

Overcoming Sin and Temptation 4 (12/18/22 SS)

(study in JO Vol VI, Exposition/Power/Deceit, Chapter 6-8)

Welcome back to our class on “Overcoming Sin & Temptation.”

We are presently engaged in Owen’s treatise titled, “Nature, Power, Deceit, ??? of remainders of IS (Indwelling Sin) in believers.”

**This quote by Owen referencing to (John 19:30) brings us back in summary fashion to our study.

Upper room discourse, “The ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.”

Owen, “Our Savior had more temptations, intensively and extensively in number, quality, and fierceness, from Satan and the world than ever any of the sons of men. But in all of them, He had to deal only with that which came from without. His holy heart had nothing like to Jesus, suited to them or ready to give them entertainment. The prince of this world had nothing in Him. So it was with Jesus, when a temptation befell Him, he had only the outward proposal to look into. All was well within until the outward temptation took place and prevailed.

WITH US IT IS NOT SO!”

How true!! With us it is not so. There is remaining in the heart of every believer a hook which the enemy works to bring us down. A jab and sobering reality. Therefore we need to learn all we can about this “Hook” of IS that we might be found “standing firm” in the evil day.

In order that we might gain ground against the enemy and that is my burden for all of us. As we work through the complexities of our inner life!!

In our last study we determined that by nature sin is enmity/hostility against God as well as being averse to God and His ways.

(Rom. 8:7) “The mind set on the flesh (sin) is enmity toward God.” {expand on the shocking nature of that truth – answers a lot of questions}

With that established lets look further into the actings of IS. How does IS act out that enmity/aversation.

Enmity/hostility/averseness is not a passive trait. By nature it is constantly seeking avenues to oppose God and all that is holy, and by extension to oppose us in all we would seek to do as we serve the Lord.

Owen gives us two avenues by which IS opposes:

Power (confrontation, force, bold) and Deceit (subtlety, trickery, sneaky).

I. Power

Turn (Gal. 5:16-17) {Read}

Opposition through lusting/desire. Constant incessant seeking after something.

(1 Pet. 2:11) "Abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul."

(James 4:1) "What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is it not your pleasures (lusts) that wage war in your members?"

(Rom. 7:23) "I see in my members another law making war against the law of my mind."

So we see clearly from these texts (many more) that IS opposes the work of God in our hearts by exerting its power in lusting and warring against us. The ways whereby it exerts this power are legion.

Let's think through three of those ways together.

1. It's natural affinity to evil. {attraction to evil}

This is where it starts. The staging area for its assaults, if you will.

This description of unregenerative men in (Gen. 6:5) is helpful to grasp this point. "Then the Lord saw that the wickedness of man on the earth was great, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

*Because of sin's affinity/attraction to that which is evil, man cannot think/produce or act anything but that which is evil.

*Balancing not here (Gen. 6:5) is descriptive of those who are under sin's dominion, but the text does give us insight into the active nature of sin and as previously stated several times, to whatever extent that sin remains in a Christian's heart, it possesses this affinity/attraction to evil. {Allow me to illustrate what I mean.}

I.E. Charles Wesley Hymn

"Sometimes a light surprises the Christian while he sings. It is the Lord who rises with healing in His wings. When comforts are declining, He grants the soul again, a season of clear shining to cheer it after rain."

**That ever happen to you?? Song/Sermon/Text read/Prayer prayed, just out of nowhere, with no explanation. A Blessings breaks upon your head, refreshment of soul, light of grace illuminating the darkness. What is that??

Well, that is the grace of God through JC operating in your heart according to its nature. {expand}

Unfortunately, so it is with the operation of IS in the heart of a Christian, out of nowhere, for no rational reason. Angry/Murderous response, harsh word, the impure thought, the blasphemous thought.

**The darkness surprises us. That ever happen to you??

The answer from Scripture is this. It is the power of IS working in accordance with its affinity for and habitual inclination to evil. {which is its nature}

Exerts its power in:

2. Persistence

**It is important for us to remember the ultimate goal in sin's opposition to your desires to please and obey God.

That purpose is to contend for rule and ??? over your life.

Sin wants you back. {the old nature}

{Two competing forces cannot have the throne. Grace rules the Christian. Sin is relentless to regain that rule. That is what's at stake, and that is where the war rages. – Owen}

Owen, "Enemies in ??? are ???, pressing, persistent, so it is with the law of sin! It sets you ??? soul. Cast off its motions; it returns again. Rebuke it by the power of grace; withers away for awhile, and returns again. Mind it of the love of God in Christ; though it be stricken, yet it gives not over. Reproach it as to its folly and ???. It knows no shame, but presseth on still!! There is nothing more marvelous ??? in the opposition of sin than this of its perseverance.

**We might add that this persistent opposition in contending for the rule over our lives is not just to be understood in some general way, but in specific and particular ways as we live out our days:

Prayer/Preaching/Reading/Meditating/Serving. {walking with God, ??? with others}

3. Captivating Power

Turn/read (Rom. 7:21-23)

*How are we to understand this??

*How can this be true of a Christian?

{(Rom. 6:11) "Consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in JC."

(Rom. 6:22) "Having been freed from sin and enslaved to God."

First: Must maintain in our thinking the biblical distinction between "reigning and remaining sin. (Captivating power of remaining sin)

Second: Paul is speaking of the law/principle of remaining sin, not a particular sin. {Captivating power of the law of sin}

Third: Even though remaining/ not reigning, it has great power still. Cannot escape it! Escaped reigning sin through the death and resurrection of JC. Escape remaining sin through your own death and resurrection. (vs. 24) "Wretched man, etc."

IS not only opposes us by its power, but also by:

II. Deceit {Trickery}

Key Text (Heb. 3:13) {Turn/read 12-13}

Here again we see that deceit (according to this text and many others) is woven into the fabric of sin. Deceitfulness is of the very nature of sin. (Sins DNA is deceit) Furthermore, to make it all the more gripping, the Bible places deceit at the very foundation of sin's entrance into the world on that fateful day in paradise.

Turn (1 Tim. 2:12-14) {Context/read}

This text may beg many questions in your mind, but I only want you to see the obvious point. At the head of the polluted stream of sin that began in (Gen. 3) was deceit.

*What Eve says in (Gen. 3:13) is true. "The serpent deceived me and I ate."

*Paul strikes this note again in (2 Cor. 11:3) "But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ."

Owen, "Deceit in general consists in presenting unto the soul, or mind, things otherwise than they are. It hides what ought to be seen and considered and conceals the consequences."

Then Owen applies this general description to the devil's strategy with our first parents:

"How did he deceive our first parents? He did it by representing things otherwise than they were. The fruit was desirable; that was apparent to the eye. Hence, Satan takes advantage to insinuate that it was ??? or ??? of their happiness. That God aimed at in forbidding them to eat of it. That certain ruin would ensue upon the eating of it, he hides from them and proposes the present advantage of knowledge, and so presents the case to them quite otherwise than indeed it was."

Turn with me to (James 1). I only want to point out this foundational text that shows us the deceitful progression of sin. To buttress Owen's remarks:

1. Purpose of God in Trials and Temptations

(vs. 12) {Read} "Approved/stood the test."

2. The Problem in Trials and Temptations

(vs. 13) {Read} In the midst of all sorts of trials and testings that are designed by God to "prove" us, there is a twofold danger, 1. Our propensity to evil, 2. Our propensity to shift the blame, "God you put the snake in the garden/It's the woman you gave me Lord."

Jesus says no/no. The problem lies within your own heart.

3. The Working of Deceit in the Heart

(vs. 14-15) {Read} Colorful language of fishing/childbirth to illustrate this deceitful progression of sin.

"drawn away"/"carried away"/"lured"/"enticed" to take the bait.

Then, conception/birth/death {purpose of sin, every sin}

**Bottom line is that to whatever degree sin remains, it will seek to deceive us and draw us into its net.

Now, when trials and temptations come, we don't often have the time to analyze everything in a neat package like (Jam. 1:12-15). Comes on us like a flood.

But at least we can come to a mature understanding of our own hearts that is rooted in the Bible rather than humanistic psychology.

****Biblical psychology is what we are after. {that will help us to effect change/growth/maturing}**

Sin opposes us by its: I. Power, II. Deceit

“This is the way of what we offer as to the actings of the law of sin in fighting and warring against our souls, which is so often mentioned in Scripture and a due consideration of it is of no small advantage unto us, especially to teach us to walk humbly before God! There are two things that are suited to humble the souls of men.

- A due consideration of God in His greatness, glory, holiness, power, majesty, and authority.
- And ourselves in our sinful condition.”

“It is no small evidence of a gracious soul when it is willing to search itself in this matter, and to be helped therein from the Word of truth; when it is willing that the Word should dive into the secret parts of the heart and rip open whatever of evil and corruption lies therein.”