

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED ON THE BOOK OF HEBREWS

JESUS HELPS YOU WHEN YOU ARE BEING TEMPTED

Hebrews 2:17-18 “For this reason He had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.”

Pet sins. That is the name I have given to the sins that I, as much as I do not want, repeatedly commit. I struggle to stop speeding on the highway and city streets. I repeatedly have thoughts of dissatisfaction with God’s gifts. There are so many other pesky sins I find myself repeating. How about you?

We pray in the Lord’s prayer that God “would guard and keep us so that the devil, the world, and our sinful nature may not deceive us or mislead us into false belief, despair and other great shame and vice.” In this same prayer we pray that “our Father in heaven would rescue us from every evil of body and soul . . .” (Luther’s explanation of the sixth and seventh petitions of the Lord’s Prayer, Small Catechism)

How is it that your heavenly Father does this for you? He gives You His Holy Spirit to drive you to God’s Word where you learn that Jesus took on the authors, those who would tempt you to sin, for you. He leads you to remember your Baptism, which is a “little exorcism through which . . . the evil ones are driven away.” (Large Catechism, page 428) The Holy Spirit leads you to read that Jesus in the wilderness overcame every temptation of Satan for you and now assists you in your battle with the temptations that come into your life as today’s devotional verse says, “Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.” (Hebrews 2:18)

“Christ stood firm against the devil’s attacks and defeated him through His death and resurrection so that (you can) now withstand his assaults in Jesus’ name. . . hold on to ‘the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, praying at all times in the Spirit’ for His strength in (your) desert journey.” (Large Catechism, pages 428-429) [see Ephesians 6:10-18]

Prayer: O Lord, fill me with Your and Your Spirit's presence leading me to remember the power of my baptism and of Your Holy Word to equip me to overcome all sin. In Your holy name, dear Jesus. Amen.

All Christians who have been baptized, Who know the God of heaven,
And in whose daily life is prized The name of Christ once given:
Consider now what God has done, The gifts He gives to ev'ryone
Baptized into Christ Jesus!

You were before your day of birth, Indeed, from your conception,
Condemned and lost with all the earth, None good with out exception.
For like your parents' flesh and blood, Turned inward from the highest good,
You constantly denied Him.

But all of that was washed away— Immersed and drowned forever.
The water of your Baptism day Restored again whatever
Old Adam and his sin destroyed And all our sinful selves employed
According to our nature.

In Baptism we now put on Christ— Our shame is fully covered
With all that He once sacrificed And freely for us suffered.
For here the flood of His own blood Now makes us holy, right, and good
Before our heav'nly Father.

O Christian, firmly hold this gift And give God thanks forever!
It gives the power to uplift In all that you endeavor.
When nothing else revives your soul,
Your Baptism stands and makes you whole And then in death completes you.

So use it well! You are made new— In Christ a new creation!
As faithful Christians, live and do Within your own vocation,
Until that day when you possess His glorious robe of righteousness
Bestowed on you forever!

(LSB 596)