

Our Young People

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BY AMOS R. WELLS.

HOW MAY I OVERCOME MY TEMPTATIONS?

I Cor. 10: 12, 13; Heb. 4: 14-16.

Certainly it is no disgrace to be tempted, since our Lord was tempted. Temptations the most foul beset the very best of men. Indeed, as Rev. F. B. Meyer says, "When you live nearest to God, you will be most tempted of the devil. Some men think they are most holy because they are not tempted. I should not believe in your holiness if you were not tempted." It is not the desert, but the rich and fruitful lands, that the enemy tries to conquer.

Many temptations are simply God testing us. As some one has said, it is like your testing of a coin. You ring it on the table, you bite it or file it, or put a drop of acid on it. You do not want to destroy it. You would be sorry to find the coin spurious; you would be so much the poorer. So with God in these testing times; he does not want to destroy us, but to save us.

"Temptations are a file," says Fene- lon, "which rub off the rust of self-confidence." They are much more than that, when rightly used; they are iron to the blood and steel to the backbone.

All this is true, however, only of God's testings and not of the devil's temptings. Phillips Brooks wisely warns us that "only those temptations which we encounter in the path of duty, in the path of consecration, only those our Lord promised we should conquer. If you are in temptation for temptation's sake, for no other purpose beyond it, you are lost."

When God sends temptations, he will "with the temptation also make a way to escape." The way to escape is along the line of the temptation, but in the opposite direction. That is, as Mr. Meyer says, "if you are tempted to impatience, claim patience; if tempted to weakness, claim strength." Extract from your temptation its opposite grace.

But some temptations are like the pattings on the neck with which the butcher lures the witless ox to his destruction. There is only one thing to do with regard to them, and that is to run away.

Such temptations are of the evil one. We are to regard them as the little girl did, who stole the peach. Soon the child was seen to come pattering back and replace the peach, while she exclaimed

triumphantly, "That's one for you, Mr. Devil."

The same sentiment is also illustrated by the experience of a foolish young man who gambled until he thought he had lost his all. He discovered, however, a hundred dollar bill in his pocket, and was about to stake it in one play when he noticed the greedy look of the dealer fixed upon it. At once he twisted the bill, thrust it into the gas jet, and watched it burn.

The poor fellow could no longer trust himself with money, and he had not learned to put his trust in the One who was tempted like as we are, yet without sin. In his strength, he could have kept his hundred dollars, and walked home a free man.

Now if it be our purpose

To walk where Christ has led,

To follow in his footsteps

With ever careful tread,

O let this be our watchword,

A watchword pure and true,

To ask in each temptation,

"What would Jesus do?"



KNOWLEDGE IN DOCTRINE.

What does the average number of our societies (or of our churches, for that matter,) know regarding the principal doctrines as accepted by the whole Catholic Church? No doctrinal teaching means in every case, under ordinary conditions, a boneless back.

How large a percentage of our members are able to write out a clear, concise intelligent definition of any of the articles of the Apostle's Creed? What kind of a definition would be generally given of such doctrines as repentance, regeneration, justification, faith, pardon, sanctification, consecration, etc.? How many of our members are able to defend such essential truths as our Lord's deity, inspiration of the Bible, atonement, the work of the Holy Spirit, etc.? Weak doctrinal knowledge usually means a weak spiritual life.

How many of our members possess a healthy, well-defined, strong, intelligent, workable ideal of Christian life, to attain which they are earnestly agonizing? Of course such expressions as "I wish to be like Jesus," "I am trying to follow Christ," "My prayer is, Nearer my God to Thee," etc., are common, far too common, when we ask, what do such expressions mean in actual life? What progress is being made by those who have used such expressions for many years? What powers do these desires have upon daily life? Tens of thousands are living, month after month, year after year, with no perceptible advancement in spiritual life. One reason for this being no clear-cut, definite, wholesome ideal to follow.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE.

If these things are as briefly outlined (and the writer knows this is too generally the case) the remedy is in our hands, as members of the young people's organization. Something ought to be done in all our societies to teach Catholic doctrine, Christian ideals, how to do personal work, how to understand and to use the Bible, how to defend our faith in its essentials, how to become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, how to make ourselves efficient in the service of our glorious and ever blessed Lord.—E. G. Wesley, in *Free Baptist Banner*.

When Your Church Holds Special Meetings.

During the winter months many of the churches to which you young people belong will hold special services. In connection with these extra meetings, a question arises that our young people's society has to answer. In addition to the weekly prayer-meeting, many of these societies have a reading circle, regular social gatherings, a Bible class, and similar interests. Shall these be maintained throughout the weeks when the church is called to special consecration for a special work? Or, shall they be discontinued for the time being?

Many will say, "A properly conducted social is not antagonistic to the very highest Christian development." Others, "The reading of good literature is a necessary part of our training." While some will plead for the Bible class, holding that increased and careful study of the Bible among young Christians is one of the most encouraging signs of the times. But when all has been said, the fact remains that our strength and leisure are necessarily limited. We cannot do half a dozen things at once, no matter how earnest and energetic we may be. We should never accomplish anything if we did not choose between conflicting interests and devote ourselves to the one which seems most worthy.

The broadening out of the society work is commendable. The enlarging of its interests provides scope for the varied talents of the different workers, and helps to develop symmetrically all who come under its influence. But when the church sets apart a special time for a special work, and summons her sons and daughters to her aid, it is not fitting that the young people should be too wrapped up in their own interests to respond. Let everything of less importance be set aside while all the strength and enthusiasm of the society rallies to support the hosts of Christ in their charge against evil.—*Young People's Weekly*.



HER BIRTHDAY.

Honor the dear old mother and make your love plain to her. Doubtless she is the object of much tender love and holy reverence. But have you manifested your affections as plainly as you should? You feel a worthy pride in her long and useful career. But to her own retrospect, life's history is largely a record of failure; of efforts defeated and anticipations unfulfilled. She needs encouragement. Let her hear the praise that you feel she deserves. It will not make her vain, but may give her needed comfort. Let her have all the help of all sorts that love can bring her.

A lady who spent some time among the peasants of the Tyrol, writes the following:

"The morning after our arrival we were awakened by the sound of a violin and flutes under the window, and hurrying down found the little house adorned as for a feast—garlands over the doors and wreathing a high chair which was set in state. The table was already covered with gifts, brought by the young people whose music we had heard. The whole neighborhood was kinsfolk, and these gifts came from uncles and cousins in every far-off degree. They were very simple, for the donors are poor—knitted gloves, a shawl, baskets of flowers, jars of fruits, loaves of bread; but upon all some little message of love was pinned. 'Is there a bride in the house?' I asked of my landlord. 'O, no,' he said. 'We do not make such a bother

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about our young people. It is grandmother's birthday.

"The grandmother, in her spectacles, white apron and high velvet cap, was a heroine all day, sitting in state to receive visits and dealing out slices from a sweet loaf to each one who came."—*The New World*.



MANNERS WHEN AT CHURCH.

No, your manners in church are very bad. And shall I tell to whom you are rude? To God himself. You have no right to saunter lazily up the aisle of the house dedicated to him.

You have no right to move about, arranging, stroking, and straightening your gown; your manners should be quiet and in good order.

You have no right, during the time the hymn is sung, to carefully observe the bonnets and wraps of the congregation.

You have no right to discuss the sermon as you walk down the aisle. The preacher has done his best, and in the name of God, and you have no right to criticize him.

You wonder if you have committed all these sins—and you do not believe you have. My dear, think it over, and you will find one or two may be laid at your door. Only little faults, only little rudeness—but to the Kings of kings!

Every time we consent to sin the curtain drops and the warm rays from heaven are cut off from our hearts. And then comes frost.—*Selected*.