

Been There, Done That

Joe Slater

“Lord, You just don’t understand what I’m going through!” Have you ever said or thought something like that? The Bible tells us that *“we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin”* (Hebrews 4:15). Yes, Jesus understands because He has “been there, done that”! The difference is, while we often yield to temptation, Jesus never did – not even once.

Now, Jesus may not have been tempted to do exactly the same things you are tempted to do. Driving 75 MPH in a 55 zone was not an option in the first century! But was He tempted to be impatient and to violate laws that seemed inconvenient at the moment? Of course!

The temptations Jesus resisted were of the same varieties as the ones you and I face: *“the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life”* (1 John 2:16). In Matthew 4, when Satan tempted Him to turn stones into bread, the craving of the flesh was powerful – He had not eaten for 40 days! The prospect of jumping off the high pinnacle of the temple appealed to pride – what a great show it would be to walk away unscathed. Then Satan showed Him the kingdoms of the world (lust of the eyes) and offered them to Him (pride of life). Truly, Jesus was tempted in all points as we are.

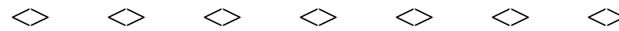
Some people erroneously see Jesus as immune from actual temptation. They think that since He was God in the flesh, temptations really didn’t affect Him as they do us. They were merely annoyances that bounced off of Him like bullets off of Superman.

Not So! Such would be a mockery, and would provide us with no comfort or assurance whatever. Either Jesus’ temptations were every bit as strong and trying as

ours, or He was a fake, a fraud, and an impostor. Our Lord did not “cheat” by using infinite power (omnipotence) to overcome temptations. He fought on the same field as everyone else (see Philippians 2:7 ASV, He *“emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men”*).

How blessed we are to have such a sympathetic High Priest! When we are tempted, Jesus can say, “I understand fully what you are experiencing. I’ve been where you are.” That isn’t an excuse to yield to temptation. It is an assurance that there is Someone there to help us, and to lift us up when we stumble.

“Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Hebrews 4:16)



Do What’s Right “Anyway”!

People are unreasonable, illogical, and self-centered.

–Love them anyway

If you do good, people will accuse you of ulterior motives.

–Do good anyway

If you find serenity and happiness, they may be envious.

–Be happy anyway.

The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow.

–Do good anyway.

Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable.

–Be frank and honest anyway.

People favor underdogs, but will follow only top dogs.

–Fight for some underdogs anyway.

People may need help, but attack you if you help them.

–Help people anyway.

What you build for years may be destroyed overnight.

–Build anyway.

Give the world the your best & it may never be enough.

–Give your best anyway. (Author unknown)

Facebook Fraud

"Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." (Acts 17:11).

If you are on Facebook, you probably saw several posts recently warning about security and privacy. It probably looked something like this: "Better safe than sorry is right. ... As of September 26th , 2015 ... I do not give Facebook ... permission to use my pictures, information ..."

Of course, it is a hoax. Some fraudulent viral posts may announce some wickedly horrific story from history you have never heard before - because it never happened. How do such fake stories get so much traction so quickly? There are two reasons:

First, we do not check our sources. We assume that what our friends post is correct. Because it is on Facebook/Twitter/Huffington Post/Yahoo it is true, right? None of them would intentionally mislead us, would they? Maybe not intentionally, but they could be wrong, couldn't they?

Second, we do follow the crowd. If everyone is sharing pictures of their daughter, I do not want my daughter to feel left out. If everyone writes about Facebook charging, I should also. If all my friends say microwaving the iPhone is the way to go, maybe I should nuke mine.

When we understand all this, it helps us comprehend why there are so many religions and teachings today. My preacher/parents/spouse/friends would not lead me into error, would they? Perhaps not intentionally, but they could be wrong. And if everyone is doing and believing this or that, it is okay, right?

I John 4:1-6 warns us not to believe everyone or everything we hear. Acts 17:11 tells us of the noble Bereans who did not believe without baking it up in scripture. Yet, II Peter 2:2 reminds us many will fall away because of false teaching.

Don't believe everything you read on Facebook ... no matter who - or how many - post it. And certainly, do not believe everything you hear religiously ... no matter who - or how many - may believe and/or teach it. Check the source - search the scriptures daily to find out if the things you taught are so (Acts 17:11).

--Corey Sawyers (Denver, CO)