

# Temptation

No Regrets Feb, 2009

In a culture like ours filled with images that appeal to men's greatest weaknesses, temptation is inevitable but God has given us everything we need to overcome it. So why is it that we so easily succumb to it? Why is it that certain temptations in our lives move from distraction to besetting sin? Come join us as we discuss a God-given strategy for overcoming temptation in our lives.

**C.S. Lewis**, "No man knows how bad he is till he has tried very hard to be good. A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is. After all, you find out the strength of the German army by fighting against it, not by giving in. You find out the strength of a wind by trying to walk against it, not by lying down. A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in. We never find out the strength of the evil impulse inside us until we try to fight it: and Christ, because he was the only man who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man who knows *to the full* what temptation means--the only complete realist."

**W.N. Taylor**, "Temptation rarely comes in working hours. It is in their leisure time that men are made or marred."

**Robert Orben**, "Most people would like to be delivered from temptation but would like it to keep in touch."

I think the battle for most of us looks like the popular skit on YouTube dramatizing the battle we all face!

**Video Clip: Everything**

## The Anatomy of Temptation and Strategies For Overcoming It

(James 1:12-18 as our paradigm)

### 1. The Reality and Benefit of Trials and Testing vv1-12

- Some call **trials**-- testing's on the outside, and temptations testing's on the inside
- **Crown**: word most often used for a laurel wreath given to the victor in an athletic event, here speaking of glory and honor due this person

### 2. The Power of a Lie to Undermine Our Resistance v13

- We know God tests us from examples like Abraham with Isaac, King Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 32:31)
- Temptation is **our tendency toward sin**, not our sinless God's initiative

### 3. The Root of Temptation is Our 'Evil Desires' vv14-15

- **Oswald Chambers**: "A man's disposition on the inside, i.e., what he possesses in his personality, determines what he is tempted by on the outside. The temptation fits the nature of the one tempted, and reveals the possibilities of that nature. Every man has the setting of this own temptation, and the temptation will come along the line of the ruling disposition. Temptation yielded to... is a proof that it was timidity that prevented the sin before."
- **Desire**: flesh based, unhealthy, lustful, evil desire. Obviously not all desires are evil.
- God's Word confirms what is occurring when the Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Cor 2:10-11 Satan is proactive, he is deliberately scheming; and in 1 Pet 5:8 we are told he is like a prowling lion—seeking someone to devour...
- Interesting to note—Satan is not referenced likely encouraging us to focus on our personal responsibility to resist the temptation or become hooked...
- Metaphor of Desire as a mother giving birth to sin, her child...and when her child is full grown and conceives it produces death...picture of death is reminiscent of the loose woman in Proverbs 6-9

### 4. Temptations Often Common among Men

**a. Jesus in the Desert:**

- 1. Performance**--Mt 4:1-4;
- 2. Significance/authority/power**-- Mt 4:5-7;
- 3. Possession**—Mt 4:8-11
- 4. Pride**--Proverbs 16:18
- 5. Sexual**--1 Cor 7:5; 1 Cor 6:18
- 6. Anger**--Eph 4:26-27
- 7. Wealth**--1 Tim 6:9
- 8. Idolatry**--1 Cor 10:14

**5. Strategies for Overcoming?**

**a. Put On Our Spiritual Armor**

Eph 6:10-13—armor of God

**b. Embrace Your Identity**

**1. Mindset:**

Galatians 1 John 5:18-20; 2 Cor 5:17; Rom 6:11-13—**new identity**

Gal 5:16—**Live by the Spirit**; Rom 8:5-9

Rom 12:2; 13:14—**Mind renewal; new identity**

**2. Proactive:**

1 Pet 5:8—**be self-controlled and alert**

Luke 9:23—**deny ourselves**

Rom 8:13—**Put to death the deeds of the body...**; Eph 4:22-24-- **Put off and put on...**

James 4:7, **Submit to God and resist the devil**

1 Cor 6:18—**flee**; 1Cor 10:14; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:22

2 Tim 4:18; 1 Cor 10:13—**Seek/Pursue God's way out**

**c. Grow in Your Knowledge of the Word**

Heb 4:12—the word of God

**d. Get Serious About Prayer**

Mt 6:13—prayer lead us not into temptation, but deliver...

Mt 26:41—Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation...

2 Cor 10:3-5—spiritual weapons with divine power

**e. Find an Accountability Relationship, and possibly Christian counseling**

Proverbs 27:17—Iron sharpens Iron;

Eccl 4:10—if one falls down his friend can pick him up. But pity the man...

**Resources:** Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, Peter Scazzero . Thomas Nelson; The Bondage Breaker, Neil Anderson, Harvest House