was a terrible blizzard and it was snowing and snowing all weekend. Sunday morning came and the Pastor saw that the snow had reached his window. He didn't think anyone would be coming to church this morning, but he felt obliged to go anyway. The pastor fought his way through the icy wind and snow to get next door to the church. He waited in the sanctuary, reading, for ten minutes. He was about to go when the door opened, and a man staggered through.

"Hello!" said the pastor. "Church will have to be cancelled today. You're the only one who has come." The man replied, "Reverend, if you had a big herd of sheep, and only one came home that night to feed, would you still feed him?" The pastor was amazed and cried, "Yes! I would!" He then was filled with the spirit, and decided to preach the best sermon ever. He talked and talked about all of life's trials and joys. He referred to passages from Genesis to Job, Psalms to John, Acts to Revelation. He did so with profound excitement and conviction. This went on for a long time. After the minister had come to his final conclusion, he went down and talked to the other man. "Did that satisfy you, sir?" he asked happily. The man replied, "Reverend, if you had a herd of sheep and only one came home that night to feed, would you make sure he ate the whole bale of hay!?"

## SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

One day a group of scientists got together and decided that man had come a long way and no longer needed God. They picked one scientist to go and tell Him that they were done with Him. The scientist walked up to God and said, "God, we've decided that we no longer need you. We're at the point that we can clone people and do many miraculous things, so why don't you just go on and get lost." God listened patiently and kindly to the man and, after the scientist was done talking, God said, "Very well! How about this? Let's have a man-making contest."

To which the man replied, "OK, great!" But God added, "Now we're going to do this just like I did back in the old days with Adam." The scientist said, "Sure, no problem" and bent down and grabbed himself a handful of dirt. God just looked at him and said, "No, no, no. You go get your own dirt!"

## **Lead us not to temptation but deliver us from evil**

### **Conclusion on series on Lord's Prayer**

To modern ears, the word *tempt* is always a bad word; it always means to *seek to seduce into evil*. But in its New Testament usage, **to tempt people is not so much to seek to seduce them into sin as it is to test their strength and their loyalty and their ability for service**. In the Old Testament, we read the story of how God tested the loyalty of Abraham by seeming to demand the sacrifice of his only son Isaac. In the Authorized Version, the story begins: 'And it came to pass that God did *tempt* Abraham' (Genesis 22:1). Obviously the word *tempt* cannot there mean to seek to seduce into sin, for that is something that God would never do. It means rather to submit to a test of loyalty and obedience.

### **How and why does God Test Christians?**

God tests His people by putting them in situations that reveal the quality and sincerity of their faith and devotion, so that all can see what is in their hearts. God allows the trial to be His method of purifying the believer as metal is purified in the refiner's crucible. He strengthens their patience, matures their Christian character and He leads them into an enhanced assurance of His love for them. Through faithfulness in times of trial men become "approved" in God's sight.

### **How and Why Does Satan Test Christians?**

**Satan tests God's people by manipulating circumstances, within the limits that God allows him, in an attempt to make them desert God's will.** Christians must constantly be watchful and active against the devil, for he is always at work trying to make us fall. There are four main schemes that Satan uses to succeed in the destruction of Christians:

He tries to crush us under the weight of hardship or pain.

He tries to urge us toward a wrong fulfilment of natural desires.

He tries to make us complacent, careless and self-assertive.

He tries to misrepresent God to us and create false ideas of His truth and His will. Matthew 4:5 demonstrates that Satan can even quote (and misapply) Scripture for this purpose. -->**p17**

## **Lead us not to temptation but deliver us from evil**

Continued from page 16

It is one of the tragic facts of life that temptations can come to us from those who love us; and of all kinds of temptation, this is the hardest to fight. It comes from people who love us and who have not the slightest intention of harming us. Can you find any examples of this in real life?

Nothing gives temptation its chance like over-confidence. At our weakest and at our strongest points, we must be on our guard. Can you give examples of how we could succumb to temptation at our strongest points? Weakest points?

### **Defence against temptation from the evil one**

Some people might be perfectly willing to pay the price of sin if that price affected only them. But if they remember that their sin will break someone else's heart, they will have a strong defence against temptation. There is also the defence of *the presence of Jesus Christ*. Jesus is not a figure in a book; He is a living presence.

Sometimes we ask: 'What would you do, if you suddenly found Christ standing beside you? How would you live, if Jesus Christ was a guest in your house?'

But the whole point of the Christian faith is that Jesus Christ is beside us, and he is a 'guest' in every home. His is the inescapable presence, and therefore, we must make all life fit for him to see. We have a strong defence against temptation in the memory of the continual presence of Jesus Christ.

In James 1:13 we read : "When tempted, no one should say, 'God is tempting me.' For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone" As we have seen, the word *temptation* can mean to entice to do wrong, but it can also mean to put to the test. The same experience can be both a temptation to do wrong and a test of our commitment to do right. Satan, the evil one, wants us to fail the test and sin; God gives us everything we need to pass the test and, as a result, strengthen our walk of obedience.

## WHAT'S ON 12 APRIL- 10 MAY

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Order</u>	<u>Theme</u>	<u>Texts</u>
12/04	1030hrs.	(MP)	<b>YOU MUST EXPERIENCE IT TO TELL IT</b>	Acts 4:32-35 1 John 1:1-3
	1700 hrs	(EW)	<b>GOD'S "STUPIDITY?"</b>	1 Cor. 1: 18-2:5
19/04	1030hrs.	(MP)	<b>WE ARE LIVING WITNESSES</b>	Acts 3:1-19
	1700hrs.	(EW)	<b>NO EVENING SERVICE</b>	
26/04	1030hrs	(HC)	<b>PRIVILEGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b>	1 John 3:1-24 John 10:11-18
	1700hrs	(EW)	<b>WISDOM &amp; ITS SECRET</b>	1 Cor. 2: 6-16
03/05	1030hrs	(MP)	<b>LOVE IN ACTION</b>	1 John 4:7-21
	1700hrs.	(EW)	<b>NO EVENING SERVICE</b>	
10/05	1030hrs.	(HC)	<b>THAT YOU MAY KNOW</b>	1 John 5:9-15 John 15:9-17
	1700hrs.	(EW)	<b>WHAT DO YOU HAVE THAT YOU'VE NOT RECEIVED</b>	1 Cor. 4: 1-21

**Note:** (HC) - indicates Holy Communion (Common Worship); (MP) - Morning Prayer; (EW) - Evening Worship (AA/FS) - All Age/Parade /Family Service; (HA)- Healing and Anointing. (SW) - Service of the Word. There is Holy Communion Service every Sunday at 8am using the Book of Common Prayer except where otherwise directed.

### QUOTABLE QUOTES

God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, 'I love you.' **Billy Graham**

Easter is very important to me, it's a second chance.

**Reba McEntire**

# HEAVENLY CORRESPONDENCE

**E-MAIL FROM GOD (38)**

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From: **GOD, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER**

To: **You, My beloved child**

I tried keeping rules and working my head off to please God, and it didn't work. So I quit being a "law man" so that I could be God's man.

Subject: **LEARN TO BE A LOVE RECEIVER**

Dear Child,

Unless you can obey every law down to the last letter, you can't say that you've kept the law. And no one can keep every letter of every law. So no man can make it as a law keeper. You can't get in good with Me by working hard enough either.

So if you can't earn you way into My heart by being good enough or working hard enough, what can you do? You can only be mine by accepting and embracing My love. I've made it so simple that it actually makes some people mad. They'd rather do something for Me than receive what I've done for them. They'd rather give Me something than receive the gift I have for them.

The truth remains: you can only be God's man or woman when you learn to be a love receiver.

Your Father,  
God

Adapted from 'e-mail from God for Teens'-Clonigers

**TEXT FOR THE YEAR (Isaiah 41:10. NLT)**

**Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.**

**FINDING OUT ABOUT ...CHRIST CHURCH?**

**Tel/Fax: 020 8340 1566**

We are a family of men and women, boys and girls who are resolved to live for God in a world that has largely chosen to ignore Him.

We believe that it is God's world and that He has given the answer to all human problems in Jesus Christ. As a body of believers, we offer to all who come, regular opportunities for worship and service that point the way to God as our strongest resource in all aspects of life.

We will be pleased to welcome you to any of our activities.  
You will find a warm welcome at Christ Church.

**Times of worship and fellowship are shown below:**

- Sunday** - **8.00 am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)  
- **10.30 am.** Main service with Crèche facilities  
There is an all-age/parade service once every month - usually the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated.  
- **5.00 pm.** Evening worship

**WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE**

- Monday** Prayer meeting in church - 20th April, 18th May  
**Wednesday** - Fellowship Meal in church (6:30 pm) followed by, Bible Fellowship (7.15 pm)  
**Thursday** - Homework Club (5pm -7pm)  
**Friday** - Scouts meeting in church and hall (6.00 pm)  
- Music Team practice in choir vestry (6.00 pm)  
**Saturday** - Intercessors prayer meeting in church (7-8 pm)  
**Enquiry/Counselling/Prayer Lifeline** - please phone 020 8340 1566  
**Editorial Board:** Sheila Wheeler, Iyabo Agbelusi, Dele Agbelusi, Jibola Fapohunda  
**Vicar:** - Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi  
**Church Wardens:** Peter Green, Jibola Fapohunda, Charles Murphy  
**Licensed Lay Ministers:** Richard Mercer, Iyabo Agbelusi  
Safeguarding: Christabel Oshodi  
**Organist:** Position vacant

**YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME**

**PLEASE WRITE TO THE EDITOR AT:**

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