Satan Part 4:
Battling Satanic Accusation

Temptation Continued

1) When Satan Tempts through Suffering

2 Corinthians 12:7–10: [7] So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. [8] Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. [9] But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2) When Satan Tempts through Distraction

"[L]ike all young tempters, you are anxious to be able to report spectacular wickedness. But do remember, the only thing that matters is the extent to which you separate the man from the Enemy (God). It does not matter how small the sins are provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light and out into the Nothing. Murder is no better than cards if cards can do the trick. Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one—the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts…" (CS Lewis, *Screwtape Letters,* 60-61).

Battling Satanic Accusation

1) How Does Satan Accuse Us?

2) Why Does Satan Accuse Us?

Satan keeps "souls in a sad, doubting, and questioning condition, and so making their life a hell…By causing them to be still poring and musing upon sin, to mind their sins more than their Saviour…so to mind their sins as to forget [and even] to neglect their Saviour" (*Precious Remedies,* 142).

3) How Do We Battle Satan's Accusations (Spiritual Considerations)

"You have been bitten by the great serpent. The poison of sin is through and through your whole heart….Now for the remedy. Look to Christ; for the glorious Son of God so loved lost souls, that he took on him a body and died for us—bore our curse….Do not take up your time so much with studying your own heart as with studying Christ's heart. For one look at yourself, take ten looks at Christ!" (Bonnar, *Memoirs of M'Cheyne,* 236)

4) How Do We Battle Satan's Accusations? (Practical Considerations)

5) Lessons from Martin Luther

- ***Remember Satan's Attack is a Sign of God's Favor***

  "Excellent Jerome, You ought to rejoice in this temptation of the devil because it is a certain sign that God is propitious and merciful to you.

  The very reason Satan comes is that he smells in you something of faith and Jesus Christ. He does not go to sinners (unbelievers); he is not interested in them. In his very appearance he brings you the Gospel: you are of Christ."

- ***Don't Dwell on Thoughts of Despair and Accusation***….

  "Whenever this temptation comes to you, avoid entering upon a disputation with the devil and do not allow yourself to dwell on those deadly thoughts, for to do so is nothing short of yielding to the devil and letting him have his way. Try as hard as you can to despise those thoughts which are induced by the devil."

- ***Flee Solitude!***

  "By all means flee solitude, for the devil watches and lies in wait for you most of all when you are alone. This devil is conquered by mocking and despising him, not by resisting and arguing with him. . .Whenever the devil harasses you, seek the company of men or drink more, or joke and talk nonsense, or do some other merry thing…"

- ***Look Away from Self to Christ***

  "When the devil throws our sins up to us and declares we deserve death and hell, we ought to speak thus: 'I admit that I deserve death and hell. What of it? Does this mean that I shall be sentenced to eternal damnation? By no means. For I know One who suffered and made a satisfaction in my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Where he is, there I shall be also'" (Luther, *Letters of Spiritual Counsel)*

6) Lessons from John Bunyan

APOLLYON: You have already been unfaithful in your service to your Prince; and how do you think to receive wages of him?

CHRISTIAN: How, O Apollyon, have I been unfaithful to Him?!

APOLLYON: You fainted at first setting out, when you were almost choked in the Gulf of Despond; you attempted wrong ways to be rid of your burden [of sin] when you should have stayed till your Prince had taken it off; you did sinfully sleep and lose your choice thing [Bible]; your were, also, almost persuaded to go back at the sight of the lions; and when you talk of your journey, and of what you have heard and seen, you inwardly desire vain-glory in all that you say or do.

CHRISTIAN: All this is true, and much more which you have left out; but the Prince whom I serve and honor is merciful, and ready to forgive. But, besides, these sins possessed me in your country, for there I sucked them in. And I have groaned under them, been sorry for them, and I have obtained pardon from my Prince.