

of us all is a marvelous mechanism far surpassing anything that exists and that man has yet devised. Far surpasses! There are mysteries in the human body that are far beyond the knowledge of science today. It is a wonderful mechanism.

So the desires of the flesh are here better than the lusts of the flesh. When NIV says "cravings of the sinful nature" it expresses only a portion of it. I believe that this part of this threefold division of the temptation that Christ withstood and set us an example that we should follow in his steps, corresponds to the first of the three parts of His temptation, as described in both Mat. and Lk.

He was hungry. He had fasted for 40 days. He ate nothing during these days. At the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, If you are the Son of God tell this stone to become bread. There were the desires of the flesh, and there was the tendency (the desires of the body and of the human nature) --not necessarily a sinful nature. There was nothing sinful in His wanting bread. There was nothing sinful in His needing something to eat. But to put it first and to give it a primacy it does not deserve was the temptation the devil put before Jesus.

He came to earth and He emptied himself of His great power as far as his details of his earthly life were concerned. He lived a life like we do, tempted as we are, tested as we are yet without sin. He used his supernatural power for definite purposes for the accomplishing of his mission. But when Satan asked him to use his power simply for his own physical needs, he said, Man shall not live by bread alone but by everything that procedes--every word that procedes from the mouth of God.

Our relation to our physical needs is the first part of the temptation. of Christ. It is very important we clearly understand what God wants us to know in this direction. There are three matters connected with this I would like to mention.

First, the denial of our bodily needs. The denial of the cravings of the human flesh. I am not speaking here of sinful flesh. But of flesh as God has made it. This is the asceticism so common in the Middle Ages. I do not believe that God wants us except on rare occasions where he leads us for a special purpose for the accomplishing of His will to leave the ordinary needs of the human nature unsatisfied.

I remember one time when I was in high school when I went up in the mountains with another fellow for a few days hiking in the mountains north of Los Angeles. We headed toward a place called Barley Flats where he said there was a good spring, and since there was a good spring in that place we did not bother to carry water. We went through the day up and down over rather steep hills and we got rather warn, tired and thirsty. Somewhat hungry, but we thought more of the thirst. Barley Flats was an area in which there were supposed to be a good many rattlesnakes. We did not want to wander around in the dark, but we knew exactly where the spring was. So we headed toward that spot in order to drink our fill, and to eat a little and then to put down our sleeping bags and spend the