

TESTED VALUES

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The agnosticism of our modern philosophy which for a few decades has been so popular in many colleges and universities is bearing its fruitage in a wave of out and out atheism. These modern destroyers of the foundations of the historic faith of Christianity are willing to admit dogma even in the realm of the purest human guesses along philosophical and scientific lines, affirming with confidence and certainty utterly unproved hypotheses. But they are very careful to deny the possibility of knowing anything in the higher realms of truth which involve man in his moral and spiritual relationships. They are dogmatic in their denial of any possible knowledge of God and of all truth in the realm of higher values.

We turn from these uncertain voices to the Word of Life. Here we find the antidote for all error. Here we find the clear note of assurance and certainty in the highest values of life. The clarion tones of divine revelation speak to us of God and of the fact that we, his creatures by creation may know him in the facts of redemption. True religion which has in it the element of real salvation is a reality which may become the subject of the strongest assurance and greatest certainty. This is obviously true because of its very nature and content, for true religion is not as many suppose, mere restraint, a not doing this or doing that, it is not a system of negation or of prohibition. It is true there are prohibitions in the commandments of God, but one might keep all the prohibitions of God and still not be a Christian. Nor yet is it a program of works, of doing good. It involves holy activities but no amount of good works or philanthropic activity will save a man. True religion involves more than restraint on the one hand and more than good works on the other. It involves personal acquaintanceship with Jesus Christ. Paul says, "I know whom I have believed."

There is a "what" that we as Christians believe; but there is also a "Whom" we trust. The "what" we believe involves the whole content upon Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour. God has not left the most important interests of life to uncertainty, doubt and fear. We may know. The propositions of saving truth centering in our knowing Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour are capable of demonstration in human experience. We ask Paul, "How do you know him?" I think he would answer us, "I know him in the fulfillment of his mission in my own heart and life." There are two major propositions in the revealed mission of Jesus Christ to men. These propositions are stated in the first epistle of John, 3rd chapter, verses 5 and 8. In verse 5, he states, "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins and in him is no sin." He came to be our scapegoat. This animal was then taken outside of the camp of Israel to an uninhabited wilderness and let go, never to be seen again, signifying the bearing away of sins. This animal was a type of Jesus Christ who becomes our sin-bearer, who alone is able to take away our sins. We become our own confessors. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Friends, we may know him in this wonderful mission fulfilled in our own lives. When he in his sovereign power speaks the word of authority, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," we become con-

science free with sin's load lifted and sin's guilt cancelled. Receive him, believe on him, and he will so reveal himself to you that you will know him in his pardoning favor.

The second proposition is in the 8th verse where it is further stated, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil. It is his plan and purpose in grace not only to forgive sins committed, but to destroy that inward untowardness of nature, to take out of our humanity that moral poison which is the most direct and diabolical work of the devil on earth. Thus his mission is to cleanse the heart from inward defilement and restore the moral nature of man to the image and likeness of God. When this fundamental change is experienced in a human heart there is a further revelation in the knowledge of Jesus Christ in His divine Saviourhood that results in our knowing him in the most unmistakable realities of which human consciousness is capable. Paul knew him thus. He knew him in the revelation of the mystery hidden from ages and generations but which is now made manifest to his saints, even the riches of the glory of the mystery which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

After these experiential revelations of Jesus Christ in Paul's life establishing to him the certainty of his personal relation to God and of his personal fitness for his presence, he came also to know him and identify him as the Christ of the Jewish Scriptures, the One who had so fulfilled the types and shadows of the old dispensation and who had so fulfilled the prophecies of the old Testament as to fully establish the New. We, too, may know him, in all of the certainties which characterize the experience and life of Paul. Here in these respects Paul is but our example. By a complete self-yielding and humble trust you may this moment become wholly his and so receive him that you will testify with one of whom I recently read who had been saved through the merit of Christ and who reported to the workers where he was saved that he was a J. I. M. man. When asked what he meant by these letters he replied with joy, "Jesus is Mine." He had come into possession of values which were tested in the laboratory of every day living, and which proved satisfactory in actual experience and which anchored time to values eternal.

DIFFICULTIES ABOUT TEMPTATION

By A. B. Simpson

Nothing more closely touches our spiritual life than the great fact of temptation. It will be profitable for us to consider some of the teachings of the Holy Scriptures concerning it.

It is Permitted of God

While the power of Satan is very great, it is not supreme. He had to ask permission from heaven before assailing the patriarch Job, and we are still promised that God will not permit us to be tempted above what we are able to bear (I. Cor. 10:13). The Lord's Prayer assumes the divine control of the tempter's power. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

Why was Satan permitted to assail our first parents and to overcome them? It is obvious that virtue untested is of inferior value. Two

young men passed through a business experience unscathed in their integrity. The one had no temptation to dishonesty; the other was severely tested and overcame. Which has the highest quality of character? Certainly the second. Our Lord was proved in the fires of temptation and His followers must come through the same test and receive the blessing of the man who "endureth temptation." Indeed, we are to rejoice because we are "partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, [we] may be glad also with exceeding joy."

It is Provided for by the Promise and Grace of God

"In that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." We are not alone in our spiritual conflicts. The Master himself was led of the Spirit into the wilderness, and the same Presence is still assured to us. "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

It is a Valuable Spiritual Discipline for the Tempted

The Apostle Peter comforts his brethren by reminding them that there is a "need be" for their "manifold temptations." "The trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire." It is not the faith which is precious, but the **trial** of our faith. And "though it be tried with fire," it will "be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

It Will Win Us a Great Reward

"Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." There is a crown for the martyr and the minister, but there is also one for the tempted soul.

It Glorifies God When We Stand in the Hour of Temptation

God permits the enemy to come against us in order that he may be conquered and the grace of God be magnified. We read of the kings whom Joshua subdued, that "It was of the Lord * * * that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly." There was no other way of overcoming them and magnifying the power of Jehovah except through the conflict. Therefore, writing to the Philippians, Paul encourages them to look upon their temptations with thankfulness and encouragement, "in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God. For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." But let us remember when we are tempted that

Temptation is Not Sin

We may be greatly distressed by evil suggestions; but so long as we refuse them, we are not defiled by them nor counted guilty of entertaining them. It is the **will** which determines the quality of moral action. Nothing

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