

Devotion

Part 1

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[00:00:01] For the love of Christ constrains us, because we must judge that if one died for all then we're all dead and that he died for all that they which live should not henceforth live on to themselves but unto him which died for them and rose again. And then to Numbers chapter 6.

Numbers 6, verse 1.

[00:01:17] The Lord speak unto Moses saying, speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them when either a man or woman shall separate themselves to a vow of a Nazarite to separate themselves unto the Lord he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink and shall drink no vinegar of wine or vinegar of strong drink neither shall he drink any liquor of grapes nor eat moist grapes or dried. All the days of a separation shall he eat nothing [00:02:02] that is made of the vine tree from the kernels even to the husk. All the days of the vow of a separation there shall no razor come upon his head until the days be fulfilled in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord he shall be holy and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. All the days that he separateth himself unto the Lord he shall come at no dead body. He shall not make himself unclean for his father or for his mother for his brother or for his sister when they die because the consecration or [00:03:03] separation of his God is upon his head. All the days of his separation or Nazarite ship he is holy unto the Lord. I think that should do from this chapter.

I have to say I don't feel very energetic tonight. I think preaching in the open air has taken quite a bit out of me. I don't think the preaching in itself but to go down there and see men and women passing by you heedlessly, carelessly, no thought of their souls, no thought [00:04:01] of eternity and without any hope. It's solemn. I think we should bear that in mind as we give out the Gospel leaflets. We need to remember that men and women are perishing not just in Woolwich and not only when you're helping at chapter 2 but when you go back to your own localities in France or Germany or Spain or Poland or Israel or Belfast. These are souls without a saviour, without hope, passing out to a lost eternity and there but for the grace of God [00:05:08] would be your eye. How we can thank God that in his mercy he's reached us, he's touched us, he's made the message come home in part to our hearts in such a way that we've responded in accepting Christ as Saviour. And so the point I want to deal with tonight is the point of devotedness and that's why I read the verse in the New Testament about Christ, he died for all, so we can go to everyone, no exceptions to that. People are alive if they're here in the body, we can go to them with the Gospel and we can say to them on the basis of this verse, Christ died for you, he died for all. But sadly not all respond and so it goes on to say, [00:06:07] that there are only a certain class, he died for all, that they which live, we're not speaking about everybody now, we're speaking about those who have spiritual life, we're speaking about those for

whom Christ has died who responded and it says of us that we which live should not live unto ourselves. What are you living for? What am I living for?

What have I been living for in the last week or the last year or the last ten years? Christ died [00:07:04] for us, through infinite grace we live through his death. Paul says that they which live should not live unto themselves, our own selfish lives, but we should live unto him, Christ who died for us in depths of unmeasurable suffering, who took our place and lives again. He's alive, he's in glory and we ought to live our lives in relation to him and that's really what the [00:08:07] truth of the Nazarite in the Old Testament scriptures brings before us. The possibility that we can devote our lives to the Lord and to the Lord's interests and that was seen preeminently dear brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ. Not externally, not in these external markings as to touching the fruit of the vine, growing hair long and not coming near a dead body. We're not talking about what was true externally in the Old Testament but we're talking about the spiritual reality preeminently the spiritual reality of the Nazarite was seen [00:09:02] in the life of Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus the Son of God, the one who could say I do always those things that please the Father. And I think too to come to our subject this afternoon, this course of Nazariteship was seen in the Apostle Paul, a life of devoted service to the Lord Jesus Christ.

He could speak of his life as being poured out as a drink offering. He could speak of having fought a good fight, having completed the course. For me to live is Christ, that was the motto of his life and he passed it on to Timothy and through Timothy to us today. The Lord's looking [00:10:04] for devotedness and it's particularly true in view of the ruin and the failure that has come in in the Christian circle. In the verses we've read, verse 8 contemplates a certain period of Nazariteship, it says that one should be a Nazarite all the days of a separation. And then there are regulations and instructions given further down in the chapter as to bringing the offerings, as to burning the hair in the altar and the way in which this period of separation comes to an end. But actually we find that when ruin came in in the nation of Israel and when an [00:11:01] abnormal condition of things developed in Israel, well then we find that there were individuals who took up Nazariteship, not just for a limited period but for their life from the day of their birth right through to the close of their life. I'm thinking of Samuel, I'm thinking of Samson, I'm thinking of one like John the Baptist. And so what was essentially for a limited period, what was abnormal I think we could say in Old Testament times is really what's normal, it's what's expected, it's what we should be in Christianity. And in point of fact, in the Christian testimony it's been those that have been specially devoted to God that have carried the testimony. I don't think there's any doubt about that whatsoever. The Nazarite corresponds in a sense to the man of God. Timothy was referred to as a man of God [00:12:13] it said thou man of God. And then instructions were given, we read the verses in chapter 3 this afternoon, that the man of God should be fully furnished. And that opens out the possibility of being man of God to the brothers and sisters, to us today. It's not every Christian that's a man of God in the sense in which it's used in the scripture. I think the expression is used about 70 times in the Old Testament. And we find in the connection with the first mention in Moses the man of God, we find that the title, the name man of God is introduced when failure has come in. I think it's used about 22 times of Elisha, again where [00:13:08] Israel had failed. The man of God out of Bethel and David, there are others, but when things outwardly were not as they should be, then there were opportunities for the man of God.

It was Mr. Faraday wrote a book once about Samuel, the prophet, and he called it Samuel, God's emergency man. And that's what a man of God is. It's a person now, we're talking about man of God, we're not confining it to the male of the species, it's brother or sister, he wants to take a stand for God. To meet special contingencies, to meet special needs, to meet abnormal situations, God is

recruiting men of God. He's enlisting them tonight and he's [00:14:18] asking you, young or old, if you're prepared to sign up. And so it's the same here with the Nazarite. Talking about special devotion, we're talking about those who want to separate themselves to be holy unto Jehovah. And it's interesting in verse 1 it says, when either man or woman, I think that just about includes every one of us here. It's not preach the word, it's not just for [00:15:04] the brothers, it's not what we were hearing about this afternoon. There are other vacancies. So it says man or woman. It was D.L. Moody said that God needs O and O's. O and O's, out and out, out and out to be completely absorbed in something. I read a little biography of Lord Congleton, one of the early brethren. Just a little notice of his death. A man who was well to do and who, from a human point of view, gave it all up in order to serve the Lord.

[00:16:01] And it says he was one of those that D.L. Moody would have referred to as an O and O, an out and out. And as I've said, when we look at the history of the testimony, the Christian testimony, God has used people such as that. We can think of Martin Luther, the monk. Ah, but he got converted. And he was the monk who shook the world. The Babylonian captivity of the church, he brought the whole papal structure tumbling down round him. And the altar on which supposed sacrifices of Christ were offered up, [00:17:04] the altars in the church buildings were replaced by the pulpit. And in place of superstition and sacramental systems, the precious word of God was ministered. The truth was brought before people's souls. And in Europe, they responded in their hundreds and in their thousands. That was one man. It says in Hebrew, so great a cloud of witnesses. Who do we look at next?

I can think of John Bunyan in the 1600s in England. He'd never been ordained, never been [00:18:18] to university or college. Hadn't had any training. But he started to take delight in the word of God, and he started to read it. And the truth got into his soul. He said he would have preached to the very crows the reality of the word of God to them. And he preached it to others. And of course, because he wasn't an ordained minister in the church, they said, Bunyan, you can't preach. You're bound over to keep the peace. Keep quiet or you'll go to prison. Do you agree not to preach? [00:19:06] And he said, I'm sorry. If God's called me to preach, I'm going to preach. I can't give that up.

Off to jail with him. Bedford jail. He laid down in a den. Wasn't a very comfortable place. But it says, I dreamed a dream. Bunyan, the immortal dreamer, and that work of his imagination soundly founded in the word of God, that allegory, I'm sure you know it. The Pilgrim's Progress. A book [00:20:03] that has been read and used of God probably next to the Bible and translated into many languages, even French. I'm sure others too, or Polish. What I'm saying is, if you can't read the book in English, read it in your own language. Definitely worth reading. Very challenging, invigorating book. Think of that man's influence through what he's written. One man again that was devoted to God and was prepared to put God's interests first. But Fanny Crosby, the blind hymn writer. Or Mary [00:21:08] Slessor, the white queen who worked amongst the slaves. Or Florence Nightingale. Or Amy Carmichael in India. It's good sometimes to read a little bit of biography, just to see what others have accomplished for God. Or since it's the 300th year of his birth, what about John Wesley? The founder of Methodism. The one who was anxious about salvation. Even though he was a minister of the gospel, he was preaching to people and he wasn't converted himself. He came to see it in the West Indies. The Mennonites that had gone out to work amongst the slaves had a reality that he [00:22:07] didn't have in his own life. It's no good going through with meetings and coming here. It's no good standing up here to preach if we don't have the reality. And he saw people and when he measured himself alongside them, he realised they've got something I haven't got. Back he went to England, the city of London, Aldersgate Street. Someone was reading aloud the Luther's, and here's the link

with the past, Luther's preface to the epistle to the Romans. He says, I felt my heart strangely warm. I did believe. He got the assurance of salvation. And off he went on horseback, virtually lived on horseback. England and Ireland and even the Isle of Man. Thousands were converted.

[00:23:10] Well now, where does that leave us today? It's usually an individual, there are a few individuals that have influenced, that have carried others along and have borne the testimony. And in the type, in the picture of the Nazarite, we have a possibility of making a vow. Vowing a vow, that's something internal, something we do. Like Count Zinzendorf, when he saw the painting of the sufferings of Christ, all this I've done for thee, for you, what hast thou done for me? He died for [00:24:05] all that they who live, permit me to put it in the third person plural, that we which live, should live not unto ourselves, but unto him which died for us and rose again. With that possibility, dear friends, of devoting ourselves to the Lord's interests, of saying I don't care what he's doing or she's doing, there's something here and I want to go in for it. And I want my life not to be wasted. I want to do something worthwhile. Worthwhile in the estimate of heaven, I'll vow a vow. I'll respond. I'll hold myself available. Even if perhaps you're just called [00:25:07] upon to scrub floors and have property in heaven. Whatever God wants us to do. You know, I have a man who comes into my bookshop, a regular customer, an ex-vice-principal of a large grammar school, and a very devoted Christian. And he told me, he says, I go to missionary meetings and they talk about the missionary work they're doing. And then he said, I tell them about my mission field. And he said, it's just five minutes from my own doorstep. And he's been a very positive influence [00:26:04] amongst young people in that school and those young people, different generations now, I should think, a whole succession. And he's been there available to them with the gospel and available to help them with their problems. So don't just think that mission field has to be a summer campaign in some different locality or country or location to where we're normally found. God perhaps calls us to live a very mundane life, day-to-day life, day-to-day business, our own locality. But the point is, are we going to be devoted? If that's the place where the Lord calls upon us to shine, are we prepared to shine there? You in your small corner and I in mine. [00:27:06] And so the point here is, it was for a man or a woman to purpose, to distinguish themselves by separating, to make this vow. And first of all, they were to separate onto the Lord. They were to be holy onto the Lord. They were to be dedicated onto the Lord. And that's something which concerns our motives. And that's something which we do in our hearts and in our minds. It's not something anyone else can see, but it's something that God sees. And then of course, it will be seen in its effects. And there are three things here. And again, we're trying to [00:28:03] discover the spiritual significance of them. I'll do my best to try and open this out a little bit. First of all, the Nazarite was to separate himself from wine and strong drink. And so drink no vinegar of wine or vinegar of strong drink, nor any liquor of grapes, etc. Now, I want to say I'm not raising the question of teetotalism here, as to whether believers should drink alcohol or not. That's a different question to what's before us here. But I will say this, I had someone come into my bookshop who I know well. And he started to work amongst down and outs, people who were in the gutter through drink or drug abuse. And these poor people have a certain loyalty amongst [00:29:13] themselves, and they just buried one of their number. And he was giving to her husband and wife, he was giving them a lift in his car back to the hostel where they lived. And he wanted to witness to them. And when they got in the car, he said, I'm born again, or I'm a born again Christian. And they said, yes, they said, we are born again. No, he said, you don't understand. I'm not talking about reincarnation, because he said very often when people when you say born again to people, they have this idea of reincarnation and that they come back in a separate life and are born again in that way. So he explained to them that he wasn't talking about reincarnation, but that he [00:30:03] meant born again by trusting and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, they said, we are born again, we're baptised believers. And there they were. And they went on to tell him. One drink, one social drink, at the office, party with their

colleagues. And that was the start, on the slippery slope to alcoholism. And to a great deal of depravity. And he said, they said to me, he said, warn other believers of the danger. So I'm passing that on. It's not the use of alcohol that's condemned in the Bible. It's the abuse of it. But if we don't touch it, [00:31:10] friends or family will not be able to reproach us for drinking too much. And we'll not find that there's maybe something in our makeup that disposes us to it in a certain way that when we start, we can't stop. That's by the way, that's another subject. That's a matter for each individual and for each individual conscience. But the thought here, and not taking derivatives of the vine, I understand to be different. Vine is a type of joy. Wine that maketh glad the heart of God and man. And the Lord Jesus Christ said, as he was leaving the disciples, that he would [00:32:07] not drink of the fruit of the vine with them until he would drink it afresh in the kingdom of God. It was something that was put up. And so wine would be a type of natural joys, of earthly joys. And yet the Nazarite is called to something higher. He's called not just to get his enjoyment and pleasures in the things that are merely of nature or of the earth or social. He's called rather to a higher level of devotedness and to put the interests of Christ first.

I think we might have a sense of it in 1 Corinthians 7 where it says, [00:33:13] they that weep as though they wept not, and they that rejoice as though they rejoiced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world as not abusing it, for the fashion of this world passeth away. And so on. So the point surely here in regard to taking of wine or the vine, grapes, kernels, the skin, even to the husk, even to that which is internal, raises a question as to where we're deriving our enjoyment. Whether it's merely the [00:34:06] things of time and sense, or whether it's the higher things and things of God. So that's the first thing in connection with the Nazarite. A level of devotedness that puts the things of Christ uppermost, even beyond our natural sensibilities and the things, normal things in life, things not sinful in themselves, things that are pleasurable but that we could give up for God. And then the second thing, the Nazarite was not to cut his hair, he was to let the locks [00:35:01] of the hair of his head grow. Now what's the significance here? We know that a woman's hair is her glory, long hair is a glory, whether it's up or down. And it says in the same passage in Corinthians that it's a shame for a man to have long hair, it's contrary to nature, looks effeminate. Here the thought is that a man is surrendering his glory to Christ. Long hair is a matter of reproach to a man. And I think it connects itself with that thought. You know, the natural man [00:36:01] didn't appreciate the qualities that were found in Christ, meek and lowly in heart. They despised him. One who wouldn't quench a smoking flax, touch a bruised reed. And if we develop those qualities of Christian integrity and God-centeredness that were seen in Christ, we're going to be despised by the world. They don't appreciate the same values at all.

[00:37:02] And so in connection with this long hair, I think we can bring in the thought of reproach. Raises a question if we're prepared to do that, school or college or wherever we are.

Someone takes the Lord's name in vain to say, excuse me, but he's my saviour and he's my friend and I'm trusting him. Or, I don't go to such and such places because I'm a Christian.

In connection with the nation of Israel, there was a great reproach in identifying with Messiah, with Yeshua, Jehovah Jesus. And in the exhortation to the Hebrews, in the epistles of the Hebrews, [00:38:08] Paul said, the writer, I would take it to be Paul says, let us go forth unto him outside the camp, bearing his reproach. See, if we step out of organized religion, be it Israel in the past, or be it organizations, religious organizations and conglomerations that man has formed.

If we find that Christ has taken the outside place, if we find that Christ tells us to gather to his name,

we find that Christ tells us to go forth onto him. If we make the break, we say, [00:39:07] I see God's will is to the church. We see God's will is to the assembly as to where I should gather with like-minded believers. It's there, it's clear, it's black and white. I'm going to have to do something about it. I'm going to have to remove myself from false circumstances and seek to gather to Christ and to Christ's name, even if it's with a despised handful, even if it's with the poor of the flock and the feeble and the difficulties. Well, you'll be reproached.

There's no question about it. You'll be viewed with contempt, perhaps even by other like-minded Christians. I remember when I had to make the step.

[00:40:06] I remember a very dear friend saying to me, oh, he says you're too good to break bread with us now. There's a measure of reproach there. And it was the same with Moses in the gallery of faith in Hebrews chapter 11. He had to make a choice. And he had to make a choice when he was come to years. Parents couldn't decide the question for him, says when Moses, when he was come to years.

He refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, took a definite decision. He took a definite choice. He said, I'm not going to be identified with Egypt anymore or with Pharaoh's [00:41:04] court, says he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. What's it going to be tonight? Pleasures of sin just for a season or to suffer a reproach with the people of God. So there's this question of something beyond mere natural earthly joy. And then in the long hair and the onshore locks, there's this question of devotedness and the reproach that comes with it. And then there's this question of not touching the dead body. [00:42:03] It's a type of sin, sin and death. They go together. Death is the result of sin. They go together. Death is the result of sin. And how much corruption there is through sin here in this world and how easily it attaches itself to us.

There's a question, of course, of our sinful nature of the flesh. Paul says, I know that in me, that is in my flesh, good does not dwell. So we've got an enemy within. And Paul goes on to say, oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? It's as if he was strapped up to a dead body and he was carrying a dead body about with him. [00:43:04] Horrible thought. But that's what sin is. We have it in our nature.

It drags us down. We have to lay aside every weight in the sin which so easily besets us. But there is an answer. It's not the intention, it's not God's intention that a believer should always be coming under the power of sin, under the power of the indwelling of the flesh, of the old nature. Paul could also say, I'm crucified with Christ. He could open out instruction about liberty, about being set free. And he could say in response to the question, who will deliver me from the body of this death? He says, I thank God through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So in regard to the nature that would [00:44:07] pull us down, there's instruction in the word of God, that we've died with Christ, that we've to live in newness of life, that we have to know certain things and that we have to reckon certain things. And then there's the opening out of liberty, just like the children of Israel seemed an insurmountable barrier to pass through the Red Sea. And yet when Moses lifted up his rod, there was a way through. There was an opening out of liberty. There was a way of being freed from bondage, from Pharaoh and from the bondage of Egypt. And I suppose if we don't make progress in deliverance, in understanding the gospel, the second part of the epistle to the Romans, we're not going to get very far in our Christian lives because instead of battling with enemies outside and fighting the good fight of faith, we'll be fighting with ourselves all the time. So there's a great subject there and a subject that

needs to be opened up. But [00:45:05] death, sin, how many defiling things we meet with every day. Just have to turn on a television or open a newspaper or walk down the street or listen to someone's conversation in the train or tram or bus or all these sources of defilement. And yet we need the cleansing from them. And if we're going to be devoted to the Lord, we need to separate ourselves from these things. Now I know that time is against me, but I did want just to take a little look at Samson. As a type of a Nazarite who went astray. And then to look at John the Baptist as a type of one who lived in devotedness to the Lord. And so before we turn to judges, I just want to quote something that someone said, [00:46:02] and he said this, when the church is in ruin or indeed in the ruin of any dispensation, nothing but a Nazarite will meet the case. That is a man prepared to surrender the proprieties and joys of life that he might be naturally entitled to. In other words, we're on the line of giving up certain things in order that we might be devoted to the Lord. Samson, we know in the book of Judges was a Nazarite from his birth. His mother was told, even his mother was told not to drink wine or strong drink nor eat any unclean thing. For she's told the child shall be a Nazarite to God. [00:47:06] She's told no razor shall come on his head. The child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb and so on. And she in repeating the message, she said the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death. That's what that mother had in view for her son.

She'd been told he'd be a Nazarite from the womb and she said he'd be a Nazarite from the womb to the day of his death. And it's good and proper that we've right desires for our children, that we can pray for them in that direction. But sometimes it doesn't turn out that way. And Samson failed in his Nazarite ship. [00:48:04] And it's a warning to us. Chapter 14, verse 1.

It says he went down to Timnah.

And then it says he saw, he saw a woman, the daughters of the Philistines. And he comes up and he tells his father and mother, he says, I've seen a woman. And in the end of verse 3, evidently he liked what he saw because he says, get her for me. [00:49:08] And the French version conveys it better, elle plait à mes yeux. She's pleasing to my eyes. She's good to look on. I think the best English rendering is New American Standard version, but I couldn't get hold of one here in London. But it's said twice. She pleases my eyes. Again in verse. And of course, he set himself out on a certain course.

[00:50:01] This was Samson's weakness. He saw something, he saw someone, and he wanted her.

Next thing he says, get her for me. And then it says, he went down and talked with her. That's the next thing.

She pleases me well. I like what I see.

She's right in my eyes. It's a danger.

Danger to young man. Not an adequate basis for courtship or for a relationship, just because I see someone that I like and I want to have her. [00:51:07] You see, there's an important ingredient missing here. She was a non-believer. She was a non-believer. It was an unequal yoke. His parents knew that. Of course, God overruled in the circumstances. I'm not looking at the sovereignty side here. I'm looking at the failure side in Samson. Is there never a woman among the daughters of thy people, or among all my people, that you have to go and take a wife of these uncircumcised Philistines? But that's exactly what he did. In verse 10, he went down unto the woman. [00:52:06] And so on.

Of course, it didn't work out as he'd intended, because it says, verse 20, Samson's wife was given to his companion. And then later, Samson went down, and he said, he visited his wife. He says, I'll go into my wife, into the chamber. And her father had to say, but I've given her to your companion. And then, what about her younger sister? She's fairer than she. Even the father-in-law knew about Samson's weakness. And so we could go on. There it was, an unequal yoke. It was one of the Philistines. Corresponds to brother, young brother, young sister, linking themselves up with a worldly person today, [00:53:03] and forming an unequal yoke. And then it gets worse, because in the beginning of chapter 16, it says he goes down to Gaza. And here, it's not just an unequal yoke, it's a desolateness, it's the defiling world, because it says it's a woman, a harlot. And again, his weakness, he goes in unto her. And of course, they were lying in wait until the next morning. And this was just a casual liaison, a chance encounter, and how much danger there is in that for our young people, or even for us older ones. Worlds around us where this sort of behaviour, moral behaviour, becomes more and more debased each day. [00:54:03] Christian standards are falling, are falling, until even our young people don't know that there's anything wrong with premarital sex, and they're saying, well, it doesn't matter, we're in love, why should I have to wait? The reason is because it's condemned by the word of God. And the proper place for physical intimacy is not in a relationship, even if it is a steady relationship, it's not even the place in engagement.

The place for physical intimacy, according to the word of God, is within the marriage bond. And this illustration in Samson [00:55:02] is given for a purpose. And it's telling us here not to get along in a close encounter with someone the opposite sex that we feel a physical attraction to.

Because it spells danger, just as it's spelled danger here. And it's very solitary to take up the book of Proverbs and look there at the instruction that God gives in this subject of what the father gives to his son. And there are two dangers, there's the danger of the violent man, but there's also the danger of the strange woman. Chapter 5 and 6 and 7 of Proverbs.

The strange woman.

The woman with the flattering woman. [00:56:01] The foolish woman.

The woman with impudent lips. Strong warning.

In Chapter 9 it says, stolen waters are sweet. Oh yes, oh yes, it's sweet at the time. Bread eaten in secret is pleasant. What do we do in secret? What do we think in secret? But it goes on to say, he knoweth not that the dead are there and that her guests are in the depths of hell. That's where it leads. And you say to me, why are you saying all this? Why do you need this? Because it's a problem. Just this week a letter came through to the depot [00:57:02] from someone and he asked, she or he asked questions about the problem of lust. William Macdonald, the bible expositor, he's written a little booklet and it's called The Problem of Lust. And one of the things I remarked in speaking to our missionaries that work overseas and work in Africa, they're all saying we need something on this subject.

And if they need something on that subject here below it, we probably need something on this subject here too. It's just that they're perhaps more open in speaking about it than we would be with our natural reserve. So heed the warning from Samson. Just one look and it opened up [00:58:01] a whole moral chasm. It plunged him into a false course.

You only lose your purity once and if it's lost it's never regained. Ah, you say I don't have this problem. Very well.

What is your problem? One of the old puritans, Thomas Watson, he said Satan, the devil is very good at taking your spiritual pulse He knows the temperature.

He knows what you're susceptible to and he'll be able to wheel out a suitable temptation. He's had plenty of experience. The sin which so easily [00:59:01] besets us, it may not be in this realm that we speak about here, it's a danger.

But there are many other things. We mentioned drink earlier on. Many other pleasures. Distractions.

That'll take our footsteps out of the path of devotedness. We have it here in the case of Samson. Let us be warned and instructed by his history. And then in closing to close on a more positive note, let's think of John the Baptist who again was a Nazarite. What a life of devotedness to the Lord Jesus Christ. He kept his eye on Christ. He didn't know who it would be until he presented himself to Israel.

But then he could say, this is he of whom it said [01:00:01] after me comes one that's preferred before me.

He put Christ in that place.

He preferred him.

In fact, he took a humble place. He said he wasn't even worthy to loose the thongs of his sandal. He was so great he wasn't even worthy to come near and touch his sandals. He says he must increase.

He must increase but I must decrease.

He called people to look to him. Behold the Lamb of God the person.

Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world the work.

Again, this is he which baptizes with the Holy Spirit. He recognized [01:01:03] the offices of Christ. He recognized his greatness. He recognized his worth. He recognized the significance of his death. He knew he couldn't stand in his presence.

Indeed, he was the messenger who went before Jehovah's face and yet he didn't speak of himself. He didn't say I'm the one that's come to prepare the way of the Lord. He just spoke of himself as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. He took a low place to exalt Christ. May God help us to honor Christ.

He died for all.

We which live should not live unto ourselves but unto him which died for us lives again. We've seen in the Nazarites vow how we should do it. We've seen in Samson the dangers that confront us but we also see in John the Baptist the possibilities for God's glory.