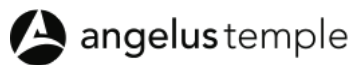


Overcoming Temptation



Name _____

Part One: Satan's Devices and God's precious remedies.

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 2:9-11

9 For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything. 10 Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, 11 so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Excerpt from "Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices" by: Thomas Brooks

First, You must know that every man cannot be excellent, yet every man may be useful. An iron key may unlock the door with a golden treasure behind it; yes, iron can do some things that gold cannot. *Secondly*, Remember, it is not hasty reading—but serious meditating upon holy and heavenly truths, that make them prove sweet and profitable to the soul. It is not the bee's touching of the flower, which gathers honey—but her abiding for a time upon the flower, which draws out the sweet. It is not he who reads most—but he who meditates most, who will prove the choicest, sweetest, wisest and strongest Christian. *Thirdly*, Know that it is not the knowing, nor the talking, nor the reading man —but the doing man, that at last will be found the happiest man.

The 12 Devices Satan uses against us and their remedies.

1. By presenting the bait & hiding the hook: For remedies, consider that

- we ought to keep at our distance from sin, don't play with the bait
- sin looks sweet, but tastes bitter
- sin will bring us the greatest sadness
- sin is extremely deceitful & bewitching

2. By painting sin to make it sound or seem good: For remedies, consider that

- sin is never good, no matter how you paint the story
- the more sin has been spun as good, the more dangerous it becomes
- we should compare sin in the moment with how we feel about it later
- sin cost Jesus his life

3. By making excuses for sin & pretending sin isn't that bad: For remedies, consider that

- sin that seems "small" still brings God's wrath & judgment

- giving in to “small” sins is a gateway to committing “larger” sins
- it is pathetic to sin against God for earthly gain or comfort
- often there is real danger in the smallest sins
- believers before us chose to suffer greatly rather than commit sin & offend God
- in light of the Truth of God, our soul cannot bear the weight & guilt of sin
- God didn’t spare Jesus wrath over even the “smallest” sins, Jesus drank the dregs

4. By comparing our sin to a great person’s sin, but ignoring their virtue in sorrow & repentance over sin: For remedies, consider that

- God recorded sins of past believers, but also their repentance as examples for us (i.e. Paul, David & Hezekiah)
- it’s not a Christian’s job to sin
- God does not disown believers who sin, but He does punish sin severely
- God recorded past believer’s sin to: 1) remove despair over sin’s burden 2) warnings/guidance

5. By presenting the lie: “Sin as much as you want, God is all mercy!”: For remedies, consider that

- when God leaves someone alone in sin, it is a sign of His great anger towards them
- God is as just as He is merciful
- taking advantage of His mercy will bring the swift, stinging judgment
- God's general mercy (sustaining life) is over all, His redemptive mercy is confined to Christians
- God's redemptive mercy is our most powerful argument against temptation & sin

6. By convincing that repentance is easy & we shouldn’t regret sinning: For remedies, consider that

- repentance is a gift, a difficult work above our own power
- repentance converts the entirety of a person, from only living to sin to living for God
- repentance is always active; it is a continual act that never ends
- if repentance were easy, fewer would be roaring & crying out in hell
- repentance is just as much an evidence of God’s grace as not sinning is
- Satan tempts that “repentance is easy,” but soon presents our sin as unforgivable & repentance as impossible

Group Discussion

1. At your tables, discuss which one of the first six devices jumped out at you the most.

2. The remedies are mostly beliefs and not boundaries or restrictions. Talk about the difference between focusing on your beliefs about God rather than total reliance on a system or boundaries.

7. By presenting the thought that we can resist failure when walking the line of temptation:

For remedies, consider

- scripture that commands us to avoid temptation & anything remotely evil.
- that overcoming sin is impossible if we don't avoid temptation
- Christians should avoid temptation as if we are running from hell itself
- Avoiding & resisting temptation is evidence of Christ's grace

8. By thinking that wicked people have more happiness & a better life than Christians: For remedies, consider that

- A person's outward comfort or "blessing" does not represent God's heart toward them
- nothing provokes God's wrath more than those who take advantage of His goodness and mercy
- there's no greater curse than never knowing the pain of God's correction
- the unrighteous may seem to have honor & riches, but lack the greatest treasure: redemption
- outwardly they seem to be happy & well off, but inside are unsatisfied & fearful of loss
- God allows them to be raised up & spared affliction for now, but they will soon be brought low
- God often internally plagues those people we perceive as externally "spared"
- even if the ungodly enjoy a carefree, luxurious, sinful life, God will strictly judge them

9. By presenting us with the discomfort, suffering, and difficulty of living a Christ-centered life: For remedies, consider that

- all earthly suffering for the Christian will be for their spiritual gain
- all suffering effects the weakest parts of us, allowing His Spirit to remain the strongest part of us.
- all suffering is momentary whether compared to a lifetime or eternity
- all suffering is used by God in love to refine, sanctify & prepare His people for His return
- it is our honor to measure suffering not by pain or discomfort, but by the glory given to God
- God doesn't cause us to suffer, but does purpose our suffering for testing & growth, not to ruin us

- the suffering given to those who aren't found in Christ will be far worse than a Christian's suffering on Earth

10. By tempting us to compare sins with those who are "worse" than us: For remedies, consider that

- to be quick to judge others but not recognize our own sin is hypocrisy
- it is better to compare our internal and external actions with scripture than to compare ourselves to others
- though we think our sins aren't as "bad" as others, without our repentance responding to God's mercy, we will be judged harshly

11. By presenting lies about the Lord, sin, evil & repentance, that lead us away from Truth: For remedies, consider that

- proudly holding on to incorrect thoughts & actions is as wrong to God as a wicked life
- scripture calls us to rejoice in the Truth, welcome it & make it a part of us
- those who spread lies about the Truth, will receive no rewards or comfort in judgment
- we need to hate all doctrine that is contrary to scripture, leads to self-righteousness, & claims good works are as effective in salvation as Christ is
- it is necessary to hold on to the Truth
- it is necessary to pursue humility, accept correction & seek the Truth
- incorrect "truth" steals joy, causes confusion, & produces great evil

12. By leading us to choose the company of the unrighteous: For remedies, consider that

- God has commanded us to not remain in the company of the unrighteous
- unrighteous company infects our hearts, minds, & souls; it's dangerous
- it is necessary for us to look on the unrighteous with the lens of scripture
- keeping the unrighteous close to us will bring us a burden of guilt & grief

Group Discussion

1. After hearing all 12 devices, how do you think this will effect your prayer life?

2. What would it feel like for you or someone you love to experience freedom in a new way this year?

Questions and Answers