

much more than you are apt to get as a beginner in the pastorate. There is the temptation to keep on with secular work after graduating. Now the Lord may intend for some of you to keep on. He may intend for some of us to earn our living by tent-making even as Paul earned his living by tentmaking, and to devote a very considerable amount of our time to the Lord's work on the side, you might say.

He certainly does not intend for any of us to make the getting of daily bread the primary thing in our lives. It is to be a side issue. And when the devil says to turn these stones into bread, the Lord wants us to say, Thou shalt not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God. Notice he did not say, You shall not live by bread. He said, Not by bread alone. We have a responsibility under God to find a way of securing our bread, to find a way, a reasonable, proper way of doing it. But it should not be primary with any one of us.

This temptation of Christ corresponds to temptations and to situations that are very important in the lives of all of us. And the phrase "the cravings of the sinful nature" or the phrase "the lusts of the flesh" doesn't give the idea to us today. I think the desires of the natural man or the deeds of the natural man would be nearer to telling what the phrase means.

The other two parts of that verse and the other two parts of the temptation of Christ are equally important for each of us. They represent important matters that we have to face, and that Jesus faced in our stead. And Jesus though tempted in all points like as we are, was without sin. And became the perfect sacrifice. May God enable us to make sure that every phase of our lives that He as our sinbearer is primary; He as our leader; He as the One who lives in and through us, and that we follow in His steps.

Let us pray: Our Father, help us we pray to see the lessons you have for us and to follow as your word teaches. Give us wisdom in the interpretation. And O our God no matter if the difficulties become great and we don't see where the bread is coming from, help us nevertheless to keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus Christ and to push forward knowing that His will is best. We ask in Jesus Name, Amen.