

T e m p t a t i o n

HOW TO FIGHT IT

Christians and non-Christians alike are tempted every day (1 Cor. 10:13). Just because a person comes to a saving faith in Christ, that doesn't mean that they will no longer be tempted to sin. Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by Satan himself in Matthew 4:1-11. 1 John 3:9 speaks of no longer sinning but John is speaking of habitual sin, a life characterized by sin. Since believers are still prone to sin, we must take a look at what temptation is, where it comes from, and how to conquer it.

Temptation – to sow disbelief that God's way is the most satisfying way for us to live.

Sin - a lack of conformity to the moral law of God in act, disposition, or state; to miss the mark

Temptation is not Sin, but it leads to sin. Jesus was tempted (Matt. 4) but did not sin (1 Pet. 2:22)

HOW ARE WE TEMPTED?

James 1:13-15 – “When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to death.”

We are tempted by our own desires when they are enticed by one of three sources:

- **The world** - 1 John 2:15-17 - ¹⁵Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. ¹⁷The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever.
- **The flesh** - Gal. 5:16-17 - ¹⁶So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature. ¹⁷For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.
- **The devil** - Eph. 6:10-11 - ¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.
1 Peter 5:8-9 - Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

We are tempted in three main areas of our lives:

	<i>Eve</i> <i>Gen. 3:6</i>	<i>Christ</i> <i>Matt. 4</i>	<i>The World</i> <i>1 Jn. 2:16</i>	<i>Enemies</i> <i>Phil. 3:19</i>
Cravings of the flesh	Good for food	Stones to bread	Cravings of sinful man	Their god is their stomach
Lust of the eyes	Pleasing to the eyes	Have all the kingdoms of the world	Lust of the eyes	Mind is on earthly things
Pride of life	Desirable for gaining wisdom	Prove yourself	Boasting of what he has & does	Their glory is in their shame

IT IS OUR CHOICE TO SIN WHEN TEMPTED

When we are tempted, God is not tempting us. But God is watching to see how we handle temptation. We are responsible for choosing our thoughts and actions.

Genesis 4:7 If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it.

Romans 6:12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.

James 4:7 Resist the devil, and he will flee from you

JESUS PROVIDES A WAY OUT

- Hebrews 2:18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.
- Hebrews 4:15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. 16Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
- 1 Cor. 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, He will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.
- Romans 6:8-11 ⁸Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. ¹⁰The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. ¹¹In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

As believers, we have the power to overcome temptation in our lives (1 John 3:9; 5:4; 5:18).

HOW TO FIGHT TEMPTATION

Understand where temptation takes place?

In the mind! For us, it is a daily battle of the mind. (see *RENEWING THE MIND* page under discipleship)
 2 Cor. 10:5 - We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Be Prepared - Put on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:1-18)

- Helmet of salvation v. 17 - Without Christ in our lives, we have no power over temptation. We must have a saving faith in Jesus.
 1 John 5:4-5 ⁴for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.
- Shield of faith v. 16 - Have faith that through Jesus' sacrifice for our sins and the power of His Word, we can overcome temptation. He will provide the way out (1 Cor. 10:13).
- Belt of truth v. 14 - Know the Word of God so that you will know truth. Then you will be able to test your thoughts and discern the truth from the lies.
- Breastplate of righteousness v. 14 - Choose to do what is right
- Feet fitted with readiness v. 15 - ready to stand your ground for what is true.
- Sword of the Spirit v. 17 - The "word" here means "spoken word." Speak the Word of God when tempted. (see *how Jesus overcame temptation* below)
- Prayer v. 18 - Pray on all occasions
 Mark 14:38 "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak."

Take Action - How did Jesus prepare for and respond to temptation? (Matthew 4:1-11)

- Pray - Jesus spent forty days in prayer and fasting prior to His being tempted
- Discern between truth and lies - Satan used scripture in verse 6
- Respond to temptation with the Word of God - Jesus did all three times
 This involves memorizing Scripture - Jesus knew the Word. In order to handle temptation at anytime and any place, the Word must be in hearts and on the tip of our tongues!
 Psalm 119:11 "I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against you."
 (see *MEMORIZING* page under discipleship)
- Respond with Scripture that fits the temptation - speak the truth in place of the lies
- Respond by saying it out loud - Satan is not omniscient and therefore doesn't know our thoughts. By quoting Scripture out loud, he hears that you are submitting to God. It helps us as well to hear the Word in the moment of need.
 Eph. 6:17 - the sword of the Spirit is the spoken Word (Scripture) - Grk: "*rhema*"
- Choose to live by the truth - James 4:7 "Submit yourselves then to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."
 It is a minute by minute decision to follow God's will.