

Dealing With Temptation

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of avoiding temptation and being obedient to God's words to achieve spiritual victory.

Duration: 1:12:05

Scripture: Genesis 39:7

Topics: "Temptation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher tells the story of King Midas and his obsession with gold. The king is visited by a stranger dressed in white who questions his satisfaction with his wealth. The stranger asks the king to choose between gold and the love of his daughter, and the king realizes that he would give up all his gold for his daughter. However, when the king touches things, they turn to gold. The sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's word and warns against falling into sin. The preacher also briefly mentions the concept of the Trinity and the sanctification of believers by God the Father.

Transcript

Today's text we find in Genesis 39. I'll just start reading, even if I don't speak about all of it, from verse 7. Then after a time his master's wife, that's Joseph, cast her eyes upon Joseph, and she said, Lie with me. But he refused and said to his master's wife, See here, with me in the house my master has concern about nothing.

He has put all that he has in my care. He is not greater in this house than I am. Nor has he kept anything from me except you, for you are his wife.

How then can I do this great evil and sin against God? He has put all that he has in my care. How then can I do this great evil and sin against God? She spoke to Joseph day after day, but he did not listen to her, to lie with her or to be with her. Then it happened about this time that Joseph went into the house to attend to his duties, and none of the men of the house were indoors.

And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me. But he left his garments in her hand and fled and got out of the house. And when she saw that he had left his garments in her hand and had fled away, she called to the men of her household and said to them, Behold, he, your master, has brought in a Hebrew to us to mock and insult us.

He came in to lie with me, and I screamed at the top of my voice. And when he heard me screaming and crying, he left his garment with me and fled and got out of the house. I think we can stop there.

Shall we pray? I pray, O God, that your word will be sharp and penetrate right to the deepest depths of our being. May it be sharper than any two-edged sword. Let it not be in vain that we are together here.

We ask you, Lord, to work in a way that passes our understanding. Let it not be in vain that we are together here. Joseph is a good example to every one of us, whether you're a Christian or not.

He shows us what to do and how to deal with temptation. It's heartbreaking to see Christians falling over and over again and living in sin. If our life is like that, we are in danger of being doomed and damned forever and ever.

We are chosen to be pure, holy in spirit, soul, and body. And if we aren't that, we are in danger of being cast away. God doesn't want such tummy-rot Christians.

Temptation will always be there. And sins will always come and look at us. But in contending with certain sins, there remains no way of winning but by running and running away from sin and temptation.

Those who want to be safe from acts of evil must run away. We've got to run away from opportunities for sinning. Every Christian should have made a covenant with his eyes, not even to look upon temptation.

Because of certain sins, such sins only need a spark to begin with a blaze of fire. And that follows in an instant, right there and then, if you look at temptation and look at sin. Remember the man of God, Job.

And God says there's no one like him in this world. And he says he made a covenant with his eyes that he wouldn't look at a girl, even, not a prostitute, a virgin. We've got to run away and be as far away from sin as possible.

And don't be a fool and a silly fool and go to Sodom and Gomorrah and live there. To live amongst a rotten people. And live amongst people that are corrupted.

People with horrible corruption in word, deed and thought. The first psalm, verse one, says don't sit amongst sinners and those that are corrupted and talk evil and vile things. What are you seeking there? How can they be your friends? In German we say a person is known by his friends.

Tell me who your friends are and then I'll tell you who you are. You wonder why you can't get victory. You always fall and fall.

Have got to confess and confess every week over and over again and you don't know what the cause of that is. Of course if you live in Sodom and Gomorrah you'll be infected by their vileness and rottenness and evil if you just see and hear that all day long. We nowadays don't go with ships.

A ship's captain knows how to avoid a storm. Nowadays we fly. And it's always interesting for me to look at the pilot and see what he does.

Every storm is shown on the instruments. They tell you there's a storm and there's a storm and there's a storm. And he does everything in his power to deviate and to run away from those storms.

Not only the small planes, even the big planes. One day when I flew down to Cape Town I got out my Bible and I read. And the lady next to me was saying, hey, what are you reading there? I said I'm reading the Bible.

I'm busy with God. She said I don't believe in that. I don't believe in God.

And then luckily something unforeseen happened. And the plane jumped like a horse. The cocks flew around.

The tea was spilt. The water. And we were so to say in the air in spite of having the belt on.

And this lady, she screamed, oh God help us. And I said hey. I didn't touch her.

I touch him now. And then she said Lord help us. And then I said what? Are you calling now someone that is not in existence? Let us not be foolish pilots.

Not one amongst us. Of course if you want to be a fool and stay a fool then carry on and land in hell. The ship's captains and the plane's pilots they know how to evade the storms.

If they don't they land into trouble. And it happened a few years ago that many people in a big plane hit their heads, banged their heads against the roof that's quite high. And then I said to myself, I don't believe in God.

I don't believe in God. I don't believe in God. May every one of us present here today, I say may and I pray, but I doubt whether that prayer will go into fulfillment.

That every one of us will have the wisdom to keep out of it, out of temptation. We even pray, lead us not into temptation. And don't be a fool and so stupid and lead yourself into temptation.

Keep out of it. Avoid it. Don't look at pornography.

And decline evil company. If you want to be victorious, you've got to be obedient to God's words. Maybe you've got aches and pains because of always falling into sin.

It's your own fault. You are going into it. You are not praying, keep me from temptation, lead me not into temptation.

You are looking for it. I would like to say, the wings of a dove have more use to us than the strength of lions. I hope you've understood what I've told you till now, that I can carry on now and leave that.

You can dingus the curd, chew the curd like a cow. Eats a cow, eats eight hours, chews the curd eight hours and sleeps eight hours. So what you've heard, chew the cow, chew the curd.

Don't let a four-legged beast, a cow, have more sense than what you have got. If you want to be victorious, you've got to be obedient to God's words. Maybe you've got aches and pains because of always falling into sin.

It's your own fault. You are looking for it. You are not praying, keep me from temptation.

You are looking for it. You are looking for it. I would like to speak about Satan.

God is a Trinity. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. And the working of the Trinity, but I haven't got time for that.

But just touching on one point, God the Father, he sanctifies us, makes us holy. God the Son sanctifies and makes us holy. We find that all in the Bible.

The Holy Spirit sanctifies us, makes us holy. All three persons of the Trinity. Don't say that you are not holy because you haven't received the Holy Spirit.

God the Father sanctifies us, the Son sanctifies us. And if you tell me you've got Jesus and you're not sanctified and holy, excuse me calling you a liar. You are deceiving yourself because Jesus sanctifies us as well.

And the Holy Spirit. If you claim to have the Holy Spirit and you don't live a holy life, you've got a spirit not from above, but from below. Now this you won't find in the Bible.

I'm just coining this and telling you this. The Trinity of Satan. The world, the flesh and the devil.

There you've got the devil's Trinity. If you're in the world, you are Satan's. If you're living and ruled by the lusts of your flesh, you belong to the devil and the devil himself.

I had very little time. I had very little time to prepare this morning. So I would like to read a verse to you about the world.

In 2 Timothy 4 verse 10 I think. Demas has deserted me for love of this present world and has gone to Thessalonica. Demas has deserted me for love of this present world.

How is such a thing possible? A close co-worker of Paul, a person who went with him, leaving him because he fell in love with the world. It happened, it doesn't happen just now that co-workers go back into the world or fall into sin. It happened in Paul's time and very often they left him.

That's not something new. We've got to reckon with that. I'd like to ask Demas, tell me how is it possible being with maybe the best man who ever lived to forsake him and follow after the world? The Bible says friendship of the world is enmity with God.

You hear young people, you love fashion, the world. You like to clothe yourself as they do. You like to do what the world does.

You look and listen to worldly music and that's enmity. God hates you. God is your enemy if you are pelly-pelly with the world.

That friendship is God's friendship. And you Pharisee, you go to church, are with Christians, call yourself a Christian and you are a friend of the world. The world appeals to you.

Is there somebody here should I ask you to get up to stand? You who would like to be a friend of the world. We'd like to see you, who you are. I don't see anybody, but I don't believe that there isn't anyone.

Maybe you're just ashamed. But one day when God will reveal you and shout your name from the mountaintops and reveal your life, I don't know where you'll hide then. There's a Greek tale, ancient, I think 800 before Christ.

It's about a Greek. It's a Greek tale about lust for riches and for gold. This is supposed to have happened in Phrygia, that's nowadays Turkey.

The king of Turkey ruled in the 8th century before Christ. The early Greeks believed Phrygia to be a land of fabulous wealth. The king was called Midas, M-I-D-A-S.

And this king was a very, very, very rich man. He had more gold than anyone else in the whole world. But in spite of all that, he thought the gold he had wasn't enough.

He wanted more. He was never, never so happy as when he happened to get more gold to add to his treasure. He started away.

Underneath his palace, there were some rooms below his house. He started away in great vaults underneath his palace. And many hours of each day were spent counting the gold.

Now King Midas had a little daughter, a little nice girl named Mary Gold. He loved her devotedly. He loved her very much.

And he said, she shall be the richest princess in all the world. But little Mary Gold cared nothing about it all. She cared nothing.

She loved her garden, her flowers, the golden sunshine, much more than her father's riches. She was a lonely girl most of the time. Because her father was always busy planning new ways to get new gold.

And counting what he had. That he seldom, or very few times, told her stories, or went for walks with her, as all fathers should do sometimes with their children. One day it happened when Midas was down with his gold below his big house.

He was down there in his treasure room. He always locked those heavy doors that nobody could enter in. Lest they go in and open the great chests of gold and boxes of gold.

He piled the gold and put it onto his table. And he handled it as if he loved just the touch of it. He left.

It slipped through his fingers and smiled at the clink of it as if it had been sweet music to him. But all of a sudden, suddenly, like a cloud, something like a shadow fell over the heap of gold. Looking up, he saw a stranger dressed in shining white.

Looking and smiling at him. The king Midas started looking up in surprise. He thought, didn't I lock the door? So wasn't his treasure safe? But the stranger carried on smiling at him.

And this stranger, clothed in white, said to the king, but you have got much gold. Yes, said the king, but think how little this is to all the gold there is in the world. The stranger asked him, what, are you not satisfied with all this gold? The king said, satisfied? Of course not, I'm not satisfied.

I often lie awake through the long night, planning new ways to get more gold. He said, I wish that everything I touch could turn into gold. And this being said, is that really so, king? He said, of course, nothing would make me more happier than that.

And this man, clothed in white, said, all right, in white, then you'll have it. You will have your wish. Tomorrow morning, when the first rays of the sun fall through your window, you'll have the golden touch.

When this person, in white, finished speaking, the stranger just vanished. And the king Midas just rubbed his eyes. And he thought, I must have dreamt this.

It was just a dream. How happy I'd be if this would be true. The next morning, king Midas woke, when the first faint light came into his room.

He put out his hands and he touched his blankets, and the cover of his bed. But nothing happened. He said, I knew it could not be true.

He sighed. Just at that moment, the first ray of the sun came through the window. The covers on which king Midas lay became pure gold.

It's true, it's true, he cried. He cried joyfully. He sprang out of bed.

Ran about the room, touching everything. His dressing gown. His slippers.

The furniture. And everything and all became gold. He looked out of the window through Marygold's garden.

And said, I'll give her a nice surprise. He went down into the garden. He touched all of Marygold's flowers.

Changing them to gold. She will be so pleased, he thought. He went back into his room to have breakfast.

He took up his book that he had been reading the night before. But the minute he touched it, it was solid gold. He said, I can't read it now.

But of course, it is far better to have it gold. Then a servant came through the door with the king's breakfast. He said, how good it looks.

I'll have that ripe, rich, red peach first of all. He took that red peach into his hands. And before he could taste it, it became a lump of gold.

King Midas put it back on the plate. He said, it's very beautiful, but I can't eat it. And then he took a roll from the plate.

But that turned into gold as well. He took a glass of water in his hand. But that turned into gold as well.

And he said, what shall I do? He cried, I'm hungry, I'm thirsty. But I can't eat and drink gold. But in that moment, in came little Mary Gold.

She had opened the door and came in. She was crying bitterly. In her hand was one of the beautiful roses.

He said, what's the matter, my girl? Oh, father, see what has happened to all my roses. They are stiff, ugly things. Why, they are golden roses, child.

Do you not think they are more beautiful than they were? She said, no, she sobbed. They don't smell sweet. They won't grow any more.

I like roses that are alive. He said, never mind, eat your breakfast now. Why, he said, I couldn't eat.

Mary Gold had noticed that her father did not eat. And he didn't look very well either. She said, what's the matter, dear father? What, father? She said and she ran to him.

She threw her arms around him. And he kissed her. But he suddenly cried out in terror and anguish.

When he touched her, her lovely little face had turned into gold. Her eyes could not see. Her lips could not kiss him back again.

Her little arms could not hold him close again. She was no longer a loving, laughing little girl. She was changed to a little golden statue.

King Midas bowed his head and great sobs shook him. And suddenly he heard a voice. Are you happy, King Midas? Looking up, he saw the stranger again.

He said, happy, how can you ask? I'm the most miserable man living, said the king. And that angel said to him, you have the golden touch. Is that not enough for you? King Midas just looked down in shame.

Which would you rather have, food and a cup of gold? Water? Or these lumps of gold? Which would you rather have, food and a cup of gold, said the stranger? And the king looked down and could not answer. Which would you rather have, King? That little golden statue? Or a little girl who could run and laugh and love you? Which would you rather have, food and a cup of gold, said the stranger? I would give up all the gold I have, said the king. I've lost all that was worth having.

And the stranger said, go plunge in the river which runs at the foot of your garden. Then take some of its water and sprinkle it wherever you wish to change it back into what it was. And then the angel vanished.

Then King Midas sprang up and ran to the river. He plunged into it. And then he dipped up a pitcher of its water and hurried back to the palace.

He sprinkled it over Marigold. And the colour came back into her cheeks. She opened her blue eyes again.

Why, father, she said, what's happened? Why, father, she said, what's happened? With a cry of joy, King Midas took her into his arms. With a cry of joy, King Midas took her into his arms. Never after that did the king care for any gold, except the gold of the sunshine and the gold of little Marigold's hair.

And he said to her, I will show you the gold. I will show you the gold of the sunshine and the gold of little Marigold's hair. I will show you the gold of the sunshine and the gold of little Marigold's hair.

Does this mean anything to you? Have you had an ear to hear? You see the spiritual significance of these things? If you don't understand, go after the service to somebody who can pray for you. And cast out the demons that have filled your life. I'm sorry the time has gone by.

I haven't spoken about the flesh yet. And I haven't spoken about the devil. But in closing, the Bible says flee the lusts of the flesh.

But in closing, the Bible says flee the lusts of the flesh. Not only just in thought and you draw close with your body. Not only just in thought and you draw close with your body.

This word flee is the same word like the angel said to Joseph, Mary's husband. Get up, flee into Egypt. King Herod wants to kill the child.

And if he wouldn't have fled, we wouldn't have a saviour today. If he wouldn't have fled, we'd all be hell bound. If he wouldn't have fled, we'd all be hell bound.

But thank God that there was a Joseph who was obedient. When God spoke, he listened. And that saved Jesus.

Maybe your Jesus has been killed. He's been beheaded. Because you're not walking in Joseph's footsteps.

And then you come confessing and confessing and confessing again. Just as Joseph fled to Egypt, you've got to flee from sin. And then the devil, the last person in this trinity.

The Bible says and Peter says, resist him, resist the devil and he will flee from you. He will flee from you. But he doesn't flee.

He is like a blue, black fly from the toilet pit sitting on you. If you are disobedient, this roaring lion will chew you and swallow you and will run up and down the hill through the whole world. And you'll be like Jonah in the belly of the fish.

Can I stop now? Is that enough? Does this make sense to you? Or are you senseless?

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