

Temptation From All Sides

by J.H. Newman

The sermon emphasizes the importance of humility and recognizing our true spiritual state, which can only be revealed through exposure to various kinds of temptations.

Scripture: 1 Samuel 17:37, 2 Samuel 12:7, 2 Chronicles 32:25, Psalm 19:12, Matthew 26:75, Romans 3:23, 1 Corinthians 10:12, Hebrews 4:15, 1 John 1:8

Topics: "Temptation And Sin", "Spiritual Humility"

Description

John Henry Newman reflects on the hidden weaknesses and secret faults that can betray even the most faithful followers of God, using examples like Peter, David, and Hezekiah who stumbled in moments of temptation and prosperity. He emphasizes the importance of not assuming we fully understand our own spiritual state until we have faced various temptations and trials from all sides, as integrity in one aspect of our character does not guarantee integrity in others. This humbling realization should lead us to acknowledge our sinfulness and rely on the One who truly knows the depths of our sins.

Transcript

"Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults" (Ps. 19:12).

Now reflect upon the actual disclosures of our hidden weakness, which accidents occasion. Peter followed Christ boldly, and suspected not his own heart, till it betrayed him in the hour of temptation, and led him to deny his Lord. David lived years of happy obedience while he was in private life.

What calm, clear-sighted faith is manifested in his answer to Saul about Goliath:--"The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." Nay not only in retired life, in severe trial, under ill usage from Saul, he continued faithful to his God; years and years did he go on, fortifying his heart, and learning the fear of the Lord; yet power and wealth weakened his faith, and for a season overcame him. There was a time when a prophet could retort upon him, "Thou art the man" whom thou condemnest. He had kept his principles in words, but lost them in his heart.

Hezekiah is another instance of a religious man bearing trouble well, but for a season falling back under the temptation of prosperity; and that, after extraordinary mercies had been vouchsafed to him.' And if these things be so in the case of the favored saints of God, what (may we suppose) is our own real spiritual state in His sight? It is a serious thought. The warning to be deduced from it is this:--Never to think

we have a due knowledge of ourselves till we have been exposed to various kinds of temptations, and tried on every side. Integrity on one side of our character is no voucher for integrity on another. We cannot tell how we should act if brought under temptations different from those which we have hitherto experienced. This thought should keep us humble.

We are sinners, but we do not know how great. He alone knows who died for our sins.

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