

(Continued from Part 1)

This man is different from any man you have ever seen. He has already eaten the Tree of Life. He straightened up, looked at Lucifer, turned the whole issue, and said, "Lucifer...*Man*." And He had him. He defeated him. Man shall not live by bread, but take one good look at me, for I am living right now by the word of God speaking within me. He made it, brothers. Praise the Lord. He made it. How'd He make it? He made it as a man with divine life in Him, and the Lord speaking, and His obedience to the Word. Round one. Praise the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, He's after His wife, and He'll know no barrier. Satan took Him to the pinnacle of the temple, and he stood there, and the Lord stood there, and I'm sure if you had looked up on that day and looked at the temple, you would have seen one man there. Satan took Him there, and some have called this the temptation of the soul. I don't know. I only tell you that Satan looked at Him and said, "If you be the Son of God, cast yourself down, for it's been said that the angels will take the Son of God and lift Him up and bear Him up to keep His foot from falling. Cast yourself down." And the Lord Jesus looked at Satan, and He felt something. What was it? And I'm going to guess, this is a guess, but I guess. This is really a guess. So, this is what it is like when you are the Lord's, and He is yours, and there is a total commitment between the two of you. And you take that which is God's commitment to you, and you use it, not for God, but for lesser things.

Follow me. So, this is what Israel did when God said, "You will be My bride." And Israel took her position, pressed God, and used it for other purposes. She tempted her God. She tempted the covenant between them, an unbreakable covenant. She merchandised her position for personal gain. She fell, brothers. She tempted her Lord. The Lord Jesus turned to Satan and said, "Somebody wrote it down once. Someone experienced it and wrote it down, Lucifer." *You'll not tempt the Lord your God*. That was a two-edged sword. Do you understand what He said? I'll not tempt My Father. In the perfect relationship that we have, I *can* do it, but I'll not tempt Him for something less than His purpose for our relationship. That was one thing he said, but He also said something else. Satan, you will not tempt the Lord your God, for he stood there facing his Lord and God—two down, one to go.

This has been called the temptation of the spirit. Again, I don't know, brothers. The enemy, Lucifer, took Him to a high mountain...the highest mountain, and then something very eternal took place. It was without dimension. Now, please watch this. Remember, the Lord Jesus came to set up a kingdom and to have a queen in that kingdom, and here was a shortcut. Lucifer stood with the Lord on the mountain, this high mountain, and with one sweep, both of them could see the entire earth and could see every kingdom on it. The Scripture says that they could see the beauty of it, the glory of it, and the power of it. They could see the marble temples. They could see the granite palaces. They could see the thousands of soldiers marching. They could see the gold and the treasury. They could see the armored guards. They could see the soldiers. They could see the diplomats scurrying all over the earth. They could see the authority, the power, the beauty, and the splendor of it all. Every kingdom of the earth at that time was under his full authority. And Lucifer

said, "It's Yours. You can have every kingdom of the earth. For it has been granted to me to have every kingdom of this earth, and I give it to whomever I please."

I want you to know that the Lord Jesus saw the White House, and He saw the Kremlin, and He saw Buckingham Palace and the House of Parliament. Who chooses the leader who lives in the White House? Who chooses a leader who runs 10 Downey Street in London? Who chooses who will live in the Kremlin? Do you really believe that? Well, it's true. He just said it was, but it was granted to him as his right. He gives it to whomever he wishes, and it is his kingdom, and you and I don't have any business in that kingdom. You only get one citizenship. You can only be a citizen of one nation. You've got to choose which one it's going to be, and I choose the nation called Ekklesia.

Okay, listen. He could have made quick work of the whole thing right there. The Lord Jesus Christ could have become King of kings and Lord of lords. He would have become King of all kings and Lord of all lords. All He would have had to do was just kneel once and bow to Lucifer. He looked, and He saw the mighty kingdom of the Roman Empire. I'm going to switch gears on you a little bit, so stay with me. He saw the great kingdom of Egypt. He saw the great kingdom of Babylon. He got one total look, just that quick, and He said...the Lord said within Himself, "So this is the splendor and the beauty and the power of the world system. So, this is what drew Israel away from Me and ensnared her and kept her from being My perfect bride." The Lord Jesus looked that system over once, really well, and said...brothers, listen carefully: "I have discovered it. Now I see it. I feel it draw Me. I even feel the temptation to become head of all these kingdoms. I feel the temptation of marrying myself to them. So, this is what drew my people away. So, this is the feeling they yielded to. I've come for my bride, and she will not be distracted by this. I'm going to have her, and I'll not have a competitor. There'll be no rival." While in one second He was tempted, in another second something welled up in Him that said, "I'll bring this thing down and destroy this system so that it has no draw on my beloved bride."

The Lord looked at Lucifer and said, "Get out of here." The temptation ended right there. Now, who's commanding who? The Lord won in that instant. Resist him, and he'll flee. "Get out of here." For you are to worship only God, and bow down only to Him. He was addressing Lucifer. He was addressing Himself. And He was addressing whom? His counterpart. Brothers and sisters, listen. You don't know. The devil didn't know. Nobody knew what the Lord knew that day. You might say He drew out His notebook and wrote down obstacle number one: Lucifer. He's got to go. Obstacle number two, the world system. It's got to go. Nothing will stand between my bride and me. Now, do you believe that? The Lord came down from the mountain, and you all know what He did. The first thing He did was go to a wedding. I don't have time to get into that wedding. The first thing the Lord did was: He went to a wedding. I guess He was kind of practicing.

Okay, I want you to listen very carefully now. He has seen the enemy. He has seen the kingdoms of this world, and He has seen the kingdom of Satan. Now He comes down. I'm not going to put this in any particular order, but please follow me. Jesus Christ is after His wife. Have you ever

wondered whether or not the Lord enjoyed His time on this earth? Have you ever wondered what His feelings were? Do you have any idea how He felt? We'll get an idea in a minute.

I want to tell two quick stories. This happened, I believe, in the city of Nein. It was a very remarkable day. The Lord was walking down the streets, and a funeral procession was taking place, and the funeral bearers came by, and the Lord was there. As far as I know, this is the first record that Jesus Christ, as a man after His baptism, fully God and fully man, ever looked at a corpse. I don't know if you've ever seen death. Probably no one in this room, only one or two of you, or three of you, has ever seen death. Well, you say, "I've been to a funeral, and everything is open." You haven't seen anything because the morticians got there. Death has its own mark. If you've ever seen it, you know immediately. I cannot tell you if you have never seen death. If you ever see death, you will know.

Sisters and brothers, the Lord walked by, and the child, who was a boy, was the son of his mother, and she was weeping, and they were taking the child out to bury him. The Lord had a very strange sense. Do you know what it was? Right. Something strange is going on here. The voice within. This is one whom I have chosen, but he's dead. Now that's strange; that can't be. And the Lord took His eternal position. He stepped out of time. Here He is in time; here's the cross, and here's eternity. Here is where death died. He stepped behind the cross. Do you understand what I mean? He took His eternal place, and He looked at that boy, and He took one good look at death, and He realized death had taken that part of the human race that belongs to Him, and He looked at it, and He thought, "I'm here now, and I am after a bride. And you, death, have interfered. Death, I put you on notice: The woman I marry will never die."

Lucifer, you're my tempter, but you will not be victorious. He was a lover, and He had a sword in His hand, and He was cutting away all obstacles to have a perfect counterpart. And He took hold of that boy, and He said, "Arise." Brothers and sisters, the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ cannot be touched by death. That little boy was in the wrong dimension, and the Lord raised him from the dead. Well, don't just sit there. Say something.

That same town, that same day. This is not told in the Bible, but you don't have to draw on your imagination to know it's true because the Scripture that reports the raising of that little boy tells another story and tells about what had happened to that girl from Nein. So, we're not stealing from the word of God to tell this story. It was probably that same day. The scripture says that the Lord was healing many and casting out demons from many, and there in the city of Nein was a lovely young girl. And you can't forget the story. Don't forget it. You hear? I don't know if someone brought her or if she came on her own, but she...two things. She was a harlot, and she had seven demons. I have a notion that she was a very beautiful girl. Very simple. I tell you, brothers. Very simple.

Many were saved that day, the day the Lord Jesus Christ looked at that girl, and He saw the demons, and He said, "Those are the principalities, and they'll never again have any part in my bride." Then the Lord Jesus looked at the little girl herself, and He saw...I'm going to have to put

these together...He saw two things. He saw the incarnation of a creature, a living being, a type of disease that was alive. He saw it everywhere. Wherever He looked...When He looked at Simon Peter, He saw it. When He looked at Andrew, He saw it. When He looked at this little girl, He saw it. He saw a factory. What did He see? He had looked at men's wrinkles. He looked at the disease, and it was all a result of sin. He watched the lying, cheating, stealing, and immorality. And what was this? The products coming out of the factory. It was sin. The Lord looked at that little girl and said, "So this is what happened to Adam. This is what went into Him and corrupted the cells in his body. This is what produced the whole race. This is the rampant disease that every creature of mine catches. This is what sends to hell. This is that which works death. This is that which ends, which corrupts, corrodes, and debases. This is that which produces the hate, the anger, the murder, the immorality, the lying, the stealing. This will never...at any cost...it will never...touch my bride. I have to choose between taking it all myself, and it ever touching my bride. I love her too much. The passion within me is too big. The jealousy in me is proof. The love in me beats too hot. *Sin shall never touch her!*" May I ask you if you believe that?

I will tell you the story. Anytime there is a new fad, let me talk religiously, in the denominations, anytime there's a new evangelist, a great new pastor, or a new anything, the wealthy will always seek to lay claim. You don't know that, but that's true. And if you ever get in a position where anybody admires you, you will find the wealthy inviting you over for supper. They want to make you their friend. Frankly, they're trying to own you. I have told my brothers that before. Don't ever take anything from the wealthy. Don't take anything from the wealthy, brothers. They will purchase you.

A wealthy Pharisee invited the Lord Jesus to supper, and the Lord said, "Okay, I'm not prejudiced." That day at their tables, they had no table. No such thing as a table. When you went to eat, they threw out a mat on the floor, and they put a tablecloth...maybe they didn't call it that...they put the food on the tablecloth, and to eat, you knelt, and then you lay down and rested on one shoulder, like this, and you lay on the floor to eat. I have done this. No, not exactly. I shouldn't say that. I did half of this while I was in Jordan. A big tablecloth on the floor, put all the food there, and we all sat around it squat-legged and ate from it that way. But in the ancient days, they lay on the floor.

The meal began. Everybody was talking. The Lord was there. Please hear the story. A girl came in, and she just stood there. She didn't say a word. She didn't say anything. She just stood there, and she was in complete... She just began to cry. The tears began to run down her face, turning into a river that fell on the Lord's feet. They fell on the Lord's feet. Simon was lying there beside the Lord, and he looked, and he looked at the Lord, and he knew the girl. Everybody in the room recognized her. And she just wept and wept and wept and wept and wept until the tears began to flow all over the Lord. Brothers and sisters, she knelt down, and she just kept crying. She just kept crying. It wasn't sorrow; it was joy. And she could see the tears on His feet. She didn't say a word. She had not uttered one word. She saw His feet wet with tears. She took her hair and undid it and just began wiping the tears away. Then she knelt over, and she kissed His feet, and she kissed them

again and again and again, until they're poured out of that little girl an utter passion, a total adoring love. Brothers, there was passion in it. It was a love story. Then she took some perfume and poured it on His feet, and she wiped it onto His feet and then kissed His feet. Have you ever had anything like that happen to you? Would that be embarrassing?

Who was she? Do you know who she was? She was a harlot, out of whom seven demons had been cast. The Lord said, "Simon, I know what you're thinking. I want to ask you something, Simon. If a man owed \$500 and another one owed \$50, and the one who was owed forgave them both, who is loved the most?" And Simon said, "I guess the one who owed \$500 that was forgiven." And Jesus said, "Simon, you're just as right as you can be. Whoever is forgiven loves much."

Was she loving much? Was He stopping her? Why wasn't He stopping her? You tell me why He didn't stop her. Because she was His bride. Because He had come to love and He had come to be loved. And although it was an unusual display to say the least, He never stopped her. There's only one thing I want to say before we go on. Sisters and brothers, one question. Who loves much, who loves much? Those who are forgiven much. Now I ask you, who was the bigger sinner, Simon or the girl? The girl. She was only forgiven more. Simon could have been forgiven. He could have melted as Simon Peter melted. He could have melted as that little girl melted. He could have seen Him for who He was and let the whole inner witness of his pain or what he needed well up. He could have been forgiven with a contrite spirit.

That little girl had stood there at His feet and allowed the Lord to forgive her totally. Simon was holding out on the Lord. Brothers and sisters, if you have in you a sense of having forgiven a great deal, you will love a great deal. Oh Lord, we're going to be like that little girl. We're going to kiss you and kiss you and kiss you. We're going to pour out our tears of joy over you. We're going to hold you, and we're going to love you. We can't help it. Lord, we allow You to forgive us of a great deal. Who can love Him with a passion? Who can love Him with a passion? Those who have allowed Him to forgive them a great deal.

Have you been forgiven? I'm just not sure how much you've been forgiven. Will you please hold on to this? How much will the Lord forgive you? You have allowed the Lord to forgive you for how much? Completely. Completely? You have allowed Him to do that. Do you know, brother, I don't believe you. And you know something else, brother, you don't believe it. Brother, I have a question for you. Have you ever come to the Lord in the morning, in the early morning, and felt a tremendous sense...has the sense of your sinful state ever stood between you and fellowship with the Lord? How many sins? The story didn't end.

The Lord turned around and looked at the girl. He had allowed her, Simon said, to hold Him. That must have been quite a scene. He turned around and looked at her. What did He say? What did He say to her? We read it earlier. *Your sins are forgiven*. And He turned to Simon and said, "The Lord asks not for sacrifices, but for what? Compassion, for affection." Then He turns to the girl, and what did He say to her? "Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace." Did she accept that? She accepted that. Did she go in peace? She probably was the only believer who ever took the Lord up on that.

You haven't heard the last of this girl. I tell you, in the last few weeks, I have become her number one fan. I have even asked the Lord if I'm going to be like anybody in the Bible. I want to be like that girl. Don't give two toots on a whistle if I ever know anything about the Bible. I want the privilege she had. I want the privilege of being forgiven much, of having the peace of knowing that; I want the privilege of loving Him a great deal. I wouldn't trade places if I were that little girl for all the kings who ever lived. She got the privilege of loving the Lord Jesus Christ.

Did He condemn her? He praised her. Lucifer, the kingdom of Satan, the world, the principalities and powers, sin. Well, He saw some other things as He walked around on this earth that stood between Him and His wife. See, He must have had a glorious experience. Can you see Him walking around with this God in Him? Constantly every day discovering His bride and constantly every day discovering the obstacles that she faced. He came to such an appreciation, my brothers, of everything that had ever caused man to go away.

He stood there and watched the religious people who were more tied up with religion than they were with God. He stood there, and as a man, He stood there and looked at it, and He said, "Now I know the feeling of the religious nature." He had faced it with the enemy. He saw Adam in His fallen state. He saw the old man. He felt what you have felt. He went around talking about being God's Son. He went around talking about a close, intimate relationship with the Father, and He watched the nature of man rebel against Him. And He understood. And He said, "That's got to go, because I'm going to have a bride who is not fearful of Me, but one so close to Me, so intimate to Me." He marked down the old man, the religious man, the old man, the good man. He had marked down death already.

Excuse me. You know, I never do this unless it's important. Praise the Lord, I left out one. Maybe it was this time when He was walking along the road, and He heard John and James and probably Andrew and Peter shouting at one another and threatening one another and fussing with one another. And He walked back to listen to them, and they were enraged against one another, and some of them were pouting, and they started fussing at the Lord and telling them of these guys. You know the story. We've told it around here many times. What was it? Who was going to sit on the right hand and the left hand of the Lord when He set up His political system in Jerusalem? Now, that's exactly where they were. The Lord looked at that, and He said, "There's not going to be any...mark this, brothers...there's not going to be one... I'm going to end the corrupt flesh with its crate." Maybe this was drawn home again when the sinful woman was brought to Him, and they asked Him what Moses' law was, and He agreed, He said, "Moses law is to stone her." And He said, "Stone her, but only on one condition. Let the one who has not sinned stone her first." And the Lord, when they had all left, He looked at her and said, "Go and sin no more."

I don't know whether it was the fleshly action expressed or the fleshly deed committed; I don't know, but somewhere, while the Lord was on this earth, He looked straight at the knowing lust of the flesh, its craving, its ambition, its drive, its corruption, its distortion, its perversion, and He said, "She will not be marked by this." You see, brothers, the Lord had to draw His wife out of the

race of man, and these were the things that had gotten into man, and had caught man's attention, and won man away. These were the things that had brought man down, corrupted man, and stolen man. And this was the people out of whom the Lord was going to have His bride. Something had to change.

(Continued in Part 3)