

Facing Temptation

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The time has come to walk away from the temptations of this world and seek God's plan for your life. How many times have you fallen into temptation and sin? I have fallen into temptation many times, have sinned and still do. It's a daily learning process, and it's our actions and attitude that will make a difference. Do you continue in sin and follow temptation or do you stop and seek God's council, repent of the sin and seek His forgiveness?

Temptation can be found all around us from the biggest to the smallest and we have to choose whether we submit to it or walk away. Oftentimes that choice depends on the amount of bad influence we have allowed into our lives.

In watching and listening to some of the people around me, I have seen them fall into a life of loneliness, bitterness and constant worry, allowing Satan's influence to continually impact their lives. I have seen people who have the light of God in them, slowly allow themselves to be kept from doing the work God has called and requires them to do. They retreat into a shell that they allow to hold them captive. I did say, "THEY ALLOW." Satan isn't the one holding any of us in this shell. It is our choice. He is only the tempter.

The consequences of anyone's decision to disobey God is on them. They have no one to blame but themselves. Any of us can put a stop to Satan, but only if we make that choice. No one can make the choice for you.

Most of the time we create our own misery. We don't have to live with it though. It says in James 4:7, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." And, in Luke 4:8, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Satan is the one that tries to turn us from what God requires of us and he works hard to influence us to do what we know in our hearts to be wrong.

Justifying, in our minds, what is wrong, doesn't make it right either. We can make as many excuses as we want by saying something is okay to do, but wrong is wrong in the eyes of God.

Satan wants us to fail and he doesn't care about us or our salvation. We are nothing to him, other than pawns in his game of attempting to separate us from God.

If we fail to do what's right by God, then Satan wins. Do you want him to win? I sure don't. We are the only ones who can put a stop to Satan's influence on us. God loves us and gives us a way out from Satan's hold. 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."

God is our way out. If you don't know how, then get in your Bible and read His words. Get on your knees and pray diligently. Pour your heart out to Him. Psalm 55:17 "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and He shall hear my voice."

He will hear you when you come before Him with an open heart, a heart that has faith in Him, trusts Him and believes in Him.

When we are tempted and we choose to give in to it, it can cause the ones we love to fall into the same temptation also.

Sometimes temptation comes with the fear of what God has planned for our lives. The fear overcomes us and we end up giving into the temptation. We go off the straight and narrow path bringing our family and friends along with us if they are not strong in their own relationship with God.

We need to be a better influence in people's lives, being the ones that plant the seeds of God's word in their hearts. If you don't do the work God has called you to do He could do as it says in, Titus 1:16 "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." Romans 1:28 "And even as they did not like to retain God in *their* knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient.

God could choose to remove His Spirit and release you to this world if you continue to walk contrary to what He has commanded.

Satan had the same choice we do now. God gave Satan everything his heart desired, but the temptation of power and a vanity in himself caused his fall from God's ways. We can read this description in Ezekiel 28:12-19 "Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee

in the day that thou wast created. Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee *so*: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never *shalt* thou *be* any more.”

God is speaking of Satan. Tyrus was being influenced by Satan, desiring to be all powerful. We may not, and should not want those same things, but temptation whether big or small is the same. It can and will cause us to sin if we follow down that path.

We have an amazing God, because He allowed us to be released from the bondage of sin by the sacrifice of His Son, our Savior, Jesus, the Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:3 “For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”

Jesus didn’t have to do that for us, but he did because he loved us. Jesus had His temptations too. Read it in Matthew 4:1-11 “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward and hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, if thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, it is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, it is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.”

Why did Jesus have to be tested? Why, do we have to be tested? Because God wants us, of our own free will, to choose to follow and believe in Him with all of our body, mind, heart and soul. He could have made us love him, but who wants a forced love. A love that isn’t pure and true.

He has given us the chance to choose between good and evil, because he loves us. Deuteronomy 7:7-19 “The LORD did not set His love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye *were* the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Know therefore that the LORD thy God, He *is* God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations; And repayeth them that hate Him to their face, to destroy them: He will not be slack to him that hateth Him, He will repay him to His face. Thou shalt therefore keep the commandments, and the statutes, and the judgments, which I command thee this day, to do them. Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which He swore unto thy fathers: And He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: He will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which He swore unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. And the LORD will take away from thee all sickness, and will put none of the evil diseases of Egypt, which thou knowest, upon thee; but will lay them upon all *them* that hate thee. And thou shalt consume all the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have no pity upon them: neither shalt thou serve their gods; for that *will be* a snare unto thee. If thou shalt say in thine heart, These nations *are* more than I; how can I dispossess them? Thou shalt not be afraid of them: *but* shalt well remember what the LORD thy God did unto Pharaoh, and unto all Egypt; The great temptations which thine eyes saw, and the signs, and the wonders, and the mighty hand, and the stretched out arm, whereby the LORD thy God brought thee out: so shall the LORD thy God do unto all the people of whom thou art afraid.”

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

So, before it's too late, set yourself right with God, if you haven't already done so. Those of us that have been baptized and have had God's Holy Spirit given to us, and also, those of you that haven't given yourself to God, walk away from Satan's temptations in your life.

Every day is a fresh start Luke 12:22-40 "And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning; And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

God will forgive your sins if you truly repent and change your ways back to His ways. Psalm 103:12 "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

Jesus is coming back soon. So, let's make the needed changes in our hearts, in our lives. Put your faith in God; and don't give up on yourself. Because He hasn't given up on you.