

How To Defeat Temptation

May 12, 2021

Scripture: James 1:12-18

12. **Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.**

13. **Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:**

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

15. **Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.**

16. **Do not err, my beloved brethren.**

17. **Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.**

18. **Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.**

How to defeat Temptation

Introduction: I am reminded of a little boy and his mom. She had just baked some fresh cookies and placed them on the counter to cool. The little boy made the comment to his mother about how good the cookies smelled. The mother told him he was not to eat any of the cookies. A few minutes passed and the mother walked back into the kitchen and caught the little boy eating one of the cookies. She asked for an explanation to which the little boy replied. "I climbed up on the counter to smell the cookies and my teeth got caught on one."

As funny as a story like this may seem, temptation is a serious affliction for us as Christians and it needs serious attention. James gives serious attention as to the source of temptation and what we are to do about temptation.

We know several things about temptation:

- 1) It is universal – all people are tempted to sin.
- 2) It is unique – people have different kinds of temptation.
- 3) It is personal – no one likes to talk about temptation.
- 4) It is beatable – but takes much work.

F. B. Meyer, once said that when we see a brother or sister in sin, there are two things we do not know: First, we do not know how hard he or she tried not to sin. And second, we do not know the power of the forces that assailed him or her. We also do not know what we would have done in the same circumstances.

Today James is speaking to YOU.

Individually to your temptation since it affects all.

You need to focus in this brief time we have together on learning about YOUR temptations.

I. Our Reward for enduring temptation (v. 12)

12. Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

The rewards for enduring temptation are clearly pointed out here: the gift of the crown of life. It is important to fully understand what kind of rewards this passage is talking about.

NOT – eternal life. No faith nor love can earn us that.

WHAT IT IS = God has blessings in store for those that are faithful in keeping His commandments and that love and serve Him.

The gift of blessing is what God promises to us who endure temptation.

ILLUS.

How do we conquer temptation?

On the TV show "Hee Haw," Doc Campbell is confronted by a patient who says he broke his arm in two places. The doc replies, "Well then, stay out of them places!"

He may have something there. We cannot regularly put ourselves in the face of temptation and not be affected. When faced with the problem of temptation, we need to take the good doctor's advice and "stay out of them places."

APPLY

Survey respondents noted temptations were more potent when they had neglected their time with God (81 percent) and when they were physically tired (57 percent).

Resisting temptation was accomplished by prayer (84 percent), avoiding compromising situations (76 percent), Bible study (66 percent), and being accountable to someone (52 percent).

This was from a Discipleship Journal, November / December, 1992.

II Corinthians 2:11 "In order that Satan might not outwit us, we are not unaware of his schemes."

(KJV)

11. Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

HOW do we avoid temptation – we must spend time with God.

IN ORDER TO RESIST – we must pray regularly, consistently.

We must avoid tempting situations, we must be involved in regular Bible study, and often times if we have a particular area that is difficult we need accountability to other Christians.

We are not eligible for the reward if we do not complete the requirements.

II. The source of temptation (v. 13-15)

13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

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

15. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Very simply and plainly James says that GOD is NOT the author of temptation.

Some Jews reasoned that since God created everything, he must have created the evil impulse. And since it is the evil impulse that tempts man to sin, ultimately God, who created it, is responsible for evil.

James tells us that this idea is FALSE. God is NOT the author of temptation and neither can He be tempted.

V.14 – But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Rather than blaming God for his sin, as man tends to like to do, we are to take full responsibility for our sinful lifestyle.

IT is OUR lust that draws us away from God.

IT is OUR wickedness that allows us to be enticed by Satan, and

IT is OUR choice to fall or resist the temptation.

Death here refers to spiritual death – as opposed to the crown of life that God gives to those that love him.

ILLUS.

The object of our Temptation looks sooooo goood.

In the Australian bush country grows a little plant called the "sundew." It has a slender stem and tiny, round leaves fringed with hairs that glisten with bright drops of liquid as delicate as fine dew. Woe to the insect, however, that dares to dance on it. Although its attractive clusters of red, white, and pink blossoms are harmless, the leaves are deadly. The shiny moisture on each leaf is sticky and will imprison any bug that touches it. As an insect struggles to

free itself, the vibration causes the leaves to close tightly around it. This innocent-looking plant then feeds on its victim.

God does not author temptation. God is the only TRUE good. Therefore where God is no evil can be.

My one EVIL act means that I am excluded from Heaven unless there is some way for me to become GOOD – that is through Christ and Christ alone. He is the only way!

God is not the tempter. The final question then is what the future like is for the believers and followers of Christ.

III. The future of Christians (v.16-18)

16. Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

18. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

God does not change. He is steadfast.

James also concludes this section of his writing on temptation to say, God is not the author of temptation.

The future of Christians is shown to be the long. This first generation of new believers who were saved and would one day be with Christ were called the first fruits.

Pilgrim's Progress.

If we will understand our faith in this light, we will see more clearly the real battle that is going on for our souls. Christ is in the trenches every time and we can honor or dishonor his effort by our choices we make every day.

APPLY

Though you may at times feel like blaming God for your lot in life, you must understand that God is not the cause of your problems. In fact correcting

your relationship with God is the first step in the RIGHT direction to get rid of your problems.

Today Christ understands your temptation. C. S. Lewis made these insightful observations about temptation: “No man knows how bad he is until he has tried very hard to be good. A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. That is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is....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.”

Christ fully and completely understands the difficulty and the consequences of temptation. He can see the right now, but He can also see the end results.

When have you resisted temptation or do you fall to it regularly?

Do you feel powerless and afraid in the face of your own evil choices?

Choose Christ today!