

Stay Warm in the Cold (November 17, 2019 by Rev. Anthony Menzel)

Scripture 1: Matthew 24:4-14

⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. ⁶ And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for [a]all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. ⁷ For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, [b]pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. ⁸ All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

⁹ "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. ¹⁰ And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹ Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹² And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But he who endures to the end shall be saved. ¹⁴ And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

How do we protect ourselves so that the love inside of us does not grow cold?

Today I want to provide us with some weapons we can use to protect ourselves from the spiritual disease of growing cold in our love for the Lord Jesus and others...

1) When you want to react in anger or desperation, cry out to God instead. It may seem like there is no way out of your situation, but sooner or later, if you remain faithful to the Lord Jesus, God will give you a way out of the situation...

Scripture 1: Psalm 30:5

For His anger *is but for* a moment,
His favor *is for* life;
Weeping may endure for a night,
But [c]joy *comes* in the morning.

Scripture 2: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13

Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for *their bodies* were scattered in the wilderness.

⁶ Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. ⁷ And do not become idolaters as *were* some of them. As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play." ⁸ Nor let us commit sexual immorality, as some of them did, and in one day twenty-three thousand fell; ⁹ nor let us [a]tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents; ¹⁰ nor complain, as some of them also complained, and were destroyed by the destroyer. ¹¹ Now [b]all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our [c]admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

¹² Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to [d]bear *it*.

Scripture 3: Psalm 141

LORD, I cry out to You;

Make haste to me!

Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You.

² Let my prayer be set before You *as* incense,
The lifting up of my hands *as* the evening sacrifice.

³ Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth;

Keep watch over the door of my lips.

⁴ Do not incline my heart to any evil thing,

To practice wicked works

With men who work iniquity;

And do not let me eat of their delicacies.

⁵ Let the righteous strike me;

It shall be a kindness.

And let him rebuke me;

It shall be as excellent oil;
Let my head not refuse it.
For still my prayer *is* against the deeds of the wicked.
⁶ Their judges are overthrown by the sides of the [a]cliff,
And they hear my words, for they are sweet.
⁷ Our bones are scattered at the mouth of the grave,
As when one plows and breaks up the earth.
⁸ But my eyes *are* upon You, O GOD the Lord;
In You I take refuge;
[b]Do not leave my soul destitute.
⁹ Keep me from the snares they have laid for me,
And from the traps of the workers of iniquity.
¹⁰ Let the wicked fall into their own nets,
While I escape safely.

There are so many verses about the importance of watching the words that we speak...
One of the most famous passages is

Scripture 4: Proverbs 18:20-21

A man's stomach shall be satisfied from the fruit of his mouth;
From the produce of his lips he shall be filled.
²¹ Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue,
And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Where do our words come from? Desires that we entertain as thoughts...

Scripture 5: Proverbs 23:6-7

Do not eat the bread of a [b] miser,
Nor desire his delicacies;
⁷ For as he thinks in his heart, so *is* he.
"Eat and drink!" he says to you,
But his heart is not with you.

Scripture 6: James 1:12-17

¹² Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. ¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt

anyone. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. ¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

When we entertain evil thoughts, we are in sin...

Scripture 7: Matthew 5:27-28

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said ^[i]to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' ²⁸ But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

2) To block out the cold of this world, we should also be gentle with ourselves when we can...

Scripture 8: Matthew 7:6

⁶ "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

There is no reason for us to seek unnecessary suffering...

The Lord Jesus wants our obedience, not unnecessary sacrifices...

Scripture 9: 1 Samuel 15:22-23

²² So Samuel said:

"Has the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the LORD?

Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,

And to heed than the fat of rams.

²³ For rebellion *is* as the sin of ^[d]witchcraft,

And stubbornness *is* as iniquity and idolatry.

Because you have rejected the word of the LORD,

He also has rejected you from *being* king."

When we limit ourselves as much as possible to obedience instead of unnecessary sacrifice, then we will have more strength to obey the Lord Jesus and will be less likely to fall into sin...

3) To block this cold world, we should put on a garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness...

Scripture 10: Isaiah 61:1-3


“The Spirit of the Lord GOD *is* upon Me,
Because the LORD has anointed Me
To preach good tidings to the poor;
He has sent Me to ^[a]heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives,
And the opening of the prison to *those who are* bound;
² To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD,
And the day of vengeance of our God;
To comfort all who mourn,
³ To ^[b]console those who mourn in Zion,
To give them beauty for ashes,
The oil of joy for mourning,
The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;
That they may be called trees of righteousness,
The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

This is a prophecy of God’s Messiah, which means His Anointed One, Jesus Christ, who is also God the Son, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity...

Scripture 11: Luke 4:16-21

¹⁶ So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the LORD *is* upon Me,
Because He has anointed Me
To preach the gospel to *the* poor;
He has sent Me ^[i]to heal the brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to *the* captives

And recovery of sight to *the* blind,
To set at liberty those who are  oppressed;
¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down.
And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And
He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”
In order to keep our garment of praise on that the Lord Jesus gives us, we
have to be thankful...

Scripture 12: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

¹⁶ Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for
this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.