

SPIRITUAL WARFARE



Charles Haddon Spurgeon
(1834-1892)

Course SWA
(complete)

Name: _____ Student ID: _____ Date: _____

Instructions for this course

The reading material for this course is *Satan Considering the Saints* and the third section of *The Infallible Word of God* by Charles Spurgeon, which are included in this study guide. All materials you need to take this course are included in this study guide, except for a Bible and answer sheets.

Before each lesson: pray for God to give a teachable heart and understanding.
Begin the lesson by reading the related section in the book provided.

Answer the questions for the corresponding lesson in this study guide.

Use the required answer sheet format, putting your name and course information on each sheet (sample after the Table of Contents). Use any standard note paper (or the answer booklets if provided).

Skip a line between answers.

Always use your own words in your answers.

Try to be as clear and concise as possible.

Please do not rush! Meditate on what God wants you to learn.

Don't go to the next question until completing the current one.

If, and only if, you are taking the course as ***correspondence study*** (with written feedback from others):

After completing all lessons, send the completed answer sheets to your course coordinator.

Only mail your answers sheets, not other materials.

All sent answers are handled confidentially.

Label the envelope's lower left with: student ID, course, and lesson numbers.

Two months are allotted for course completion.

Extensions may be granted upon request.

Your answer sheets are returned to you after review.

Keep all materials and returned answers together for future reference.

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

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Sample Answer Sheet

_____	_____	<u>SWA</u>	_____	_____
Your name	Student ID	Course number	Lesson number	Date

Question Answer

skip a line between questions

This course uses two texts from sermons by Charles Spurgeon in the *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*: Part A is “Satan Considering the Saints,” Vol. 11, No. 623; and Part B is “Infallibility: Where to Find It and How to Use It,” Vol. 20, No. 1208. Both are printed by Chapel Library; the latter appears as part three in a compilation of three sermons in the Chapel Library title “The Infallible Word of God.” The text in this study guide has been abridged and modified for course purposes.

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PART A

SATAN'S ATTACKS

And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job?—Job 1:8

Lesson 1

How Satan “Considers” the Saints

1. Introduction

How very uncertain are all things on earth! How foolish is the believer who stores up his treasure anywhere except in heaven! Job's prosperity promised as much stability as anything can under the sun. The man had round about him a large household, accumulated wealth, and a large farming operation, which provided more than the needed food and clothing. His children were numerous enough to promise a long line of descendants. His prosperity lacked nothing: where was the cause that could take it away?

Up there, beyond the clouds where no human eye could see, there was a scene enacted that foretold no good to Job's prosperity. The spirit of evil stood face to face with the infinite Spirit of all good. An extraordinary conversation took place between these two beings. When called to account for his doings, the evil one boasted that he had gone “to and fro” throughout the earth (Job 1:7). This implies that he had met with no hindrance to his will, and found no one to oppose his freely moving and acting at his own pleasure. He had marched everywhere like a king in his own dominions, unhindered and unchallenged. When the great God reminded Satan that there was at least one place among men where he had no foothold, and where his power was unrecognized, namely, in the heart of Job—that there was one man who stood like an undefeatable castle, protected by integrity and perfectly loyal to the King of Heaven—the evil one challenged Jehovah to test the faithfulness of Job and told Him that the patriarch's integrity was due to his prosperity, that he served God and avoided evil from selfish motives: only because he found his conduct profitable to himself.

The God of heaven took up the challenge of the evil one, giving him permission to take away all the mercies that he supposed to be the props of Job's integrity, and to pull down all his resources—and see whether Job himself could stand without them. In consequence of this, all Job's wealth went in one black day, and not even a child was left to whisper comfort.

A second interview between the Lord and his fallen angel took place (Job 2:1-6). Job was again the subject of conversation; and the Great One, defied by Satan, permitted him even to touch Job in his bone and in his flesh, till the prince became worse than a pauper. He who was

rich and happy became poor and wretched, filled with disease from head to foot, and scraped himself with a miserable potsherd¹ to gain a poor relief from his pain.

Let us see in this the changeableness of all earthly things. “He hath founded it...upon the floods” (Psa 24:2) is David’s description of this world; and, if it be founded on the floods, can you wonder that it often changes? Put not your trust in anything beneath the stars: remember that “Change” is written on the forefront of nature. Say not therefore, “I am secure; I shall never be moved”—the glance of Jehovah’s eye can shake you into dust. “Set your affection on things above,” “where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God” (Col 3:1-2), and let your heart and your treasure be “where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal” (Mat 6:20).

This is not, however, our subject this morning. Accept this much as merely an introduction to our main discourse. The Lord said to Satan, “Hast thou *considered* my servant Job?” Let us deliberate,

- In what sense the devil may be said to consider the people of God,
- What it is that he considers about them,
- The truth that One far above Satan considers us in a higher sense.

2. How Satan “Considers” the Saints

In what sense may Satan be said to *consider* the people of God? Certainly not in the usual biblical meaning of the term “consider.” “O Lord consider my trouble” (Psa 9:13). “Consider my meditation” (Psa 5:1). “Blessed is he that considereth the poor” (Psa 41:1). Such consideration implies good-will and a careful inspection of the person He desires to bless, in order to distribute His favor most wisely.

Satan never considers any in that sense. If he has any benevolence, it must be towards himself, but all his considerations of other creatures are of the most malevolent² kind. No spark of good ever flashes across the black midnight of his soul.

Nor does Satan consider us in the same way that we are told to consider the works of God, that is, in order to derive instruction as to God’s wisdom, love, and kindness. He does not honour God by what he sees in His works or in His people. It is not with him, “Go to the ant...consider her ways and be wise” (Pro 6:6); but he goes to the Christian and considers his ways—and becomes more foolishly God’s enemy than he was before! The consideration that Satan pays to God’s saints is understood in the following.

A. *The difference between them and himself*

Satan considers the saints with wonder when he looks upon the difference between them and himself. A traitor, when he knows the thorough villainy and the blackness³ of his own heart, cannot help being astounded when he is forced to believe another man to be faithful. The first resort of a treacherous heart is to believe that all men would be just as treacherous, and are really so in their heart. The traitor thinks that all men are traitors like himself, or would be if it were to get them more than does faithfulness.

¹ **potsherd** – piece of broken pottery.

² **malevolent** – desiring to do evil to others.

³ **blackness** – quality of having been darkened with sin and corruption.

When Satan looks at the Christian and finds him faithful to God's truth, he marvels at him and wonders how he can act thus. Satan seems to say, "I, who was a prince in heaven at one time, would not submit my will to Jehovah: I thought it better to reign in hell than serve in heaven: I kept not my first estate, but fell from my throne: how is it that these stand? What grace is it which keeps these? I was a vessel of gold, and yet I was broken; these are earthen vessels, but I cannot break them! I could not stand in my glory—what can be the matchless grace that upholds them in their poverty, in their obscurity, in their persecution, still faithful to the God Who doth not bless and exalt them as He once did me!"

B. Their happiness

It may be that Satan also wonders at the saints' happiness. He feels within himself a seething sea of misery. There is an unfathomable gulf of anguish within his soul; and when he looks at believers, he sees them quiet in their souls, full of peace and happiness, and often without any outward means⁴ by which they should be comforted, yet rejoicing and full of glory (1Pe 1:8). He goes up and down through the world and possesses great power, and there be many evil spirits to serve him; yet he hath not the happiness of spirit possessed by even a humble cottager: obscure, unknown, having no servants to wait upon her, but stretched upon the bed of weakness in perfect rest. He envies and hates the peace that reigns in the believer's soul.

C. To find any flaw

His consideration may go farther than this. Do you not think that he considers Christians in order to detect, if possible, any flaw and fault in them, by way of comfort to himself? "They are not pure," saith he. "These blood-bought ones, these elect⁵ from before the foundations of the world—they still sin! These adopted children of God, for whom the glorious Son bowed His head and gave up the ghost—even they offend!" How must he chuckle, with such delight as he is capable of, over the secret sins of God's people; and if he can see anything in them inconsistent with their profession, anything that appears to be deceitful, and therein like himself, he rejoices. Each sin born in the believer's heart cries to him, "My father! my Father!" and he feels something like the joy of fatherhood as he sees his foul offspring (*see* John 8:44).

He looks at the "old man" in the Christian, and admires the strength with which it maintains its hold, the effort with which it struggles for mastery, the craft and cunning with which—every now and then, at set intervals, at convenient opportunities—it puts forth all its force (Eph 4:22). He considers our sinful flesh,⁶ and makes it one of the books in which he diligently reads. One of the fairest prospects, I doubt not, that the devil's eye ever rests upon is the inconsistency and the impurity that he can discover in the true child of God. In this respect he had very little to consider in God's true servant, Job.

D. As a barrier to his work

Nor is this all, but rather just the starting point of his consideration. We doubt not that he views the Lord's people, and especially the more mature and excellent among them, as the great barriers to the progress of his kingdom. He bids his sharpshooters be very careful to aim at

⁴ **means** – instruments by which something is accomplished.

⁵ **elect** – those chosen by God for salvation (*see* Rom 8-9; Joh 6:27, 39, 65; Eph 1:4-5, 11; and others).

⁶ **flesh** – part of man that is concerned with his own selfish interests and that wars against the spirit (Gal 5:17).

these; “For,” saith he, “if the standard-bearer fall, then shall the victory be more readily gained to our side, and our opponents shall be readily put to rout.” If you are more generous than other saints, if you live nearer to God than others, then, as the birds peck most at the ripest fruit, so may you expect Satan to be most busy against you.

He considers, then, God’s people. Viewing them as hindrances to his reign, he contrives methods by which he may remove them out of his way or turn them to his own account. Darkness would cover the earth if he could blow out the lights. Hence his continual consideration is to make the faithful to fail from among men.

E. To do injury

It needs not much wisdom to discern that the great object of Satan in considering God’s people is to do them injury. He knows he cannot destroy God’s children, but he knows he may be mistaken about who they are. It seems to me, therefore, that he makes it his policy to try to destroy them all—not knowing in which case he may succeed. He goes about seeking whom he may devour (1Pe 5:8), attacking all the people of God with ferocity.

Someone may say, “How can one devil do this to so many?” He does not do it by himself alone. I do not know that many of us have ever been tempted directly by Satan: we may not be notable enough among men to be worth his trouble. But he has a whole host of inferior spirits under his supremacy and control. As the centurion said of himself (Mat 8:9), so he might have said of Satan, “he saith to this spirit, ‘Do this,’ and he doeth it, and to his servant, ‘Go,’ and he goeth.” Thus all the servants of God will more or less come under the direct or indirect assaults of the great enemy of souls, and that with a view of destroying them; for he would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect (Mat 24:24).

F. To worry

Where Satan cannot destroy, his object is to bring the saints to worry. He does not like to see God’s people happy. “Ah,” says the devil, “I like to see God’s people worried and mournful. If I can make them go about with miserable faces, I reckon I have done my work very completely.”

My dear friends, let us watch against those deceptive temptations which pretend to make us humble, but which really aim at making us unbelieving. Our God takes no delight in our suspicions and mistrusts. See how He proves His love in the gift of His dear Son Jesus (Joh 3:16)! Banish then all your doubts and rejoice in unmoved confidence. God delights to be worshipped with joy.

“O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms” (Psa 95:1-2).

“Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart” (Psa 32:11).

“Rejoice in the Lord always, and again, I say, rejoice” (Phi 4:4).

Satan does not like this. Martin Luther used to say, “Let us sing psalms and spite the devil,” and I am confident Martin Luther was pretty nearly right, for that lover of discord hates joyful praise.

Beloved brother, the arch-enemy wants to make you wretched here if he cannot have you hereafter; and in this, no doubt, he is aiming a blow at the honor of God. He is well aware that mournful Christians often dishonor the faithfulness of God by mistrusting it, and he thinks if he can worry us until we no more believe in the constancy and goodness of the Lord, he shall have

robbed God of His praise. He that “offereth praise glorifieth me” (Psa 50:23), says God; and so Satan lays the axe at the root of our praise, so that God may cease to be glorified.

G. To spoil usefulness

Moreover, if Satan cannot destroy a Christian, how often has he spoiled his usefulness? We can recall with grief some men once eminent in the ranks of the Church who did run well, but through stress of temptation, they suddenly fell into sin, and their names were never mentioned in the Church again except with regret. Everybody thought and hoped they were saved so as by fire,⁷ but certainly their former usefulness never could return. It is very easy to go backwards in the pathway to heaven, but it is very hard to retrace your steps in order to return to progress. You may soon turn aside and put out your candle, but you cannot light it again quite so speedily.

Oh may God grant us grace, as a church, to stand against the wiles of Satan and his attacks, so that, having done his worst, he may gain no advantage over us.

H. Why God permits this

Now, how is it that God permits this constant and wicked consideration of His people by the evil one? One answer, doubtless, is that God knows what is for His own glory, and that He giveth no account of His matters; that having permitted free agency, and having allowed, for some mysterious reason, the existence of evil, it does not seem agreeable with His having done so to destroy Satan. Instead, God gives the devil some power so that it may appear to be a fair hand-to-hand fight between sin and holiness, between grace and craftiness.

Besides, be it remembered that the temptations of Satan produce a service to the people of God as a by-product. There is no temptation in the world which is so bad as not being tempted at all, for to be tempted will tend to keep us awake—whereas being without temptation, flesh and blood are weak; and though the spirit may be willing, yet we may be found falling into slumber. Children do not run away from their father’s side when big dogs bark at them. The howlings of the devil may tend to drive us nearer to Christ, may teach us our own weakness, may keep us upon our excellent watch-tower and refuge, and be made the means of preservation from other ills. Let us “be sober, be vigilant, because our adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour” (1Pe 5:8).

Study Questions Lesson One

How Satan Considers the Saints

Please read Lesson 1 before answering these questions. Please answer the questions from the information in the reading. Please read slowly enough so you understand what you read. Please also pray before each lesson asking the LORD for wisdom to apply what you learn to your life, and to enable you to love Him with all your mind, heart, soul, and strength, for this is the greatest commandment (Mar 12:30).

Very Important Note: In the following study questions, we ask you to always use your own words in your answers. The answers to most questions are found in the reading text, but please do not merely quote the text for your answer. Rather, read what the text says, think about the meaning of what it says, and summarize its meaning in your own words for your answer. In this way, you will learn much more than simply a “search, find, quote” method for answering the questions.

⁷ **saved so as by fire** – barely saved; saved without any fruit or spiritual reward—reference is to 1 Corinthians 3:12-15.

Introduction (1)

1. What do we learn about Satan that is implied from his going “to and fro” throughout the earth?
2. a. What was the result of Satan’s first conversation with God about Job?
b. What was the result of Satan’s second conversation with God about Job?
3. What is God’s answer to the changeableness of things on the earth?

How does Satan consider the saints? (2)

4. a. How does God consider those whom He desires to favor?
b. How is Satan’s consideration of people different from this?

The difference between them and himself (A)

5. Why does Satan marvel at a Christian’s faithfulness.

Their happiness (B)

6. Why does Satan wonder at the saints’ happiness?

To find any flaw (C)

7. a. Why does Satan seek to find faults in Christians?
b. What does he admire in the “old man” of the Christian?

As a barrier to his work (D)

8. Why does Satan seek to remove Christians from out of his way?

To do injury (E)

9. What is the meaning of 1 Peter 5:8?
10. How can one devil attack so many?

To worry (F)

11. What is the connection between unbelief and worry?
12. What harm does worry do?

To spoil usefulness (G)

13. a. How does Satan spoil a Christian’s usefulness?
b. Why is recovery from this so difficult?

Why God permits this (H)

14. How are the temptations of Satan actually of service to God’s people?

15. *Making It Personal* The author has given seven reasons Satan “considers” the saints.

Note: By “Making It Personal” we ask you to share your own viewpoint. The answer is not in the reading text.

- a. Do you profess to know Christ?
- b. If so, which of these seven ways have you experienced? If you do not profess Christ, why not?

Lesson 2

What Satan Considers

What is it that Satan considers with a view to the injury of God's people? It cannot be said of him, as of God, that he knows everything about us. But since he has been now nearly six thousand years⁸ dealing with poor fallen humanity, he must have acquired a very vast experience in that time. Having been all over the earth, and having tempted the highest and the lowest, he must know exceeding well what the springs of human action are and how to play upon them.

A. Our particular weaknesses

Satan watches and considers first of all our particular weaknesses. He looks us up and down, just as I have seen a horse-dealer do with a horse, and soon finds out wherein we are faulty. I, a common observer, might think the horse an exceedingly good one as I see it running up and down the road, but the dealer sees what I cannot see, and he knows how to handle the creature just in such quarters and at such points that he soon discovers any hidden weakness. Satan knows how to look at us and reckon us up from heel to head, so that he will say of this man, "His hidden sin is lust," or of another, "He has a quick temper," or of this other, "He is proud," or of that other, "He is slothful."

The eye of malice⁹ is very quick to perceive a weakness, and the hand of hatred soon takes advantage of it. When the arch-spy finds a weak place in the wall of our castle, he takes care to plant his battering-ram and begin his siege. You may conceal, even from your dearest friend, your weakness, but you will not conceal them from your worst enemy. He has lynx eyes,¹⁰ and detects in a moment the crack in your armor. He goes about with a match, and though you may think you have covered all the gunpowder of your heart, yet he knows how to find a crack to put his match through—and much mischief will he do, unless eternal mercy shall prevent.

B. Our states of mind

He takes care also to consider our frames and states of mind. If the devil would attack us when our mind is in certain moods, we should be more than a match for him; he knows this and shuns the encounter. Some men are more vulnerable to temptation when they are distressed and desponding; the fiend will then assail them. Others will be more liable to take fire when they are jubilant and full of joy; then will he strike his spark into the tinder. Certain persons, when they are much vexed and tossed to and fro, can be made to say almost anything; and others, when their souls are like peaceful waters, are just then in a condition to be navigated by the devil's vessel. The enemy, like a fisherman, watches his fish, adapts his bait to his prey, and knows in what seasons and times the fish are most likely to bite.

This hunter of souls comes upon us unawares. Often we are overtaken in a fault, or caught in a trap through an unwatchful frame of mind:

Is our knowledge in matter of faith deficient?—he tempts us to error.

⁸ **six thousand years** – the estimated age of the earth according to the Scriptures and Creation science.

⁹ **malice** – desire to inflict injury on another.

¹⁰ **lynx eyes** – keen vision; the lynx is among the animals with the best eyesight.

Is our conscience tender?—he tempts us to over attention to detail.
Has our conscience some lack of conviction?—he tempts us to carnal¹¹ liberty.
Are we bold spirited?—he tempts us to presumption.
Are we timorous and distrustful?—he tempts us to desperation.
Are we of a flexible disposition?—he tempts us to inconsistency.
Are we stiff?—he labors to make stubborn heretics or rebels of us.
Do we have a severe and rigid personality?—he tempts us to cruelty and judgment.
Are we soft and mild?—he tempts us to indulgence and foolish pity.
Are we hot in matters of religion?—he tempts us to blind zeal and proud confidence.
Are we cold and indifferent?—he tempts us to unuseful lukewarmness (Rev 3:16).

Thus he lays his traps so that, one way or another, he may ensnare us.

C. Our social situations

He also takes care to consider our positions among men. There are a few persons who are most easily tempted when they are alone: they are the subjects then of great heaviness of mind and they may be driven to the most awful crimes. Perhaps most of us are more liable to sin when we are with people: in some company I quickly would be led into sin, but I would not even join another society. Some are so full of mischief that those of us who are inclined the same way can scarcely look them in the face without being tempted. Others are so serious and pessimistic that when they are with another of like mind, they are pretty sure between them to invent an evil report of an otherwise good situation. Satan knows where to overtake you in a place where you lie open to his attacks. He will pounce upon you, swoop like a bird of prey from the sky, when he has been watching for the time to make his descent with the best prospect for success.

D. Our condition in the world

How will he also consider our condition in the world! He looks at one man and says, “That man has property: it is of no use my trying such-and-such strategy with him; but here is another man who is very poor, I will catch him in that net.” Then, again, he looks at the poor man, and says, “Now, I cannot tempt him to this folly, but I will lead the rich man into it.” As the sportsman has a gun for wild fowl, and another for deer and game, so has Satan a different temptation for various orders of men. Satan knows, however, just where to smite us, and our position, our capabilities, our education, our standing in society, our job, may all be doors through which he may attack us.

You who have no job at all are in peculiar peril—I wonder the devil does not swallow you outright. The most likely man to go to hell is the man who has nothing to do on earth. I say that seriously. I believe that there cannot happen a much worse evil to a person than to be placed where he has no work; and if I should ever be in such a state, I would get employment at once, for fear I should be carried off, body and soul, by the evil one. Idle people tempt the devil to tempt them. Let us have something to do, let us keep our minds occupied, for, if not, we make room for the devil (Eph 4:27). Work will not make us gracious, but the lack of work may make us vicious. Have always something on the anvil or in the fire.

*“In books, or work, or healthful play, I would be busy too,
For Satan finds some mischief still For idle hands to do”.*¹²

¹¹ **carnal** – fleshly; worldly; natural as opposed to spiritual.

So Watts taught us in our childhood, and so let us believe in our manhood. Work, books, or such recreations as are necessary for health, should occupy our time. If I throw myself down in passive idleness, then, like an old piece of iron, I must not wonder that I grow rusty with sin.

E. Objects of our affections

Satan, when he makes his investigations, notices all the objects of our affections. I doubt not that, when he went round Job's house, he observed it as carefully as thieves do a jeweler's shop when they plan to break into it. They very cunningly take account of every door, window, and fastening; they also look at the house next door, for they may have to reach the treasure through it. Just so, when the devil went round, jotting down in his mind all Job's position, he thought to himself, "There are the camels, oxen, asses, and the servants—yes, I can use all these very admirably." "Then," he thought, "there are the three daughters! There are the ten sons, and they go feasting—I shall know where to catch them, and if I can blow the house down when they are feasting, that will afflict the father's mind the more severely, for he will say 'O that they had died when they had been praying, rather than when they had been feasting and drinking wine.'"

"I also will put down in the inventory," says the devil, "his wife—I dare say I can vex her," and accordingly it happened that way. Nobody could have done what Job's wife did—none of the servants could have said that sad sentence so stingingly—or, if she meant it very kindly, none could have said it to affect him as much: "Bless God and die," as it may be read, or "Curse God and die." Ah, Satan, you have ploughed with Job's heifer, but you have not succeeded; Job's strength lies in his God, not in anything else! Perhaps the evil one had even inspected Job's personal sensibilities, and so selected that form of bodily affliction which he knew to be most dreaded by his victim. He brought upon him a disease that Job may have seen and shuddered at in poor men outside the city gates.

Brethren, Satan knows quite as much in regard to *you*! You have a child, and Satan knows that you idolize it. "Ah," says he, "*there* is a place for my wounding him." Even your beloved spouse may be made a quiver in which hell's arrows shall be stored till the time may come, and then they may prove the bow from which Satan will shoot them. Our habits, our joys, our sorrows, our leisure time, our public positions, all may be made weapons of attack by this desperate foe of the Lord's people. We have snares everywhere: in our bed and at our table, in our house and in the street. There are traps in company; there are pits when we are alone. We may find temptations in the house of God as well as in the world; traps in our successes, and deadly poisons in our failures.

We must not expect to be rid of temptations till we have crossed the Jordan,¹³ and then, thank God, we are beyond gunshot of the enemy. The last howling of the dog of hell will be heard as we descend into the chill waters of the black stream, but when we hear the hallelujah of the glorified, we shall have done with the black prince for ever and ever.

¹² **Isaac Watts** (1674-1748) – English Nonconformist pastor, essayist, and hymnwriter. Born in Southampton, England.

¹³ **crossed the Jordan** – figure for death.

Study Questions Lesson Two

What Satan Considers

Please read Lesson 2 before answering these questions. Always get your answers from the reading, but put them into your own words, in order to indicate your understanding of what you have read.

1. Why is Satan so good at tempting God's people?

Our particular weaknesses (A)

2. a. How does the enemy uncover our weaknesses?
b. When he finds a weakness, what does he do?

Our state of mind (B)

3. a. How does your state of mind affect Satan's attack?
b. Use the illustration of a fisherman to describe Satan's method.
4. a. *Making It Personal* The author lists eleven different states of mind. Which one of these best applies to you?
b. According to the text, how does Satan handle that state of mind?

Our social situation (C)

5. How does Satan use the people we are with?

Our condition in the world (D)

6. How does Satan adjust his attack based on our condition in the world?

Objects of our affections (E)

7. Use the example of thieves at a jeweler's shop to explain how Satan views our affections.
8. List the affections that are included in Satan's consideration.
Think about how all-inclusive this is.
9. When will his consideration cease?

Lesson 3

God Overriding Satan's Considerations

Satan considered, but there was a higher consideration that overrode his consideration. In times of war, one side will dig a tunnel to invade the enemy's territory, and it is very common for other side to counter by digging their own tunnel under the first one. This is just what God does with Satan. Satan is mining, and he thinks to light the fuse and to blow up God's building, but all the while God is undermining him, and He blows up Satan's sad attempt before he can do any mischief. The devil is the greatest of all fools. He has more knowledge but less wisdom than any other creature, he is more subtle¹⁴ than all the beasts of the field, but it is well called "subtlety," not

¹⁴ **subtle** – cunning; crafty; deceptive.

wisdom. It is not true wisdom: it is only another shape of folly. All the while that Satan was tempting Job, he little knew that he was answering God's purpose, for God was looking on and considering the whole of it—and holding the enemy as a man holds a horse by its bridle.

A. How far to let Satan go

The Lord had considered exactly how far He would let Satan go. He did not the first time permit him to touch his flesh—perhaps that was more than Job at that time could have borne. Have you never noticed that if you are in good strong bodily health, you can bear losses with a level head. Now, that was the case with Job. Perhaps if the disease had come first and the rest had followed, it might have been a temptation too heavy for him. But God, Who knows just how far to let the enemy go, will say to him, “Thus far, and no farther.” By degrees he became accustomed to his poverty; in fact, the trial had lost all its sting the moment Job said, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away” (Job 1:21). That enemy was slain, and more: it was buried—and this was the funeral oration: “Blessed be the name of the Lord”—because Job declared His complete trust in God no matter what happens to him, even in the midst of his grief.

When the second trial came, the first trial had qualified Job to bear the second. It may be a more severe trial for a man in the possession of great worldly wealth suddenly to be deprived of the bodily power of enjoying it, than to lose all first, and then lose the health necessary to its enjoyment. The Lord, Who weighs mountains in scales, had allowed Satan to work just the amount and type of woe that was, in the end, good for Job!

B. How to sustain the saint

Did not the Lord also consider how He should sustain His servant under the trial? Beloved, you do not know how blessedly our God poured the secret oil of the Holy Spirit upon Job's fire of grace while the devil was throwing buckets of water on it.¹⁵ He says to Himself,

If Satan shall do much, I will do more; if he takes away much, I will give more. If he tempts the man to curse, I will fill the man so full of love to Me that he will bless Me. I will help him; I will strengthen him; yea, I will uphold him with the right hand of My righteousness.

Christian, take these two principles and put them under your tongue as a wafer made with honey: 1) you will never be tempted without express license from the throne where Jesus pleads, and, on the other hand, 2) when He permits it, He will with the temptation make a way of escape, or give you grace to stand under it.

“There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”—1 Corinthians 10:13

C. How to sanctify by the trial

The Lord considered how to sanctify Job by this trial. Job was a much better man at the end of the story than he was at the beginning. He was “a perfect and an upright man” at first (Job 1:18), but there was a little pride about him. We are poor creatures to criticize such a man as Job, but still there was in him just a sprinkling of self-righteousness. Job's friends Eliphaz and

¹⁵ **secret oil...water** – allusion to the Interpreter's house in John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), where the Holy Spirit was poured in to sustain the fire of Christian's faith while the devil attempted to put it out with water. Available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

Zophar said such irritating things that poor Job could not help replying in strong terms about himself—and these were rather too strong, one thinks: there was a little too much self-justification. He was not proud of a very little as some of us are: he had much to be proud of, as the world would agree—but yet there was the tendency to be exalted with it. And though the devil did not know it, perhaps if he had left Job alone, that pride might have led to sin. But Satan was in such a hurry that he would not let pride ripen—and so he was the Lord’s tool to bring Job into a more humble, and consequently a more safe and blessed, state of mind.

D. How to bring a greater reward

Next, observe how Satan was an unwitting slave to the Almighty. Job all this while was being enabled to earn a greater reward. All his prosperity is not enough: God loves Job so much that He intends to give him twice the property. He intends to give him his children again. He means to make him a more famous man than ever, a man whose name shall ring down the ages, a man who shall be talked of through all generations. He is not to be a man “in the land of Uz” (Job 1:1), but a man of the whole world. He is not to be heard of by a handful in one neighborhood, but all men are to hear of Job’s patience in the hour of trial. Who is to do this? Who is to fashion the trumpet of fame through which Job’s name is to be blown? The devil goes to the forge and works away with all his might—to make Job illustrious! Foolish devil! he is piling up a pedestal on which God will set His servant Job, that he may be looked upon with wonder by all ages.

To conclude, Job’s afflictions and Job’s patience have been a lasting blessing to the Church of God, and they have inflicted incredible disgrace upon Satan. If you want to make the devil angry, throw the story of Job in his teeth. If you desire to have your own confidence sustained, may God the Holy Ghost lead you into the patience of Job. Oh! how many saints have been comforted in their distress by this history of patience! How many have been saved out of the jaw of the lion, and from the paw of the bear, by the dark experiences of Job. Oh arch-fiend, how are you taken in your own net! You have thrown a stone that has fallen on your own head. You made a pit for Job and have fallen into it yourself; you are taken in your own craftiness. Jehovah has made fools of the wise and driven His enemies mad!

Brethren, let us commit ourselves in faith to the care and keeping of God—come poverty, come sickness, come death, come difficulty, come rejection by men, we will in all things through Jesus Christ’s blood be conquerors, and by the power of His Spirit we shall overcome at the last (Rom 8:37). I would God we were all trusting in Jesus (2Sa 22:3). May those who have not trusted Him be led to begin, and God shall have all the praise in us all, evermore. ☞

Study Questions Lesson Three ***God Overriding Satan’s Considerations***

Please read Lesson 3 before answering these questions. Always get your answers from the reading, but put them into your own words, in order to indicate your understanding of what you have read.

1. Explain how the devil “has more knowledge and less wisdom than any other creature.”
How far to let Satan go (A)
2. Why did Job’s first trial lose all its sting when Job declared “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”
3. a. What is the end result of Satan’s “type of woe”?
b. Why is this so?

How to sustain the saint (B)

4. How does the Lord sustain us in the midst of a trial?
5. a. Who ultimately authorizes every temptation?
b. What is the meaning of 1 Corinthians 10:13?

How to sanctify by the trial (C)

6. Satan worked evil trials upon Job. How did God use them for Job's good?

How to earn a greater reward (D)

7. What did God intend all the while during Job's trials?
8. Amazingly, who was God's instrument to bring this about?
9. How should you sustain and build up your own confidence in God?
10. Regardless of the difficulty, how are we to become conquerors?
11. What is the meaning of Romans 8:37?
12. *Making It Personal*
 - a. Have you experienced significant trials in your life?
 - b. Have you ever before applied the patience of Job in the midst of a trial (i.e., have you trusted God's purposes to use it for your good, even when the trial seemed overwhelming)?
 - c. What will you do differently when you experience your next trial?

PART B

THE SAINT'S DEFENSE

"It is written."—Matthew 4:4

Lesson 4

Our Champion's Chosen Weapon

1. Introduction

Thoughtful minds anxiously desire some fixed point of belief. We cannot rest till we have found out something that is certain, settled, and no longer to be questioned. To be tossed with uncertainty leaves us desperate for help and open to Satan's attacks (Jam 1:6-8). Where do we look for help?

We have a sure word of testimony, a rock of truth upon which we rest, for our infallible¹⁶ standard lies in, “It is written.” The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible is our religion. It is said that the Bible is hard to understand, but it is not so to those who seek the guidance of the Spirit of God. It is the Word of God and is pure, unerring truth (Joh 17:17). Here is infallibility, and nowhere else.

I wish to speak to those who have found the Savior, for by them this Book must be used as the sword of the Spirit in the spiritual conflicts that await them (Eph 6:17). I would urge them to take to themselves this part of the whole armor of God, that they may be able to resist the great enemy of their souls (Eph 6:11-18).

“It is written.” I shall commend this unailing weapon to your use by noting,

- This is our Champion’s own weapon,
- To what purposes He turned this weapon,
- How He used this weapon in mortal combat.

2. Our Champion’s Chosen Weapon

A. *Alternative weapons*

I commend to every Christian here the constant use of the infallible Word, because it was our Champion’s chosen weapon when He was assailed by Satan in the wilderness (Mat 4). He had a great choice of weapons with which to fight with Satan, but He took none but this sword of the Spirit, “It is written.” Our Lord might have overcome Satan by *angelic force*. He had only to pray to his Father and He would presently have sent Him twelve legions of angels (Mat 26:53), against whose mighty rush the arch-fiend could not have stood for a single moment. If our Lord had but exercised *His godhead*, a single word would have sent the tempter back to his infernal den. But instead of power angelic or divine, He used “It is written”; thus teaching His Church that she is never to call in the aid of worldly force, but must trust alone in the omnipotence that dwells in the sure Word of testimony. This is our battle-axe and weapon of war. The support of the wealthy or of civil power is not for us; neither dare we use bribes or threats to make men Christians: a spiritual kingdom must be set up and supported by spiritual means only.

Our Lord might have defeated the tempter by *unveiling His own glory*. The brightness of the divine majesty was hidden within the humility of His manhood; and if He had lifted the veil for a moment, the fiend would have been utterly confounded. Our Master might also have assailed Satan with *rhetoric* and logic. Why did not He discuss the points with him as they arose? Here were three different issues to be discussed (Mat 4:3, 6, 9), but our Lord confined Himself to the one argument, “It is written.”

Now, beloved, if our Lord and Master, with all the choice of weapons that He might have had, nevertheless selected this true blade of the Word of God, let us not hesitate for a moment, but grasp and hold fast this one and only weapon of the saints in all times. Cast away the wooden sword of carnal reasoning; trust not in human ability, but arm yourselves with the solemn declarations of God, Who cannot lie—and you need not fear Satan and all his hosts. Jesus, we may be sure, selected the best weapon; and what was best for Him is best for you.

¹⁶ **infallible** – more than error free: not even capable of error.

B. How Christ used the Word

Note that Christ used this weapon *when no man was near*. The value of Holy Scripture is seen not only in public teaching or striving for the truth; its still small voice is equally powerful when the servant of the Lord is enduring personal trial in the lone wilderness. The severest struggles of a true Christian are usually unknown to any but himself. For these dread duels, “It is written” is the best sword and shield. Scripture to convince another man is good, but Scripture is most required to defend and purify our own souls. There is a real and personal devil, as most Christians know by experience, for they have stood foot to foot with him and known his keen suggestions, horrible insinuations,¹⁷ blasphemous assertions, and fiendish accusations. We have been attacked by thoughts that came from a mind stronger, more experienced, and more subtle than our own; and for these there is but one defense: the infallible “It is written.”

Our Lord also used this weapon *under the most trying circumstances*, but He found it to be sufficient for His need. He was alone, no disciple was there to sympathize; but the Word was the man of His right hand, the Scripture communed with Him. He was hungry, for He had fasted forty days and nights—and hunger is a sharp pain. He was placed by his adversary in a position of great danger, high on the pinnacle of the lofty house of the Lord, yet there He stood. He was placed also where the kingdoms of the world were stretched beneath His feet, a matchless panorama that has full often dazzled great men’s eyes and driven them onward to destruction. In the desert, on the Temple, or on an exceedingly high mountain, no change in His mode of warfare was required; the infallible “It is written” availed in every position in which He found Himself, and so shall it be with us.

Observe that our Savior continued to use His one defense, although His adversary *frequently shifted his point of attack*. Error has many forms, but truth is one. The devil tempted Him to *distrust*, but that dart was caught upon the shield of “It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Mat 4:4). The enemy aimed a blow at Him from the side of *presumption*, tempting Him to cast Himself down from the Temple; but how terribly did that two-edged sword fall down upon the head of the fiend: “It is written, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Mat 4:7). The next impudent blow was levelled at our Lord with the intent of *bringing Him to His knee*: “Fall down and worship me” (Mat 4:9); but it was met and returned with crushing force by, “It is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve” (Mat 4:10). This smote the devil to the heart!

This weapon is good at all points: good for defense and for attack, to guard our whole manhood or to strike through the joints and marrow of the foe. You cannot be in a condition that the Word of God has not provided for; it has as many faces and eyes as providence itself. You will find it unailing in all periods of your life, in all circumstances, in all companies, in all trials, and under all difficulties. If it were capable of error, it would be useless in emergencies, but its unerring truth renders it precious beyond all price to the soldiers of the cross.

I commend to you, then, the hiding of God’s Word in your heart, the pondering of it in your minds. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom” (Col 3:16). Be rooted and grounded, and stablished in its teaching, and saturated with its spirit (Col 2:7). To me it is an intense joy to search diligently in my Father’s Book of grace. It grows upon me daily. It was written by inspiration in old times, but I have found while feeding upon it, that not only was it inspired when written, but it is so still. It is not a mere historic document: it is a letter fresh from

¹⁷ **insinuations** – one thing implied by another.

the pen of God to us. The Holy Spirit is in the Word; therefore it is living Truth. O Christians, be sure of this, and make the Word your chosen weapon of spiritual war.

Study Questions Lesson Four **Our Champion's Chosen Weapon**

Please read Lesson 4 before answering these questions. Always get your answers from the reading, but put them into your own words, in order to indicate your understanding of what you have read.

Introduction (1)

1. a. What is meant that the Bible is “infallible”?
- b. Why is this important for spiritual warfare?

Our Champion's chosen weapon (2)

Alternative weapons (A)

2. Upon what must the church depend for evangelism? Why?
3. What do we learn from the fact that Jesus chose the one weapon of Scripture over other alternatives?

How Christ used the Word (B)

4. Is the Word best suited for public or private trials? Why?
5. Why is the devil a formidable foe?
6. Why is it significant that the Lord used the weapon of the Word in various trying circumstances?
7. Why is it significant that the Lord consistently used the one weapon of the Word even when the enemy tempted Him in different ways?

Lesson 5

Purposes of “It Is Written”

A. To Defend

Our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us to what purposes to put this “It is written.” Notice first that He used it to defend His Sonship. The fiend said, “If thou be the Son of God” (Mat 4:3), and Jesus replied, “It is written.” That was the only answer He thought fit to give. He did not call to mind evidences to prove His Sonship; He did not even mention that Voice out of the excellent glory which had said, “This is my beloved Son” (Mat 3:17). No, but “It is written.” Now, my dear brother, I do not doubt but that you have been already subjected to that infernal “if.” Oh, how comfortably it comes from Satan’s lip. It is his darling word, the favorite arrow of his quiver. One of his greatest works of mischief is to make men doubt: “You say you are justified, pardoned, and accepted; but *if* such and such, may you not after all be deceived?”

Now, dear friends, I beseech you: never let Satan get you away from the solid ground of the Word of God. If he once gets you to think that the fact of Christ being the Savior of sinners can only be proved by what you can see within yourself, he will very soon plunge you into despair.

The reason why I am to believe in Jesus, lies in Jesus and not in me. I am not to say, “I believe in the Lord Jesus because I feel so happy,” for within half an hour I may feel miserable; but I believe in Christ for salvation because *it is written*, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Act 16:31). I believe in the salvation provided by Jesus Christ, not because it suits my frame of mind, but because *it is written*, “He that believeth in him is not condemned” (Joh 3:18); “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in me hath everlasting life” (Joh 6:47). Nothing can alter this truth; it stands, and must stand for ever. Believer, abide by it, come what may.

Satan will tell you, “Ah, if you were really a changed character you would not have those thoughts and feelings.” Argue not at all with him, but dwell upon the fact that *it is written*, “Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners” and “whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (1Ti 1:15; Joh 3:16). “It is written”; stand you there, and if the devil were fifty devils in one, he could not overcome you. On the other hand, if you leave “It is written,” Satan knows more about reasoning than you do: he is far older, has studied mankind very thoroughly, and knows all our sore points: the contest, therefore, will be an unequal one. Do not argue with him, but wave in his face the banner “It is written.” Satan cannot endure the infallible truth, for it is death to the falsehood of which he is the father. So long as God’s Word is true, the believer is safe; if that is overthrown, our hope is lost—but, blessed be God, not till then. You who are tempted: Flee to your stronghold (Psa 91:2)!

B. To Defeat

Our Lord next used the Scripture to *defeat* temptation.

He was tempted to *distrust*. There lay stones at Jesus’ feet that, for all the world, were like loaves, because it was within His power to make them into loaves of bread. There was no bread and He was hungry, and “distrust” said, “God has left you; you will starve; therefore leave off being a servant, become a master, and command that these stones be made bread.” Jesus, however, met the temptation to provide distrustfully for Himself by saying, “It is written.”

Now, young Christians or old Christians, you may be placed by providence¹⁸ where you think you will be lacking basic needs, and then if you are afraid that God will not provide for you, the dark suggestion will arise, “I will deal after the way of the unjust (by stealing, lying, manipulation, flattery, etc.), and so put myself in comfortable circumstances.” True, the action would be wrong, but many would do it, and therefore Satan whispers, “Necessity has no law; take the opportunity now before you.” In such an hour, foil you the foe with, “It is written, thou shalt not steal.” We are bidden never to go beyond God’s moral law to hurt our neighbor. It is written, “Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed” (Psa 37:3). It is written, “No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly” (Psa 84:11). In that way only can you safely meet the temptation to distrust.

Then Satan tempted the Lord to *presumption*. “If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down” (Luk 4:9), said he; but Christ had a Scripture ready to parry His thrust.¹⁹ Many are tempted to presume: “You are one of God’s elect, you cannot perish; you may therefore go into sin; you have no need to be so very careful, since you cannot fall finally and fatally”—so Satan whispers. If we

¹⁸ **providence** – “God’s works of providence are His most holy (Psa 145:17), wise (Isa 28:29), and powerful (Heb 1:3), preserving and governing all His creatures and all their actions (Psa 103:19; Mat 10:29).” (*Spurgeon’s Catechism*, Q.11; available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.)

¹⁹ **parry his thrust** – This is the language of a sword fight, where an offensive swing is met with a defensive block or “parry.”

are at any time tempted to yield to such deceptive pleas, let us remember it is written, “watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation” (Mat 26:41). It is written, “Keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life” (Pro 4:23). It is written, “Be ye holy, for I am holy” (1Pe 1:16). “Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect” (Mat 4:47). Be gone, Satan, we dare not sin because of the mercy of God: that would be indeed a diabolical return for His goodness. We abhor the idea of sinning so that grace might abound (Rom 6:1)!

Then will Satan attack us with the temptation to *be traitors* to our God and to worship other gods. “Worship me,” says he when on the mountain top, “and if you do this your reward shall be great.” He sets before us some earthly object that he would have us idolize, some selfish aim that he would have us pursue. At that time, our only defense is the sure word, “It is written, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength” (Luk 10:27). “Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price” (1Co 6:19-20). “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service” (Rom 12:1). “Little children keep yourselves from idols” (1Jo 5:21). By quoting such words as those with all our hearts, we shall not be allowed to fall.

Beloved, we *must* keep from sin. If Christ has indeed saved us from sin, we cannot bear the thought of falling into it. If any of you can take delight in sin, you are not the children of God! If you are the children of God, you hate it with a perfect hatred and your very soul loathes it. To keep from sin, arm yourselves with this most holy and pure Word of God, which shall cleanse your way and make your heart obedient to the voice of the thrice-holy God.

C. To Direct

Next, our Lord used the Word as a direction to His way. This is a very important point. Too many direct their ways by what they call *providences*. They do wrong things and they say, “It seemed such a providence.” I wonder whether Jonah, when he went down to Joppa to flee to Tarshish (Jon 1:3), considered it a providence that a ship was about to sail to that exact location. If so, he was like too many now-a-days who seek to lay their guilt upon God, by declaring that they felt bound to act as they did because “God’s providence” suggested it. Our Lord was not guided as to what He should do by the circumstances around Him. Anyone but our holy Lord would have obeyed the tempter, and then have said, “I was very hungry, and I was sitting down in the wilderness, and it seemed such a providence that a spirit should find me out and courteously suggest the very thing that I needed, namely, to turn the stones into bread.” It was a providence, but it was a *testing* providence. When you are tempted to do evil to get what you need, say to yourself, “This providence is testing me, but by no means does it indicate what I ought to do; for my rule is: *‘It is written.’*” If you make apparent providence your guide, you will make a thousand mistakes, but if you follow “It is written,” your steps will be wisely ordered.

Neither are we to make our *special gifts* and special privileges our guide. Christ is on the pinnacle of the Temple, and it is certain that if He had chosen to cast Himself down, He could have safely done so; but He did not make His special privileges of God’s grace a reason for *presumption*. It is true that the saints shall be preserved all the way into glory, but I am not to presume upon a doctrine: I am to obey the command. For a man to say, “I am a child of God, I am safe, therefore I live as I choose,” would be to prove that he is no child of God at all, for the children of God do not turn the grace of God into selfish pleasures.

Then Satan tried to make our Lord’s own *personal advantage* to be His guide. “All these things will I give thee,” said he; but Christ did not order His actions for His own personal advantage, but replied, “It is written.” If our Lord had been a mere man, He might have said, “If I

fall down and perform this small act of ritualism, I shall have a noble platform to rule the world and accomplish much good. Why not do it?" Far, far removed was our Lord from the wicked spirit of *compromise*. Alas, too many now say, "We must give and take in little points; it is of no use to stand out and to be so absurdly wedded to your own ideas; there is nothing like yielding a little in one place in order to carry your point in greater things." But not so spoke our Lord. "It is written" was His guide, not His usefulness or personal advantage.

My dear brother, it will sometimes happen that for you to do the right thing will appear to be most disastrous; it will shipwreck your fortune and bring you into trouble—but I charge you do the right thing at any cost. Instead of your being respected, you will be regarded as old-fashioned or worse if you speak straight out; but speak straight out, and never mind what comes of it. You and I have nothing to do with what becomes of us or our reputations, or with what becomes of the world, or becomes of heaven itself; our one business is to do our Father's will. "It is written" is to be our rule. Follow the written Word wholly, and never mar the perfection of your obedience to Him on account of "usefulness," or any other petty plea that Satan would put in your way.

D. To Maintain

Note, further, that our Lord used "It is written" for maintaining His own Spirit. I love to think of the calmness of Christ. He is not one whit flurried. He is hungry, and He is told to create bread, and He answers, "It is written." He is lifted to the Temple's summit, but He says "It is written" just as calmly as you or I might do sitting in an easy chair. There He is with the whole world beneath His feet, gazing on its splendor, but He is not dazzled. "It is written" is still His quiet answer. Nothing makes a man self-contained, cool, and equal to every emergency like always falling back upon the infallible Book, and remembering the declaration of Jehovah, Who cannot lie. I charge you, brethren, see to this!

E. To Vanquish

The last thought on this point is that our Lord teaches us that the use of Scripture is to vanquish the enemy and chase him away. "Go," said He to the fiend, "for it is written." You too shall chase away temptation if you keep firmly to this.

*"God hath said it; God hath promised it, God that cannot lie,
Whose very word of grace is strong as that which built the skies."*

Study Questions Lesson Five ***Purposes of "It Is Written"***

Please read Lesson 5 before answering these questions. Always get your answers from the reading, but put them into your own words, in order to indicate your understanding of what you have read.

To defend (A)

1. What is the devil's favorite word? Why?
2. What is the only reason to believe in Jesus? Why?
3. Why can the devil not endure the infallible Word?

To defeat (B)

4. a. How was Jesus' being hungry like a temptation that you might face?
b. How should you respond when tempted in this way?

5. a. How was Jesus on the pinnacle like a temptation you might face?
b. How should you respond when tempted in this way?
6. a. How was Jesus on a high mountain like a temptation you might face?
b. How should you respond when tempted in this way?
7. a. If we love God, what will be our response to sinful pleasures?
b. If we love sinful pleasure, what does that tell us about our salvation?
c. *Making it Personal* Do you love sinful pleasure? Are you saved?

To direct (C)

8. a. How do many people direct their ways (i.e., make decisions)?
b. What should our response be instead?
9. How can belief of “once saved, always saved” lead to the sin of presumption?
10. How can good opportunities lead to the sin of compromise?

Lesson 6

How to Use the Word

As our Lord chose the Word of God as the weapon, and taught us its uses, so He showed us how to handle it. How are we to handle this sword of “It is written”?

First, ***with deepest reverence***. Let every word that God has spoken be “law and gospel”²⁰ to you. Never trifle with it; never try to escape its force or change its meaning. God speaks to you in this book as much as if again He came to the top of Sinai and lifted up His voice in thunder (Exo 19:16). I like to open the Bible and to pray, “Lord God, let the words leap out of the page into my soul, Your very self making them vivid, quick, powerful, and fresh to my heart.” Our Lord Himself felt the power of the Word; it was not so much the devil who felt the power of “It is written” as Christ Himself. “No,” saith He, “I will not command stones to be made bread, because I trust in God, Who can sustain me without bread. I will not cast myself down from the Temple; I will not tempt the Lord my God. I will not worship Satan, for God alone is God.” The manhood of Christ felt an awe of the Word of God, and so it became a power to Him. To trifle with Scripture is to deprive yourself of its aid. Reverence it, I urge you, and look up to God with devout gratitude for having given it to you.

Next, ***have it always ready***. Our Lord Jesus Christ, as soon as He was attacked, had His answer prepared: “It is written.” Have the Scriptures at your fingers’ end; better still, have them in the center of your heart. It is a good thing to store your memory with many passages of the Word—the very words themselves (Psa 111:9, 11). “It is written” is an armory where hangs a thousand shields of mighty men. It is not merely one, but a thousand, no, ten thousand weapons of war. It has texts of every kind, suitable for our aid in every emergency, and effective for turning back every attack. Brethren, study much the Word of God and have it ready at hand. It is no

²⁰ **law and gospel** – rules and good news for living.

use treating the Bible as the fool did his anchor, which, when he came to be in a storm, he had left at home. Have the infallible witness at your side when the father of lies approaches.

Endeavour also to ***understand its meaning***, and so to understand it that you can discern between its meaning and its perversion. Half the mischief in the world, and perhaps more, is done not by an outright lie, but by a slight change to a truth. The devil, knowing this, takes a text of Scripture, clips it, adds to it, and attacks Christ with it; but our Lord did not therefore despise Scripture because the devil himself quoted it, but He answered him with a flaming text right in his face. He did not say “The other is not written, you have altered it”; but He gave him a taste of what “It is written” really was, and so confounded him. You do the same! Search the Word, get the true taste of it in your mouth, and acquire discernment—so that when you say “It is written,” you may not be making a mistake, for there are some who think their creed scriptural and yet it is not so. Texts of Scripture out of their connection, twisted and changed, are not “It is written”: it is the plain meaning of the Word that must be known and understood. Read the Word and pray for the Holy Spirit that you may know its meaning, for so will you contend against the foe.

Brethren, learn also to ***appropriate Scripture to yourselves***. One of the texts our Lord quoted, He slightly altered. “Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God” (Luk 4:12). The original text is, “Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God” (Deu 6:16), a plural; but the each individual person lies in the plural, and it is always a blessed thing to find yourself there. Learn so to use Scripture that you take home to yourself all its teaching: all its commands and principles, all its promises, all its doctrines—for bread on the table does not nourish: it is bread that you eat that will really sustain you.

When you have appropriated the texts to yourself, ***stand by them whatever they may cost you***. If to give up the text would enable you to make stones into bread, do not give it up; if to reject the command would enable you to fly through the air like an angel, do not reject it. If to go against the Word of God would make you emperor of the entire world, do not accept the bribes. Be a Bible man (Isa 8:20); go so far as the Bible but not an inch beyond it. If your minister should go astray, pray that he may be brought back again, but do not follow him. Though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel than this Book teaches you, do not, I pray you, give any heed to us (Gal 1:8)—no, not for a single moment. Here is the only infallibility: the Holy Ghost’s witness in this Book.

Remember, lastly, that your Lord at this time was ***filled with the Spirit***. “Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost” went to be tempted (Luk 4:1). The Word of God apart from the Spirit of God will be of no use to you. If you cannot understand a book, do you know the best way to reach its meaning? Write to the author and ask him what he meant. If you have a book to read, and you have got that author always accessible, you need not complain that you do not understand it. The Holy Spirit is come to remain with us forever. Search the Scriptures, but cry for the Spirit’s light and live under His influence. So Jesus fought the devil: “being full of the Holy Ghost.” He smote him through with this weapon because the Spirit of God was upon Him. Go you with the Word of God like a two-edged sword in your hand (Heb 4:12-13), but before you enter the battle, pray the Holy Ghost to fill you and guide you (Eph 5:18); so shall you overcome all your adversaries and triumph even to the end. May God bless you, for Jesus’ sake.

Study Questions Lesson Six
How to Use the Word

Please read Lesson 6 before answering these questions. Always get your answers from the reading, but put them into your own words, in order to indicate your understanding of what you have read.

1. a. What is it to treat the Word with irreverence?
b. Why should we treat it reverently?
2. a. What is it to have God's Word "always ready"?
b. Why should we have it always ready?
3. a. What dangers can arise when we misunderstand Scripture?
b. How does the devil tempt us to misunderstand?
c. How should we avoid this?
4. a. When is it appropriate to slightly alter your quotation of Scripture?
b. Why?
5. Why must we always check what men say with the Bible?
6. a. What is the best way to find the meaning of any book?
b. What is the only way to find the meaning of the Bible?
7. *Making It Personal*
 - a. Is this concept of "spiritual warfare" new to you?
 - b. The next time you are tempted, how will you treat it differently?
8. *Making It Personal*
 - a. What are the main lessons you have learned during this course?
 - b. What value is this to you?

Thank you for taking this course.
Please contact your course administrator
now for your next course.

*Put into practice the new insights from your study.
Re-read the main headings and your notes; then review
these main lessons regularly during the next month.*

Detailed Course Instructions

1. Procedure for Taking the Course

- a. The reading material for this course consists of the reading text printed at the beginning of each lesson of this study guide.
- b. Before beginning to read, please pray for God's enabling to learn spiritually.
- c. Before you begin a lesson, please read the reading text completely.
- d. After reading the text, answer the related questions in this study guide. The lessons in this course are "open book," which often enhances learning by removing unnecessary pressure. In addition, some questions ask for a personal response, where the answer will not be found in the reading material. In this case, we ask only for your honesty and best effort.
- e. The questions are designed to be thought through carefully. Several of the questions are sensitive; they have to do with your heart attitudes. So please do not rush, or you will be defeating the purpose of the course! Answer all of the questions as honestly as you can. The answers are confidential.
- f. Do not go to the next question until you have answered the previous one.

2. Answer pages

Try to be concise and as clear as possible in your answers. Please write or type your answers on regular 8.5 x 11 inch (A4 metric) paper, or on the preprinted answer sheets if provided. Please write clearly and neatly, and if possible print. Note each page with Lesson #, each answer with Question #, and skip a line between questions

3. Supplies

Paper, pen, and Bible are needed to complete your assignments. The King James Version is quoted, but you may use another version if you do not have a KJV.

4. Completion of Assignments

- a. If taking this course with a local coordinator, please follow their instructions.
- b. If you are taking this course as individual independent study (non-graded), save your answer sheets for future reference. (Skip the below instructions 5 & 6).

5. Only if Correspondent Study

- a. Two months are allotted for the completion of this course. You may be granted an extension by contacting your course coordinator.
- b. Mail your answer sheets to your course coordinator after completing all Lessons 1 to 6. Only mail your answer sheets, not this Study Guide. They will be returned to you by regular mail after grading. Please ensure to write your name, student ID, course title, and lesson number on each answer sheet. Please see the sample after the Table of Contents at front. Headings should be in the following format:

Your name student ID course SWA lesson number

6. Written Feedback (only if correspondent study)

Spiritual success is not measured by high grades, but by growth in Christ-likeness to God's glory. Therefore, the motivation in taking the course is to see God change your life. There are no letter or number grades such as "A" or "100" to be earned. The grader will offer comments or suggestions from Scripture in response to your answers. Some answers have no comments because they are correct or personal.