

“Foundations” – Lesson #4

HANDLING TEMPTATION

There is no legitimate reason for any of us to submit to the power of temptation in our lives. As Christian men and women, we have both the ability and responsibility to fight back. The Bible has made it clear that we are to resist, fight, and endure when temptation comes our way. To do this we must read the Word of God, study it, and seek God through prayer and meditation.



“Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.”

Ephesians 6:13

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When were you last tempted to do something you knew to be wrong? Did this temptation come after you received Christ as your Savior? Was the temptation something you knew would lead you astray from the teachings of God and would cause you to sidestep His commandments? Was it last night, this morning, even now as you read these words? How did you react to the feelings deep within your soul that told you just this once it would be acceptable to give in? Were you willing to do almost anything to gain or do this thing for yourself? When you considered the possible consequences of giving in to this temptation, how did you feel? Were you lured into sin because of this temptation in your life?

I. CHRISTIANS CAN OVERCOME TEMPTATION.

James 1:13-15 ¹³ “When tempted, no one should say, “God is tempting me.” For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴ but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

What does vs. 13 say about God?

Not the source of temptation, doesn't tempt us

Is this statement, “God is making it hard for me to be good”, true or false? Explain your answer. False. Blaming God for something that he doesn't do, easier to blame God for our sin, probably will now turn and blame Satan for it because that is easier than accepting blame

According to verse 14, what makes us so susceptible to temptation? And what does it mean to be “dragged away and enticed”?

Our evil desire makes us susceptible to temptation, we are pulled toward the sin forcefully by these desires and further tempted

When “lust” and “the will” get married, what kind of children do they produce? we are tempted (we dwell on it), desire is conceived (we lust after it), eventually sin is born (we do it), then sin grows and grows (we do it a lot), and finally gives birth to spiritual death (we pay for it)

What could happen if “the will” were to choose another mate in the beginning rather than tying the knot with “Lust”?

Choosing to dwell or follow after a good thing in the temptations early stages will cause us to birth good things instead of sin and death

Read 1 John 4:4 and 5:4. What is the Christian able to do?

Overcome the world, overcome lust, sin and death

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II. UNDERSTANDING THE NATURE OF TEMPTATION.

I Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. 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 endure it.”

A. According to I Corinthians 10:13, what is true about every temptation we face? Every temptation is common to Man. Jesus went through it. God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you can handle. He always gives a way out

1. Who can give you victory when tempted? *God*
2. Does God remove temptation? *No*
3. What does God do for you? *He provides a way out*
4. What is our part and what is God’s part in overcoming temptation? *Our part is to take God’s way out. God’s part is to provide that way*

Remember: When you are feeling overwhelmed by a situation and that you cannot handle it; God knows you can!

B. According to 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.” does Jesus understand our temptation?
He Understands, has been tempted in every way but without sin

How did Christ keep from sinning when tempted? Luke 4:4,8,12
Spoke the Word

Is there a difference between temptation and sin? What is it?
Temptation is not sin. Sin is a word, thought or act against the law of God (Exodus 20:1-17). John Wesley defined sin as the willful transgression of a known law of God

Helpful illustration:

If a male Christian is driving down the street and passes a bikini-clad girl sunning herself in her front yard, that would be a temptation, but not a sin. However, if that same guy goes back around the block for another look, he has sinned!

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III. RECOGNIZING THE SOURCES OF TEMPTATION.

- A. We learned in James 1:13-14, that a major source of temptation comes from our “evil desires”. What are some other names for these desires? *Lust, the flesh, impure thoughts*
- B. What are the three primary areas of temptation according to I John 2:15-16? *Flesh, eyes (covet), pride of life (ego)*

Give an example of a specific temptation for each area mentioned and look up the corresponding solution.

EXAMPLE:

SOLUTION:

Flesh: *Lustful desires, sex*

II Timothy 2:22 *FLEE*

God does not say when you are tempted in areas of the flesh to stop and pray. He tells us to run and get out of there!

Eyes: *Materialism/our attitude toward those things*

Romans 12:3

Do not conform, renew you mind

Psalm 119:9,11 *God’s Word*

Pride: *Superiority/inferiority/Independence*

James 4:7 *Submit to God*

Psalm 139 *Proper view of self*

When we pursue the right things (i.e. turning to God, reading the Bible, and praying), the temptations will begin to lessen. It is when we dwell on our sins and faults that they overpower us. We are tremendously affected by what we see and hear. Basically, what goes into the mind will come out of the mouth, heart or body.

- C. In Romans 8:1-3, because of Christ’s death and resurrection, what have we been freed from?

the law of sin and death, sinful nature, evil desires, flesh

- D. In each of the following, discuss what our new life in Christ gives us power over?

1. Romans 6:22 *Sin*

2. Romans 8:9-12 *the body, the flesh*

3. 1 John 3:8 *the devil and his work*

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IV. PRACTICING THINGS THAT KEEP TEMPTATION FROM LEADING TO SIN.

A. Matthew 6:9,13 ___ *Prayer for God's help and deliverance* ___

B. Psalm 119:9,11 ___ *Living by the Word, hiding the Word in your heart* ___

C. James 4:7 ___ *Submit to God, resist the devil* ___

D. II Timothy 2:2 ___ *Be teachable and teach others* ___

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What is a habit? A habit is a wonderful invention that God has placed within each of us. You might say it is like a built-in automatic pilot. A habit is a thought or action that we have repeated until it has become automatic, and we do it without stopping to decide. There are good habits, and there are bad habits. God created and saved you to be the master of good habits, instead of the slave to bad habits!

Understand how habits are formed...

1. Some are learned through reward/punishment
2. Some are formed by repetition
3. Some are formed by imitation – people tend to do what we do, not what we say (Generational problems)

How to become free from the habit that binds you...

1. Admit your own bad habit or habits. Be honest with yourself and God.
Does it hurt me? Does it hinder me?

2. Become a quitter. Make up your mind to stop. Ask for God’s help.
“I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:13

3. Don’t waste energy condemning yourself.

John 8:10-11 “Jesus straightened up and asked her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” “No one, sir,” she said. “Then neither do I condemn you,” Jesus declared. “Go now and leave your life of sin.”

Romans 8:1 “Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

4. Set a time and get started. Do it now. Mark it on your calendar if you need to.
5. Visualize yourself overcoming the habit.
6. Expect some temporary pain. Deny the lesser to gain the greater.
7. Try not to give up until you’ve won the victory. Remember, God is there with you.
8. Try to replace one bad habit with one good one.

Sow an act and you reap a habit.

Sow a habit and you reap a character.

Sow a character and you reap a destiny.

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Verses For Thought Life / Temptation / Lust

2 Corinthians 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."

Psalms 119:9-11 "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. {10} I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. {11} I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

James 1:14-15 "...but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. {15} Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death."

2 Timothy 2:22 "Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

Hebrews 3:1 "Therefore, holy brothers, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess."

1 Timothy 4:12 "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."

1 Timothy 5:1-2 "...Treat...older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity."

Colossians 3:2-7 "Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. {3} For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. {4} When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. {5} Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. {6} Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. {7} You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived."

1 Corinthians 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."

Galatians 5:24-25 "Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. {25} Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."

Philippians 4:7 "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 "Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. {19} Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have

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received from God? You are not your own; {20} you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body."

Psalms 13:2 "How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?"

Psalms 19:13-14 "Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. Then will I be blameless, innocent of great transgression. {14} May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer."

Proverbs 2:12-19 "Wisdom will save you from the ways of wicked men, from men whose words are perverse, {13} who leave the straight paths to walk in dark ways, {14} who delight in doing wrong and rejoice in the perverseness of evil, {15} whose paths are crooked and who are devious in their ways. {16} It will save you also from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words, {17} who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God. {18} For her house leads down to death and her paths to the spirits of the dead. {19} None who go to her return or attain the paths of life."

Proverbs 5 "My son, pay attention to my wisdom, listen well to my words of insight, {2} that you may maintain discretion and your lips may preserve knowledge. {3} For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; {4} but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword. {5} Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave. {6} She gives no thought to the way of life; her paths are crooked, but she knows it not. {7} Now then, my sons, listen to me; do not turn aside from what I say. {8} Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house, {9} lest you give your best strength to others and your years to one who is cruel, {10} lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil enrich another man's house. {11} At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent. {12} You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! {13} I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. {14} I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly." {15} Drink water from your own cistern, running water from your own well. {16} Should your springs overflow in the streets, your streams of water in the public squares? {17} Let them be yours alone, never to be shared with strangers. {18} May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth. {19} A loving doe, a graceful deer-- may her breasts satisfy you always, may you ever be captivated by her love. {20} Why be captivated, my son, by an adulteress? Why embrace the bosom of another man's wife? {21} For a man's ways are in full view of the LORD, and he examines all his paths. {22} The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast. {23} He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly."

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Proverbs 6:24-29 "...keeping you from the immoral woman, from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife. {25} Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, {26} for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life. {27} Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned? {28} Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? {29} So is he who sleeps with another man's wife; no one who touches her will go unpunished."

Proverbs 7 "My son, keep my words and store up my commands within you. {2} Keep my commands and you will live; guard my teachings as the apple of your eye. {3} Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. {4} Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your kinsman; {5} they will keep you from the adulteress, from the wayward wife with her seductive words. {6} At the window of my house I looked out through the lattice. {7} I saw among the simple, I noticed among the young men, a youth who lacked judgment. {8} He was going down the street near her corner, walking along in the direction of her house {9} at twilight, as the day was fading, as the dark of night set in. {10} Then out came a woman to meet him, dressed like a prostitute and with crafty intent. {11} (She is loud and defiant, her feet never stay at home; {12} now in the street, now in the squares, at every corner she lurks.) {13} She took hold of him and kissed him and with a brazen face she said: {14} "I have fellowship offerings at home; today I fulfilled my vows. {15} So I came out to meet you; I looked for you and have found you! {16} I have covered my bed with colored linens from Egypt. {17} I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and cinnamon. {18} Come, let's drink deep of love till morning; let's enjoy ourselves with love! {19} My husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey. {20} He took his purse filled with money and will not be home till full moon." {21} With persuasive words she led him astray; she seduced him with her smooth talk. {22} All at once he followed her like an ox going to the slaughter, like a deer stepping into a noose {23} till an arrow pierces his liver, like a bird darting into a snare, little knowing it will cost him his life. {24} Now then, my sons, listen to me; pay attention to what I say. {25} Do not let your heart turn to her ways or stray into her paths. {26} Many are the victims she has brought down; her slain are a mighty throng. {27} Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death."