

PARCHMENT

AND HE SAID UNTO ME, WRITE: FOR THESE WORDS ARE TRUE AND FAITHFUL.

REVELATION 21:5



*For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand,
saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Isaiah 41:13*

FROM FEAR TO FAITH

It's often the case that temptation is indulged when one fears they're too prone to sin to do otherwise. One is faced with a temptation they've accustomed themselves to adore, and in light of their track record, Satan causes them to think that submission is inevitable. 'So what's the point?' Satan argues. 'You might be a conquerer this time, but you won't be for long. Goodness and obedience are far from you. You've cultivated these tastes and tendencies for yourself, and now there's no turning back.'

By contrast, the Lord tells us in Deuteronomy 30:11 that "this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off." It is neither in heaven that it must be brought down, nor beyond the sea that it must be brought up, "but the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it." Verses 12-14. Through the conscience, the Holy Spirit pleads with us, making intercession for us daily with groanings which cannot be uttered. Romans 8:26. Through the conscience, Christ reminds us of our duty and leads us to seek a better way.

Thus, unless one has grieved the Holy Spirit, every soul is capable of resisting temptation. Don't be fooled into thinking that you're too experienced a sinner to become a victorious Christian from this moment forward. It is true that the adversary will tempt you again, but that is no excuse for submitting to sin now. Determine to be victorious in your decisions today, and

recommit yourself to Christ when tomorrow comes.

It is valuable to remember that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin". God has promised that with each temptation, He will "also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it". 1 Corinthians 10:13. It is God's greatest desire to give us "the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:57. Therefore, since all the necessary resources have been imparted, and God is yearning to give you victory, do not be taken by the fear of failure. For it is merely an ungrounded and illegitimate fear employed by Satan to overcome your faith, knowing full well that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin". Romans 14:23.

Moreover, as Sister White explains, "the sinner is represented as a lost sheep, and a lost sheep never returns to the fold unless he is sought after and brought back to the fold by the shepherd." {NL 20} In the same way that victory over sin is a gift imparted through Jesus Christ, "no man of himself can repent, and make himself worthy of the blessing of justification." For "repentance is no less the gift of God than are pardon and justification, and it cannot be experienced except as it is given to the soul by Christ." {NL 20}

When one is weighed down with a guilty conscience, Satan often causes them to fear that they're too debased to receive forgiveness from the Saviour. Yet since fear is the oppo-



site of faith, and “whatsoever is not of faith is sin”, fear must be regarded with grave caution. You see, Satan uses the fear of failure to encourage one to sin, and then traps them there with fears of unworthiness!

Yet once again, this is an ungrounded and illegitimate deception. “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7. It is Christ Himself who uses feelings of guilt to draw the heart of the sinner back to Him. Indeed, “the Lord Jesus is constantly seeking to impress the sinner’s mind and attract him to behold Himself, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.”

None would be inspired to seek repentance were it not for Christ already drawing them back to Himself. As Inspiration declares, “we cannot take a step toward spiritual life save as Jesus draws and strengthens the soul, and leads us to experience that repentance which needeth not to be repented of”. {NL 20.1} Therefore, the fact that one feels the need for soul-restoration is the assurance that Christ is willing to grant them forgiveness full and free. For “if we are drawn to Christ, it is through His power and virtue. The grace of contrition comes through Him, and from Him comes justification”. {NL 20.2}

Furthermore, as E. J. Waggoner proclaims, “He bought you for the very reason that you were not worthy. His practiced eye saw in you great possibilities, and He bought you, not for what you were then or are now worth, but for what He could make of you...[For] when He takes us, worth nothing, and at the last presents us faultless before the throne, it will be to his everlasting glory.” {Christ and His Righteousness p72}

Dear friends, commit yourself each morning to resist temptation through the power of Christ working in you. Fear not the temptations of the morrow. And fear not that you are too unworthy to approach your Saviour. Set aside time for the reading of His word. And in the place of fear, take hold of faith. For “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Romans 10:17.