

Temptation – *Overcoming its influence*

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The lure to sin

The next step in your spiritual growth journey is the need for you to have an adequate understanding of temptation and how to overcome its power to lure you into sin.

What is temptation?

Temptation is a lure that influences us from within to commit sin. In itself, temptation is not sin. However, if not dealt with correctly and speedily it can easily draw us into sin.

What does the following reference say about temptation?

James 1:14-15 _____

Satan is the author of all temptation and is relentless in his efforts to use old and new ways to bait us with attractive lures that are aimed at snaring us with sin's harmful barbs.

How does the following reference characterise satan and reveal his intentions?

1 Peter 5:8 _____

Although temptation's power cannot take away our salvation, it can have a serious effect on our spiritual growth, causing disharmony with God and with one another.

God's desire and plan for all believers is that we would enjoy and celebrate His gift of an abundant life by overcoming the power of temptation (John 10:10b).

This session focuses on the:

- Sources of temptation, and
- Conditions for overcoming its power.

Flow of temptation

The Bible teaches that temptation to sin comes to us from three directions, but from the one source (satan):

- Satan
- The flesh; and
- The world

Satan

Satan is clearly shown in Scripture as the chief source of temptation to sin. From the opening book of Genesis to the closing book of Revelation we see satan at work seeking to deceive and tempt people into sin.

How did satan succeed in tempting Eve? Look carefully at what he said to her.

Genesis 3:1-5 _____

Throughout our earthly lives, satan will never stop trying to tempt us to do wrong by creating **D**oubt, **D**istortion and **D**eception in our minds.

The flesh

This source refers to the old sin nature within every person. This old nature fights a lifelong battle with our new Christian nature, seeking to draw us into old habits that are sinful (Galatians 5:17).

What are the characteristics of our *old* nature?

Galatians 5:19-21 _____

What are the characteristics of our *new* nature?

Galatians 5:22-23 _____

The world

This source of temptation involves the subtle influences and promptings for us to conform to the attitudes and actions of our earthly environment. The following are worldly temptations to look out for:

- Security in possessions or accomplishments
- Viewing life as liveable apart from a vital relationship with God
- Opinions and ideas that spring from a godless and fallen society.

What important instructions do the following verses give concerning this matter?

Romans 12:2 _____

1 John 2:15-17 _____

Overcoming temptation's power

The Bible outlines a number of general conditions for overcoming the power of temptation. Consider the following advice:

a) Be alert

We live in an environment of constant temptation. We need to be on guard and alert at all times.

What caution is found in 1 Peter 5:8a? _____

b) Be filled

You can never defeat temptation in your own strength. You need to be filled with supernatural power.

What is the source of this special power?

Acts 1:8 and Ephesians 5:18 _____

c) Be quick

You can't afford to delay when tempted. You need to act immediately! The longer you entertain temptation the weaker you will become to its lure.

Describe the stages of progression into sin.

James 1:14-15 _____

a) Know biblical escapes

With every temptation God promises a way of escape. In 1 Corinthians 10:13, the Lord tells you how you can gain victory over temptation. The Bible is filled with His ways of escape. For this reason, a growing knowledge of God's Word is essential to your success in this critical area of life.

What advice is given in the following references about escaping from the lure of temptation?

Matthew 4:1-11 _____

James 4:7 _____

b) Act by faith

It is important to always take biblical escape routes whether you *feel* like it or not. If you rely on feelings to motivate you to deal with temptations you will have already lost the battle.

What should be the motivation of your actions in life?

Philippians 2:13 _____

c) Prayer

Prayer plays an essential role in achieving victory in the fight against succumbing to temptation. The Bible clearly commands prayer for both your personal victory and the victory of others.

What do the following references instruct you to do?

Matthew 26:41 _____

Philippians 1:9-10 _____

Summary

These are the conditions for overcoming the power of temptation:

- Be alert
- Be filled
- Be quick
- Know biblical escapes
- Act by faith; and
- Prayer.

Satisfy these conditions and you can be assured of living in safety against the destructive forces of sin.



