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TBGRA - Them Bones Gonna Rise Again

Pastor John Hicks

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Years ago at summer camp we sang a song about the Garden of Eden called, "Them Bones". Several of the verses in the song are about the serpent, Eve, and the forbidden fruit. "Apples, peaches, pears and such. Them bones gonna rise again! (TBGRA!) But one fruit you must not touch. (TBGRA!) Round that tree old Satan slunk (TBGRA!) At Miss Eve his eye he wunk. (TBGRA!) My that fruit looks mighty fine (TBGRA!) Take a bite, the Lord won't mind. (TBGRA!)"

The song does a good job of describing temptation for all of us. We see something we desire and then we try to rationalize our need for it. Before we know it, temptation draws us and lures us into doing something we might not normally do. Again, we rationalize: "It's really not that bad." "Others do it." "The Lord won't mind."

And the hard thing in all of this is that our temptation can be for anything. It can involve money or worldly goods, but doesn't have to. The temptation can be for affection, or power, or just a vision of some sort of normalcy for our lives. It can be a temptation for the E.F. Hutton effect – when we speak, we want people to listen.

Another way temptation rears its head is in addiction. We think we can control alcohol, food, drugs, sex, the compulsion to make money, or any other addiction. We are in control and nothing can control us. Wrong!

I once heard a TV evangelist share, "Temptation is seductive and beautiful. Temptation lures us in and gives us a false sense of security and makes everything seem right for awhile." There was truth in what he said. Sin is seductive. But what came next I wasn't so sure of: "And if you will send a donation to my ministry, I will pray for you to overcome whatever temptation you may have. I will hold your letter in my hand, pray for you by name, and that temptation will leave you never to return again." It kind of makes you wonder who was praying for his temptations.

Temptations hit all of us at some time, and one thing is for sure, "Them bones" of temptation are gonna rise again! No one is exempt. Not even Jesus. Jesus was led into the wilderness, and He was tempted. He was tempted to change stones into bread. He was tempted with individual need. He was fasting. Breaking the fast prematurely was the temptation. He was tempted with worldly power. He was offered kingdoms, riches, and control over everything in the world. He was finally tempted to challenge God.

Jesus used Scripture, prayer, and faith to overcome the temptations that came His way. After Jesus overcame the temptations, He called the disciples together, and built a community that can uplift and uphold one another. In doing all of this, Jesus becomes our hope. Jesus gives us the example of how to deal with our own temptations. We have Scripture, prayer, faith, and the power and faith of the Christian community.

Remember the math books in high school? In each section they gave a sample problem as an example to follow as an aid for solving the other problems. Jesus is our example to follow.

The world will continue to tempt us. There are many apples out there that we could pick. Through the love and grace of God in Christ, we have help not only to resist the temptations, but saving help when we do slip and yield to them.