



Overcoming Temptations

The Word & Prayer

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Overcoming Temptation

1 Corinthians 10:13

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.

In a culture filled with moral depravity and sin-inducing pressures, Paul encouraged the Corinthians about temptation.

He said that:

- (1) Temptations happen to everyone, so don't feel you've been singled out;
- (2) Others have resisted temptation, and so can you;
- (2) Any temptation can be resisted because:

God will show you a way out. God will aid you in resisting temptation by helping you

- (1) Recognize those people and situations that give you trouble,
- (2) Run from anything you know is wrong,
- (3) Choose to do only what is right,
- (4) Pray for God's help, and
- (5) Seek friends who love God and can offer help when you are tempted. Running from a tempting situation is your first step on the way to victory.

Walk in the Spirit.

Galatians 5:16

This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

If your desire is to have the qualities listed in 5:22, 23, then you know that the Holy Spirit is leading you. At the same time, be careful not to confuse your subjective feelings with the Spirit's leading. Being led by the Holy Spirit involves the desire to hear, the readiness to obey God's Word, and the sensitivity to discern between your feelings and his promptings.

Live each day controlled and guided by the Holy Spirit. Then the words of Christ will be in your mind, the love of Christ will be behind your actions, and the power of Christ will help you control your selfish desires.

Resist the devil and he will flee.

James 4:7

Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

How can you come close to God? James gives five ways:

(1) Humble yourselves before God (4:7). Yield to his authority and will, commit your life to him and his control, and be willing to follow him.

(2) Resist the devil (4:7). Don't allow Satan to entice and tempt you.

(3) Wash your hands... and purify your hearts (that is, lead a pure life) (4:8). Be cleansed from sin, replacing your desire to sin with your desire to experience God's purity.

(4) Let there be sorrow and deep grief for your sins (4:9). Don't be afraid to express deep heartfelt sorrow for what you have done.

(5) Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor (4:10; 1 Peter 5:6).

Fornication is a sin against your body.

1 Corinthians 6:18-20

Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Christians are free to be all they can be for God, but they are not free *from* God. God created sex to be a beautiful and essential ingredient of marriage, but sexual sin—sex outside the marriage relationship—*always* hurts someone. It hurts God because it shows that we prefer following our own desires instead of the leading of the Holy Spirit. It hurts others because it violates the commitment so necessary to a relationship.

It often brings disease to our bodies. And it deeply affects our personality, which responds in anguish when we harm ourselves physically and spiritually.

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He is able to nourish those who are tempted.

Hebrews 2:18

For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

Knowing that Christ suffered pain and faced temptation helps us face our trials. Jesus understands our struggles because he faced them as a human being. We can trust Christ to help us survive suffering and overcome temptation. When you face trials, go to Jesus for strength and patience. He understands your needs and is able to help

When you know to do good, do good.

James 4:17

Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.

James tells us that sin is also *not* doing right. (These two kinds of sin are sometimes called sins of commission and sins of omission.) It is a sin to lie; it can also be a sin to know the truth and not tell it. It is a sin to speak evil of someone; it is also a sin to avoid that person when you know he or she needs your friendship. You should be willing to help as the Holy Spirit guides you. If God has directed you to do a kind act, to render a service, or to restore a relationship, do it. You will experience a renewed and refreshed vitality to your Christian faith.

Man is drawn away from God by his own lust

James 1:14

But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

It is easy to blame others and make excuses for evil thoughts and wrong actions. We use excuses such as: A person who makes excuses is trying to shift the blame from himself or herself to something or someone else. A Christian, on the other hand, accepts responsibility for his or her wrongs, confesses them, and asks God for forgiveness.

Be strong in the power of God's might.

Ephesians 6:10-18

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

In the Christian life we battle against rulers and authorities (the powerful evil forces of fallen angels headed by the devil, who is a vicious fighter, see 1 Peter 5:8). To withstand their attacks, we must depend on God's strength and use every piece of his armor.

Paul is not only giving this counsel to the church, the body of Christ, but to all individuals within the church. The whole body needs to be armed. As you do battle against the "mighty powers in this dark world," fight in the strength of the church, whose power comes from the Holy Spirit.

**IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS,
HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST AND
WILL FORGIVE US OUR SINS AND
PURIFY US FROM
ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.
*John 1:9***

God is faithful to forgive our sins.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Some Christians believe that God forgives them when they confess, but if they died with unconfessed sins, they would be forever lost.

These Christians do not understand that God *wants* to forgive us. He allowed his beloved Son to die just so he could offer us pardon.

When we come to Christ, he forgives all the sins we have committed or will ever commit.

We don't need to confess the sins of the past all over again, and we don't need to fear that God will reject us if we don't keep our slate perfectly clean. Of course we should continue to confess our sins, but not because failure to do so will make us lose our salvation. Our relationship with Christ is secure. Instead, we should confess so that we can enjoy maximum fellowship and joy with him.

True confession also involves a commitment not to continue in sin. We wouldn't be genuinely confessing our sins to God if we planned to commit

them again and just wanted temporary forgiveness. We should also pray for strength to defeat temptation the next time we face it.

The Lord, the high priest, is touched by the feelings of our infirmities.

Hebrews 4:15

For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Jesus is like us because he experienced a full range of temptations throughout his life as a human being. We can be comforted knowing that Jesus faced temptation—he can sympathize with us. We can be encouraged knowing that Jesus faced temptation without giving in to sin. He shows us that we do not have to sin when facing the seductive lure of temptation. Jesus is the only perfect human being who has ever lived.

Pray that you enter not into temptation.

Luke 22:40

And when he was at the place, he said unto them, pray that ye enter not into temptation.

Jesus asked the disciples to pray that they would not fall into temptation because he knew that he would soon be leaving them. Jesus also knew that they would need extra strength to face the temptations ahead—temptations to run away or to deny their relationship with him. They were about to see Jesus die. Would they still think he was the Messiah? The disciples' strongest temptation would undoubtedly be to think they had been deceived.

Hide God's word in your heart.

Psalms 119:11

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Hiding (keeping) God's Word in our hearts is a deterrent to sin. This alone should inspire us to memorize Scripture.

But memorization alone will not keep us from sin; we must also put God's Word to work in our lives, making it a vital guide for everything we do.

Those who sin have an advocate with Jesus Christ, the righteous.

1 John 2:1

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

John uses "dear children" in a warm, fatherly way. He is not talking down to his readers but is showing affection for them. At this writing, John was a very old man. He had spent almost all his life in ministry, and many of his readers were indeed his spiritual children.



Be transformed by renewing your mind.

Romans 12:2

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Paul warned Christians: "Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world" that are usually selfish and often corrupting. Wise Christians decide that much worldly behavior is off-limits for them. Our refusal to conform to this world's values, however, must go even deeper than just behavior and customs; it must be firmly planted in our mind: "Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think." It is possible to avoid most worldly customs and still be proud, covetous, selfish, stubborn, and arrogant. Only when the Holy Spirit renews, reeducates, and redirects our mind are we truly transformed.

The devil seeks those he may devour.

1 Peter 5:8-11

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, and seeking whom he may devour:

Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

When we are suffering, we often feel as though our pain will never end. Peter gave these faithful Christians a broader perspective. In comparison

with eternity, their suffering would last only "a little while." Some of Peter's readers would be strengthened and delivered in their own lifetimes. Others would be released from their suffering through death. All of God's faithful followers are assured of an eternal life with Christ, where there will be no suffering (Revelation 21:4).

Prayer of deliverance:

Through heaven's door, The Blood of Jesus, I repent of the sin of yielding to temptations. I denounce and cast out this evil spirit that is influencing my life and disturbing my peace of mind.

In the authority of the name of Jesus Christ. I command this spirit to leave and be cast into utter darkness never to return again.

Right now, I receive my deliverance from this spirit and receive God's peace. I pray in the mighty name of Jesus Christ, amen.

References:

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print