

## 8 GOD PUTS ARMOR ON US AND THEN PROVES IT

Pain brings patience. Peril teaches courage. We learn, not by reading so much as by doing; not by hearing, but by attempting and enduring. We dig for roots, and find gold. We fish for oysters, and find pearls. Our richest revenue, our most inestimable reward, is to grow into likeness to Christ.—Dr. Storrs.

Our temptations, or testings, are the "examination committee" by which our advancement in spiritual knowledge is brought out or proved. God's tests of our Christian graces and character act in two ways: they prove the integrity of our purpose and faith, and they verify to us his own faithfulness. He is especially aiming to do one thing for us; that is, to make us "sincere". "Behold thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." His tests are all directed to prove our "secret self".—J. M. B.

There are stakes, and racks, and dungeons that men must endure in these days. They contain the very quintessence of torture. The man who contends for the Lord's day, who advocates a spiritual morality, who follows Christ openly, and not simply as a Joseph of Arimathea or a Nicodemus, knows their power. The young man has to face them when he comes into a great city, and is sneered at as fresh and verdant because he refuses to go where the wine-glass is tipped and the gambler snares his victim and "the strange woman flattereth with her words." No man but he who has had to endure it knows the cruelty of a sneer. It burns like fire. It hurts like the thumb-screw. He must be "strong and of good courage" who spurns it all and follows Christ. Without courage he will be flattered or frightened out of his purpose.—J. R. Day, D.D.

## FULL SURRENDER TO GOD THE ONLY GROUND OF SAFETY

Here is work for the saints, to stand a warning against this worldly, frothy tinsel, jewel and jingle—dance and card-play and novel-reading religion, and then and there to demonstrate the power of Christ to save, in your own experience. And then to do all in the spirit of meekness, of patience and charity.

Your graces will be tried; you will be made to feel that you are not wanted, as you are an old foggy; and then, withal, you are "a disturbing element", you muss up the pretty things and pretty feelings. You won't speak the newly invented Shibboleth at all. How Young America hates these unalterable, these who persist in the old religion of their fathers; just as if everybody did not know of the late improvements in religion.—B. P.

You know very well whether you are a professed Christian or not; you know very well that the dividing line between the Church and the world to-day is—like the equator, or the arctic or antarctic circle—an imaginary line, and that there are men and women sworn of God who sit discussing infinitesimal questions: "Shall we dance? Shall we play cards? Shall we go to the theatre? Shall we attend the opera?" while there are five hundred millions of the race going down to darkness unwarned. These sham Christians will go on, occasionally taking a little religion with the tip end of their fingers, sauntering on lazily towards the bar of Christ, until they come in front of God's swift revolving mill, and find themselves to be "the chaff which the wind driveth away". Oh, how much dead-wood we have in all our churches. The day

of judgment will make a fearful thinning out among professed Christians.—T.

The Autobiography of the late Anthony Trollope contains a passage well worthy the consideration of every young man and woman. Here it is: "The regions of absolute vice are foul and odious. The savor of them, till custom has hardened the palate and the nose, is disgusting. In these he will hardly tread. But there are outskirts on these regions, in which sweet-smelling flowers seem to grow and grass to be green. It is in these border-lands that the danger lies." This is true, and it is also a truth not to be gained that at the entrance to these border-lands Satan stands robed as an angel of light, to woo the young, with flattering words, to taste, not the vices, O no! but the seemingly harmless pleasures of sin. It is not to drunkenness, but only to the single glass of sparkling wine that he invites; not to the abode of avowed profligacy, but to the parlor cotillion; not to the gambling table, but to the friendly game of cards at some private fireside; not to the companionship of prodigals, but to the fascinating theatrical performance; not to the crime of absolute dishonesty, but to some hidden trick of trade or speculation. It is only to a little thing, a momentary indulgence, the plucking of a rose within the charmed enclosure, that the hypocritical devil tempts. What he really seeks is to make the tempted one false to himself, to duty, and to God. The prize the tempter wants is that soul's *innocence*. What the tempted one needs in that critical moment is incorruptible loyalty, proving itself true in a little thing; power to stand immovable against the beginning of evil, to refuse to take one step into that border-land whose farther side is hell.—Zion's Herald.

## ROBS DEATH OF ITS STING, AND THE GRAVE OF ITS VICTORY

"Oh, those rays of glory!" said Mrs. Clarkson when dying. "My God, I come flying to thee!" said Lady Alice Lucy. Lady Hastings said, "Oh, the greatness of the glory that is revealed to me!" "Oh, sweet dying!" said Mrs. Talbot, of Reading. "If this be dying", said Lady Glenorchy, "it is the pleasantest thing imaginable." "Victory, victory, through the blood of the Lamb!" said Grace Bennett. "I shall go to my Father this night", said Lady Huntingdon. The dying injunction of the mother of the Wesleys was, "Children, when I am gone, sing a song of praise to God." "Though a pilgrim walking in the valley, the mountain-tops are gleaming from peak to peak", said Miss Florence A. Foster.—Foster's Cy.

When we returned from Italy some years ago, the Mont Cenis Tunnel was newly opened, and we reckoned that it must be a dreary passage. We thought it must be very dark, and therefore we had better be provided with a candle. It would be damp and close, and therefore we reckoned upon closing every window, for fear we should breathe the impure air. So we speculated; but when we traversed that wonderful passage the carriages were well lighted, and much of the tunnel also, and we sat with open windows, finding it as easy to breathe as on the mountain side. It was a joy rather than a peril to pass through the dreaded tunnel. So shall the voyager along the good old way find that death is not what he dreams. Jesus will light the darksome way, and the soul will need no candle of earth; fresh breezes from glory shall drive away the death-damps, and the music of angels shall make the heart forgetful of all pain. How can the good old way lead into danger? What can it conduct us to but eternal rest?—Spurgeon.

## UNION OF CHURCH AND WORLD IMPOSSIBLE

"Forty saloons are less hurtful to spiritual life in a village of six thousand souls than three dancing churches which claim to stand for Protestant and spiritual Christianity."

There is a great difference between being in the world, and having the world in us: let a ship be "in" the water, and it's all right; but let the water be in the ship and down she goes.—Moody

The Moon in an eclipse complained to the Sun, "Why dost thou not shine upon me as usual?" The Sun replied, "I am shining as I always do; why do you not enjoy my light as usual?" "Ah! I see", replied the Moon; "the Earth has come between us." Are you in a spiritual eclipse? Do you not detect the cause?

Perhaps some reader of this paragraph may wonder why he or she makes no progress toward a better life. You often think about it, often make good resolutions, and perhaps some earnest prayers. Yet all the time you are holding fast to your sins, unwilling to cut loose from them. I have seen a steamer at the wharf start its engine, and while the propeller was churning the water at the stern, the vessel did not move. A stout hauser held it to the pier; as soon as the rope was "cast off" the steamer started. That vessel was not "well put" for its voyage until it was detached from the wharf, and could use its motive power unhindered. I do not care what be the sin that holds you back, so that it keeps your soul from a full, honest surrender to Jesus Christ. Cost what it may, make a clean breast of it in confession to God, and clean work of it in confession to God, and clean work of it in renouncing the sin. You cannot cling to your sins and cling to your Savior too. Up to this time you have failed, and you will continue to fail as long as you try to "serve two masters." At the very point where the Holy Spirit is pressing your soul up to a duty, there you must yield. When Jesus pressed close on the young ruler with the demand to sell his estate and come and follow him, the young man *drew back*. "Sorrowful" he may have been, but he would not cut loose from his selfishness.—T. L. C.

## AN ADDRESS TO UNWILLING BELIEVERS

(By Rev. Alfred Cookman)

There are some of you who are not willing to perform certain duties; not willing, for instance, to speak or pray aloud; not willing to approach and appeal to certain friends on the subject of religion, and the reason or explanation of this unwillingness, as you insist, is your inability. You say: "I would, if I could, but really I cannot. I have not that power." Now, let me say, the reverse of this is also true; you cannot, because you will not. You have not the ability because you are wanting in the willingness. Do you remember the case of the man with a withered arm? Suppose, when Jesus bade him stretch it forth, he had refused. The consequence would have been fatal to the restoration of his arm. Do you remember the case of St. Paul? Had he been an unwilling servant, he might have said: These are things quite impracticable and impossible. I will not attempt them. But, no, he was a willing, trusting, obedient servant of the Lord Jesus, and declared, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me."

Dear friends, the point I want to fix on your thoughts, and the impression I want to make on your minds is, that if there be first a willing mind, then you may confidently look to God,