

## SOME “DIFFICULT” TOOLS GOD USES TO SHAPE US. Pt 2

*“All things work together... to conform us to the image of His son.”* Ro. 8:28,29

Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC Sunday, Sept. 27<sup>th</sup>

**Reflection:** God’s Great Commission (Mt. 29:18-20) reveals that God’s Great Plan involves our:

- Salvation: Enabling a Restoration of a Personal relationship with God. Col. 1:13
- Baptism: Producing an identification and association with God and His Church. (Ro. 6)
- Discipleship: Providing a path for personal Transformation to Christlikeness! (Ro. 8)

God describes His people as precious jewels. (Ex. 19:5; Mal. 3:17; 1 Peter 2:9) The process of transforming “rocks” into precious jewels is similar to God’s process for transforming His people “into the image of His son” (Ro. 8:28,29) **This process of Transformation is:**

- **Purposeful** (Ro. 8:28,29; 12:1,2; Job 23:13-16; Jer 29:11)
- **Purifying** (Job 23:10; 1 Peter 1:7; James 1:2-5)
- **Powerful!** (Acts 4:13, 33)
- **Painful** (Is. 48:10,11; 1 Pt 1:7)

Last time we discussed that God sometimes allows / uses Trouble in order to: **Turn us** (*Pr. 1:23; Heb 12; Rev. 3:19*); **Tune us** (*Jn 12:27,28; 2 Cor. 12:7-12*) and **Teach us** to trust and touch Him. (*Ro. 8:28-39*)

**Direction:** This week I’d like to discuss one the more challenging/confusing tools God uses to shape us “into the image of His Son.” (Ro. 8:28,29)

### God uses Temptation to teach us to **obey** Him.

Jms 1:12 *“Blessed (Makarios: supremely fortunate) is the man that endureth (Hupomeno: To stay true) temptation: (Peirasmos’ putting to the test or proof) for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.”* (Remember Ro. 8:28)

**1. God is not the author of temptations, but He can use them to teach us. Mt. 4:1**  
*“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.”*

**A. Temptation provides us with:**

- 1) A **Choice** Mt 6:24 *“no man can serve two masters”*
  - a) Character is built on making good choices.
  - b) Wisdom is sometimes forged on the anvil of bad choices! Ps 119:67
- 2) A **Chance** James 1:2,3; 1:12 *“blessed is the man who endureth temptation...”*
  - a) To demonstrate our **devotion**. (Jn 14:15,21) 2 Cor 8:8 *“to prove the sincerity of your love.”*
  - b) To develop our spiritual **fruit**. James 1:2,3

**2. Lessons from Jesus’ Temptation.** Mt 4:1-11

**A. Temptation is not sin.** Temptation is inevitable.

- 1) Jesus was *“in all points tempted, like as we are, yet without sin”* Heb. 4:15,16

**B. Satan is the source of all temptation to sin. Mt 4:1**

James 1:13 *“God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.”*

**C. Temptation is part of the journey of life.** *“Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness”*

**D. They often come during difficult “desert” experiences.**

**1) Notice when Satan came to Jesus:**

- a) After 40 days in a wilderness. (tired and alone) Mt. 4:2-4
- b) In the Garden of Gethsemane. Mt 26:38 *“My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.”* (Also weary and alone!)

**E. They usually fall into 3 categories: 1 Jn 2:16**

- 1) *"Lust of flesh"* (pleasure); Mt. 4:2,3 (Satisfy appetite)
- 2) *"lust of eyes"* (possessions) Mt. 4:8-10 Kingdoms of the world:
- 3) *"and the pride of life"* Mt. 4:5-7 Jump from the Temple pinnacle

**This is the same approach he used with Eve. Gen. 3**

**G. Temptations provide a choice of who (what) we will serve and worship.**

Luke 4:8 *"Get thee behind me, Satan: ... Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."*  
Phil. 3:18,19 *"For many walk, .. they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly... who mind earthly things."*

**H) Victory is related to our application of God's Word. *"The Sword of the Spirit"* Eph. 6:17**

Jesus responded to each of Satan's temptations with the proper application of God's word.  
*"It is written..."* Mt 4:4, 7, 10

**3. Victory (Obedience) is about Love. Jn. 14:15 *"If you love Me, keep My commandments."***

1 Jn 5:3 *"this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."*

- A. When we're tempted to be materialistic:** Who do I love/serve more: God or money?
- B. When we're tempted to be complacent:** Who do I love/serve more: God or comfort?
- C. When you're tempted to be self-promoting:** Who Do I love/serve more: God or myself?

Ro 8:35,37 *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."*

Jms 1:12 *"Blessed (Makarios: supremely fortunate) is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."*

**Application: How to Triumph over Temptation**

➤ **Stay focused on Good and God.** Ph. 4:6-8 *Temptations begin by capturing your attention.*

Jms 1:14 *"every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts..."*

- a) You "wonder" mentally before you wander spiritually.
- b) You overcome by refocusing, not just resisting! (Phil. 4:6-8)

**2) Get a spiritual "accountability" partner.** Ecc. 4:9-12 *"two are better than one..."*

Heb. 3:13 *"But exhort one another daily, ... lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."*

- a) "Divide and conquer" is still Satan's most effective strategy.
- b) Who will your "Spiritual Spotter" be?

*"Accountability to another is the only way to safeguard against poor judgment, unconscious motivations, and self-deception."* Dr. Archibald D. Hart

**3) Keep short accounts with God.** (1 John 1:9; Ro. 6:16)

Pr. 5:22,23 *"His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins. He shall die without instruction; and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray."*

**Consider discipleship (transformation) in the light of a marriage commitment.** (Eph. 5:22-32; Rev 19)

Ro 12:1 *"I beseech you ..., by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*

**Do we consider such commitment in marriage "reasonable?"**

Ro 12:2 *"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind"*

**Did anything about your thinking, priorities, habits change after marriage?**

*"that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."*