

Hope When I'm Tempted Series

July 13, 2022

Scripture: 1 Peter 1:13-21

Summary: Second in a five part series from 1 Peter that addresses how to find hope in our lives.

A minister parked his car in a no-parking zone in a large city because he was short of time and couldn't find a space with a meter. Then he put a note under the windshield wiper that read: "I have circled the block 10 times. If I don't park here, I'll miss my appointment. Forgive us our trespasses."

When he returned, he found a citation from a police officer along with this note "I've circled this block for 10 years. If I don't give you a ticket, I'll lose my job. Lead us not into temptation."

Oscar Wilde: "I can resist anything except temptation."

Wouldn't it be great if God would just take us up to heaven the very moment we were saved? Then, we would never have to face temptation. But that's not how God chooses to do things. Instead, he leaves us here on this earth, in the midst of all these temptations. So how do we deal with them? How do we live a godly life in the midst of a culture that constantly tries to keep us from doing so?

One option is isolation. And a lot of Christians try to do that by withdrawing from the world. But that seems to go against God's plan for our lives as revealed to us in the Scriptures:

...You are to live clean, innocent lives as children of God in a dark world full of crooked and perverse people. Let your lives shine brightly before them.

Philippians 2:15 (NLT)

In fact, Jesus, on the night before he died on the cross, prayed for us and made it quite clear that we are not to isolate ourselves from the world:

I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one.

John 17:14, 15 (NIV)

Instead of asking His Father to isolate his disciples from the world, Jesus asked Him to insulate us – to protect us from the evil one.

Tonight, as we continue our study of 1 Peter, we want to discover how we can have hope in the midst of all these temptations we experience in the world around us each day.

Looking at 1 Peter 1:13-21

HOW TO HAVE HOPE WHEN I'M TEMPTED

Notice that Peter starts this section with the word “therefore”. You’ll remember from last week that the first 12 verses of this letter dealt with the whole idea of how to build a solid foundation for my hope. I build that foundation by:

- Rejoicing in God’s will**
- Relying on God’s work**
- Remaining in God’s Word**

So Peter says now that you’ve built that foundation, here’s how you can have hope when you’re tempted.

Three principles:

Principle #1:

1 Peter 1:13, 14 (NIV)

Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.

1. Renew my mind

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind...

- **Filter out the bad**

Illustration:

- **Water filter**
- **Coffee filter**
- **Furnace filter**
- **Gas, oil and air filters on your car**
- **Pool/spa filter**

Isaiah 55:7 (NLT)

Let the people turn from their wicked deeds. Let them banish from their minds the very thought of doing wrong! Let them turn to the LORD that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

It's easier to filter out the bad before it gets into our mind than it is to try to remove it later.

Illustration: Coffee Filter

I avoid allowing anything into my mind that might contaminate it – movies, TV, music, magazines, websites, etc.

We should make covenant with our eyes not to look lustfully at others.

Job 31:1 (NIV)

I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?

Martin Luther:

I can't keep the birds from flying over my head, but I can keep them from roosting in my hair.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)

...we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

- **Fill up with the good**

Philippians 4:8 (NIV)

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praiseworthy - think about such things.

The faithfulness to God must be the gatekeeper of our minds.

So it is in our lives. The gatekeeper of our minds must be faithful or the walls of restraint, the laws of God's Word, will do us no good.

Principle #2:

1 Peter 1:15, 16 (NIV)

But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy."

Holy = set apart; different

I could just tell you to lead a holy life and leave it at that. Or I could take the opposite approach and give you 3, or 5, or 10 principles to apply to help you live a holy, set apart, different life. But let me just give you one practical way that might help you to do that:

2. Reflect on the consequences of sin rather than its pleasure

Although we might not like to admit it, there is no doubt that many sins can produce pleasure, at least in the short run:

Hebrews 11:24-26 (NIV)

By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a short time. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.

Proverbs 10:23 (NIV)

A fool finds pleasure in evil conduct, but a man of understanding delights in wisdom.

And I'm convinced that one of the reasons we often lose hope when we're tempted is that we focus so much on the potential pleasure we might find in some sin while we completely ignore the consequences of that sin.

I think that's particularly true for men when sexual immorality is concerned. Whether it's pre-marital sex, marital infidelity, pornography, or some other form of sexual immorality, we've been conditioned by our culture to indulge in those things because of the pleasure we might derive from those kinds of activities. And at least at first, for some brief period of time, we do experience at least some pleasure.

But when that temporary pleasure is gone – and it always does go away – we're left to deal with the consequences of our actions:

- Physical consequences such as pregnancy and disease**
- Emotional consequences such as guilt, shame, and broken relationships**
- Spiritual consequences such as grieving God, damaging the cause of Jesus Christ and destroying my ministry**

So what I'm suggesting is that when you get into a tempting situation, step back for a moment and focus on all the potential negative consequences that

will occur if you give into that situation. And then I have to ask myself this question: “Would whatever short-term pleasure I might experience be worth the pain and the hurt that is sure to follow?” And when we honestly answer that question, we have to take the position that Moses took: I’ll choose to follow God rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

Mark Twain:

There are several good protections against temptation, but the surest is cowardice.

Principle #3:

1 Peter 1:17 (NIV)

Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear.

3. Renew my reverence for God daily

The Bible is clear that one day every one of us will have to stand before God and give an account of our lives:

Romans 14:12 (NIV)

So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Hebrews 4:13 (NIV)

Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

If you’ve never committed your life to Jesus Christ and accepted Him as your Savior and Lord, then when you stand before God and give an account of your life, your life cannot possibly measure up to the sinless perfection that would be required to earn your way into His presence for eternity. And so, since you refused to accept the gift of eternal life offered to you by God through His Son, Jesus Christ, you will have chosen to spend eternity separated from God in a place of torment called Hell. That’s why it is so

important that you not leave here today with committing your life to Jesus Christ.

Most of us are probably believers, but we will also have to stand before God and give an account of our lives someday. That judgment is not for the purpose of determining where we will spend eternity.

That issue was settled once for all the very moment we invited Jesus into our lives. In 1 Corinthians 3, Paul explains that God will test the quality of each man's work. And for all the times we have given into temptation, the resulting wood, hay and stubble will be burned up. But for those times when we overcame temptation, the resulting gold, silver and costly stones will remain and bring us rewards, which we will then be able to lay at the feet of Jesus in order to worship Him.

Illustration: Steroid testing in baseball. Players were still major league baseball players, but they lost part of their "rewards."

One day, God is going to test our lives for "illegal substances." And the penalty for the times we have given in to temptation won't just be a 10 day or even a one season suspension. We're permanently going to lose those rewards that could have been ours.

Every time, I'm tempted, I ought to think about the fact that someday I am going to stand before God and be judged for my actions. However, the truth is that I can't wait until I'm tempted to develop a sense of reverent awe for God. I need to start each day by coming before Him and affirming my awe for Him.

Reverence also means that when I come before God, I talk to Him about any challenges I know I'll be facing that day. Then I give those areas over to Him and trust Him as my source of power for dealing with those situations.

Principle #4:

1 Peter 1:18-21 (NIV)

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or

defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.

4. Remember how much God loves me

When I remember how much God loves me, it helps me to have hope when I'm tempted. I want to bring glory and honor to God because of what he has done for me. And that kind of gratitude gives me strength and motivation when I'm tempted.

Jesus paid a tremendous price, not only for the purpose of dealing with my past sins, but also to free me from an empty life in which I was unable to overcome the temptations in my life. And not only did Jesus redeem me from that empty way of life through the shedding of his blood, but he also came to this earth and lived a life that is an example of how to deal with the temptations I face every day.

Hebrews 4:15 (NIV)

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.

Hebrews 2:18 (NIV)

Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

1. Renew my mind

2. Reflect on the consequences of sin rather than its pleasure

3. Renew my reverence for God daily

4. Remember how much God loves me

No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (Message)

13There 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*.