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All These Things I Will Give You If...

972-B

Series: Let God Be God

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INTO HIS LIKENESS RADIO

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Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. (I John 2:15-17)

In those stark, descriptive verses from the first epistle of John, the Holy Spirit takes the anvil of Truth and etches into the untarnished gold of Scripture an amazing formula for living the Christian life, a formula which is at the same time an enigma that the natural mind can find no way to rationalize.

Misapplied, this passage has devastating consequences. Properly understood, however, it has the capacity to set the Christian free to live in this world, without becoming captive to it.

This was the issue that Jesus was addressing in His final temptation in the wilderness. In fact, this passage is considered by many to be a description of the whole realm of temptation rolled into three simple statements. Diagrammed, it looks like this:

Basic Temptation	Eve (Genesis 3)	Jesus (Matthew 4)
Lust of the flesh	The tree was good for food	Command the stones be turned to bread
Lust of the eyes	It was a delight to the eyes	Cast thyself down (spectacular sight)
Pride of Life	The tree was desired to make one wise	All the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them

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Do you see the pattern? The passage outlines the three basic temptations from which all other temptations evolve: the lust of the flesh—the pull of the senses to dictate our choices; the lust of the eyes—the response of the senses to what we see that we want; and the pride of life—the unconscious desire of the natural man for status and acceptance. It was the sum total of all that Satan used in his onslaught against Eve, and it was the sum total of all that he used in his attack on Jesus in the wilderness. So from this first traumatic incident in the life of Christ, we can see emerge a pattern that winds its thread throughout the entirety of the Bible, a pattern that is finally depicted for us here in I John, chapter two, verses 15-17.

In this lesson, we conclude our look at the face-to-face encounter between Satan and Jesus in the wilderness by taking a closer look at that final temptation.

The title and outline for this lesson is: “All These Things I Will Give You If...”

I- Let’s Make A Deal

II- All These Things

III- The Two-Kingdom Lie

In our last two lessons, we looked, first of all, at the three temptations themselves and what they were. Then we looked at the three great statements that emerged from the passage that were the keys to understanding the mind of God where testing is concerned. The first statement was, “If you are who you say you are”. The second was, “It is written”. And the final one was, “And the angels came”. In the first study, we took an overview of the incident, and in the second, we took a three-point look at the issues involved. Today we conclude by looking at the whole event through the lens of that concluding temptation.

Satan’s first two temptations, you recall, were for Jesus to do something to prove that He was the Son of God. They were the teasers, the dares at the hand of Satan to see if Jesus would accept the challenge to solve his problems in the flesh. Jesus, of course, answered, “No, it is written”. Now Satan reaches down into his bag of tricks and tempts Jesus to do the one thing that would keep Him from the Cross and render the Gospel ineffective. He dares Jesus to make a deal.

He takes Him to the top of a mountain and shows Him all the kingdoms of this world and their glory. How he did this and

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what form it took, we do not know. Speculation would be of no value. We know he did, however, because the Scripture records it. Once there, Satan said, “Jesus, let’s make a deal. You’re here to lay claim to a kingdom. I’m here because I am the prince of this world. Your kingdom would come at my expense. We don’t need to be enemies. Here’s what I’ll do. See all of that? Look at all that power! Look at all that glory! Look at all those possessions! I’ll make you an offer you can’t refuse, Jesus. Here is the title to the whole thing. It’s all yours; it won’t cost you a thing. All you have to do is fall down and submit to my authority instead of your father’s, and you can have it all. “

“It’s all mine to give, Jesus,” Satan went on. “It’s all mine to give, and I can give it to whomever I choose. Fall down and worship me, honor me as the king of the earth, and you can have it all.”

So here in this final temptation we have the sum total of Satan’s offerings to man. It can be summed up in one statement: “All these things will I give you, if...”. The “all” applies to the kingdoms and the glories of this world. The “things” applies to everything this world offers as a substitute for truth. The “will give” is a conditional phrase that is predicated on the assumption that a) the one speaking is trustworthy, and b) that what he is offering is his to give. The “if” refers to that which makes the offer conditional, the alteration of the chain of command of life which, in essence, makes Jesus a co-god with Satan, or the kingdom of this world of equal importance with the Kingdom of God.

Don’t kid yourself into thinking that this temptation would not appeal to you. Its subtlety constitutes the basis for its deadliness. Satan, you remember, was “more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made” (Genesis 3:1).

In II Corinthians 11, Paul makes this observation,

But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

(II Corinthians 11:3,14b)

In other words, don’t sell the rascal short. He has access to the mind of man, and from that vantage point, he injects into the bloodstream of human thought concepts that cunningly confuse the Christian mind into believing that you can have God’s best

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and Satan's best at the same time. It not only invades the thought processes of the most intelligent of minds, it pervades the doctrine of the church as well, until well-meaning proponents of prosperity and well-being presuppose that to succeed on planet earth is paramount in the plan of God, and to gain power and glory in this life is part and parcel of the will of God.

Satan was not asking Jesus to give up His goal to build a kingdom. He was not asking Jesus to forfeit his plans to build the church. He was not asking Jesus to circumvent his objectives to call out disciples and train them in religious pursuits. No, the church, and the disciples, and the kingdom fit nicely into Satan's plans. They still do. His goal was not to destroy the kingdom, but to divert the kingdom. He was simply tempting Jesus to take the emphasis off the sinfulness of man and the necessity for a cross, and replace it with "all these things".

Now what were "all these things"? They constituted the very best the world has to offer. Not drugs and debauchery. Not disease and degradation. Those are by-products of the world's best, and they lie hidden beneath the surface of life, masqueraded as perversions of life, when in reality, they are the natural results of "all these things". No, Satan didn't show Jesus the fruits of sin. He showed him the facade of sin—the glamour, the glitter, the pomp, the power. He showed the Master the mighty armies of Rome, the splendor of Greece, the wealth of Ancient Egypt, the world's best technology, the world's most magnificent cultural achievements, the world's great charitable ventures; a world in which the hungry were fed, the naked were clothed, and the poor were catapulted into cities of success.

He added, "All these things will I give you if...". None of the three temptations was as big an affront to God as this one. The first one was a test to make God meet a real need, but in a way that would compromise God's plan. The second created a need, just to see if God would come to the rescue. It was infinitely more presumptuous; it dared God to prove Himself. But still it was nothing compared to what Satan was suggesting now. Now Satan was suggesting that God's objectives and his could coexist. He denied that they were engaged in an all-out conflict that could not end in anything less than total victory and total defeat. He minimized the essence of spiritual warfare and overlooked the fact that his entire life was spent roaming planet earth in an effort to devour Christians and destroy the work of the Spirit.

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Suddenly, he was Mr. Congenial, selling a glitter-wrapped package of coexistence that propagated the biggest lie ever sold to man, the lie that Christianity is not an either/or situation.

That lie is still being sold on the open market. The heavens quake as principalities and powers, the rulers of darkness themselves, shake their fist in the face of God, not by denying His existence, but rather by denying His claim to total, absolute allegiance.

Satan never gives up. He has access to the thoughts of men, and through the gate of the imaginations of man's thoughts, which Scripture tells us "is only wicked continually," the devil steals into our lives and creates impressions which, when yielded to, cause us to be subtly intrigued by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.

He moves into our lives in a myriad of ways.

1- He provokes us to compromise the principles of God the way he provoked David to number Israel in I Chronicles 21:1. These will be subtle attempts to place confidence in the flesh, attempts that even the Christian world sees as harmless, but God sees as grievous.

2- He stands against us when we stand before God as he did Joshua, the priest, in Zechariah 3:1.

3- He steals from our minds truth we have heard, but not applied (Matthew 13:19). He doesn't mind our spending days being convicted, as long as we let that conviction slip through our fingers, as we go after more truth, rather than applying the truth we know.

4- He brings trauma into our lives to tempt us to deny our faith (Luke 22:31). He knows that unexpected setbacks can actually cause us to question God's sovereignty and His love.

5- He puts deception into our hearts so that we will not be honest with ourselves or with God or with others (John 13:2, Acts 5:3).

6- He takes advantage of situations when we have, even innocently, left ourselves unnecessarily open to temptation (I Corinthians 7:5), or when we knowingly disobey Scriptural principles (II Corinthians 2:11).

7- He sends into our lives seemingly never-ending trials

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which God will use, if we will let Him, but which will turn to bitterness, if we let Satan have his way. Thus, in II Corinthians 12:7, Paul describes his “thorn in the flesh” as a blessing of God to reveal His grace, but as “sent by Satan as a messenger to buffet him”.

8- He throws roadblocks into our paths to keep us from ministering as he did to Paul in I Thessalonians 2:18.

9- He encourages the early exaltation of young Christians in the Church, so they can be caught up with spiritual pride and be shipwrecked (I Timothy 3:6).

These are but a few of his tactics, tactics we are told in II Corinthians 2 “not to be ignorant of”, tactics we are told in Ephesians 4 “not to give place to”, tactics we are told in Ephesians 6 to “stand against”, tactics we are told in James 4 and in I Peter 5 “to resist”. Through the gate of the mind he moves, prompting us with thoughts that may not appear on the surface to be blatantly rebellious, but which, in effect, simply tempt us to substitute “all these things” for all God’s best. Quietly he moves; deceptively he moves; swiftly he moves. He tempts us first to question God’s sovereignty, then tempts us to wonder about God’s Word, and finally tempts us to test God to prove Himself. Then, like a vulture who has been circling overhead, waiting for the moment to descend, he swoops into our lives, and quietly whispers “let’s make a deal”. It is not a deal to deny God, but a deal to deny God His rightful place as Lord.

He simply begins to offer us “all these things”. The method he uses is surprisingly simple, but deceptively destructive. God has clearly etched its pattern into this third temptation, so that we will not be taken unawares by its appeal to the natural man. Yet, somehow, perhaps because we have not meditated on this passage enough, we often listen to his reasoning and we begin to rationalize, based on the sheer logic of his arguments. “All these things” can be yours and “how effective you can be as a Christian”, he argues, “with all these things, if you will simply relent, and pour yourself into both worlds. Just don’t become such a religious fanatic that you cannot enjoy the pursuit of all these things.”

And so we have the trademark of the enemy, a trademark left on the lives of God’s children that is so subtly engraved on their spirits it does not even appear until after it has done its damage.

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I believe we can easily call it the “two-kingdom lie”. It works like this—when a man is born, he is born into the kingdom of this world. As soon as he is able to see, to feel, to be fed, to be cared for, his appetites and his attitudes are predicated on having his physical needs met. He wants milk. He wants to be changed, to be cuddled, to be fed on demand. He wants his appetites satisfied (the lust of the flesh). He wants to get what he sees (the lust of the eyes). He wants to be loved, accepted, and pampered (the pride of life). His natural mind grows by being fed information produced in the natural world. He grows older. He learns to gratify the flesh more and more by yielding more and more to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Yet at the same time, something wonderful happens. God begins to reach out to him, God’s Word reaches his heart, and conviction begins to take place. Finally, the seed of the Word takes root in the womb of the heart, and he is born again.

Now he is a new creature. Old things are passing away; all things are becoming new. The King has entered his life, and a whole new kingdom is now his. The Holy Spirit has ignited his human spirit, and now he can understand spiritual truth. He begins to see things from God’s perspective and finds that they are 180 degrees different from man’s vantage point. He sees this world as passing away. He sees the treasures of this world as perishable commodities, where moth and rust corrupt, and thieves break through and steal. He begins to see his strength being made perfect in weakness. He begins to see tribulation working patience in his life. He begins to see that he was intended to be satisfied with such things as he has; having food and raiment, he is therewith to be content. He begins to realize that in order for God to bring His kingdom into full bloom in his life, the things he has always considered important must cease to be primary, and he is to “count it all joy” when he falls into situations where the flesh is denied so the spirit can be fed. All of life takes on a new meaning. All of life’s goals begin to change. He has been born again.

Now, you see, there is the basis for an all-out war. Now, the battle really begins. Satan steals into his thoughts and whispers, “Hey, you really are becoming a great Christian. God must be so proud of you! He loves you so much. He loves you so much he wants you to have it all! Hey, look at all you’ve been missing. You’ve been so busy with that religious stuff, you’ve forgotten

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that God wants His children happy. Say, didn't you go to Bill and Judy's house last night? What a palace! God loves you as much as he does Bill. If God is who He says He is, he ought to give you a house like that. Here's a verse of Scripture; claim it. Satan says, 'Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened.' Just knock on a new house, and tell your God you're claiming it for Jesus. It's all yours. Didn't he tell you he would give you the desires of your heart? Go for it. So that deal is a little shaky; God understands. So you have to bend the truth a little; everybody does it! Wow. You used to live like that. Remember all the fun? Just look at what the world is enjoying that you're not. Sure, you can do those things and still be a Christian; look at Deacon Phillips. He's still sitting on the front row every Sunday (and you know what he's doing Monday through Saturday). God doesn't care, as long as you tithe."

On and on he weaves his lies. "Eat, drink, and be merry (the lust of the flesh). Look, long for, and desire (the lust of the eyes). Boast, beg, and be proud (the pride of life). Keep going to church, that's all right. Keep quoting Scripture, that's all right. I'm not asking you to give up your religion," Satan adds, "just don't confine your objectives to only one kingdom. You can have the best of both worlds: the fire insurance of salvation and the property insurance of a worldly life. Just look at all those things. You can have God's best and my best both," Satan is saying. "All those things I will give you if..."

"Wait a minute," you respond, "All those things I will give you...if what?" "Oh, it isn't important," Satan adds, "I'll get to that later." "No", you reply, "all those things I will give you if... what? What's the fine print say?" "If you will gradually change your allegiance, until you have come to fall down and worship me." (That's what the fine print says.) Gradually, it must be, you see, for none of us would go for it out in the open. The "all these things" is the bait. The fall-down-and-worship me is the trap.

So we turn to God and ask, "Lord, what do you think of that offer?" Sternly, Jesus replies:

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that friendship with the world is enmity with God? (James 4:4a)

No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

(Matthew 6:24)

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Then, lovingly, Jesus takes us to a mountain top, too. And He points to all the kingdoms of this world and the glory of them, and He reads Matthew 24:2 “See ye not all these things? Verily, I say unto you, There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” Then He lovingly, turns to II Peter 3 and reads:

The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?

Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.

(II Peter 3:9-14)

That is what is going to happen to all these things.

God’s going to build the biggest bonfire in the history of man, and all these things are going to go up in smoke! All these things. Satan wants us to give our lives to things that are going to become charcoal.

So Jesus concludes by reading to us from Colossians, chapter 3, these words:

If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory.

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Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth;...
[And then He lists all those things.] (Colossians 3:1-5a)

My friend, the Christian life is a one-kingdom life. We are not to live in two worlds at the same time. We are to live in one or the other. But the things this world counts as dear are not to be counted as important to us.

God has a better way. Instead of gnawing our way to the pinnacle of success, we are to labor diligently, content to be God's man or woman at the bottom of the ladder, and let God exalt us in whatever way He chooses, and only if He chooses. Instead of trying to live the Christian life with the weights of this life's best draped all about us, we are to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and run the race that counts. Instead of demanding our way in relationships, we are to lay down our lives for one another, and if we are mistreated, we are to love the more. If someone demands that we carry their load as well as ours, we don't fret and fume. We offer to go the second mile. If our mate doesn't love as they ought, we are to but love the more. If our boss is unruly or unreasonable, we are to but work the harder. The things we may lose are incidental. The people we affect are everything.

When we get to heaven all these things will be gone. Not even their memories will remain. All that will remain are the lives we have touched, the priceless treasures laid up there as God poured Himself through us into the hearts of people. Those people will join us in that eternity to come, praising His precious name, that when faced with the choice of giving our lives for that which lasts, or giving our lives for all these things, we chose the better part.

(See poem next page.)

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ALL THESE THINGS

The question God is asking now
Beloved, is “how about you?”
What in life is the driving force
Behind everything you do?

Do you want to get all the world affords
And still be the best Christian you can?
Or are you ready to die to it all
Just to be God’s kind of man?

When you came to Christ the song in your heart
Was, “Wherever He leads, I’ll go”
You were ready to suffer or die for your faith
So that “into his likeness” you’d grow.

But one day Satan drew you aside
At the time, it made so much sense.
He said, “All these things I will give you if...
You just won’t be so intense.

Serve the Lord, that’s okay
But ease up on the ‘dying’ stuff
Give God His; and you get yours
(I’ll see that you get enough).”

Oh, dear child, please listen
That’s simply not God’s way.
The “all-these-things” you’re gaining
Are all going to burn someday!

Cry out “All that matters is Jesus!
It was He who paid the price.
Satan, you can have all those things
Just give me more of Christ!”

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