

■ DIGGING IN...

TEMPTATION: HOW TO WIN THE BATTLE

As the compass needle is affected by magnetic attraction, so the Christian feels a pull by sin. This is illustrated by Israel's desire to return to the "leeks and garlics" of Egypt (Numbers 11:5), and Demas, the young man the Apostle Paul mentions as "having loved this present world, and is departed..." (2 Timothy 4:10). Paul describes the Christian as having two natures, the old and the new, which constantly compete for supremacy. The Christian must understand this, and learn to confront this "magnetic pull" of his own sinful nature and Satan's wiles.

A paragraph by Billy Graham helps put this into perspective: "God never promises to remove temptation from us, for even Christ was subject to it...There is a sense of achievement and assurance that results from victory over temptation that cannot come to us otherwise. Temptation shows what people really are. It does not make us Christian or unchristian. Overcoming does make the Christian stronger and causes him to discover resources of power... In times of temptation Christ can become more real to you than ever."

Some Things to Remember About Temptation:

1. **Temptation is common to all Christians.** "But remember this—the wrong desires that come into your life aren't anything new and different. Many others have faced exactly the same problems before you" (1 Corinthians 10:13, TLB).
2. **Temptation is of the devil** (see temptation of Jesus, Matthew 4:1-11).
3. **Temptation itself is not sin, but succumbing to it is.** Billy Graham says, "The sin is when we use the temptation for giving in." None of us should deliberately place ourselves in a position to be tempted. Satan will always attack where we are the most vulnerable. "But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death" (James 1:14, 15). A thought enters; we pamper it; it germinates and grows into an evil act.
4. **God does not lead us into temptation in the sense that He purposely and personally tempts.** "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" (James 1:13, KJV) But, God does permit us to be tempted (see Job 1:6-12), so that we can face temptation, overcome it, and become stronger. "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:14). We can also be blessed in victory (see James 1:12).
5. **No temptation is irresistible.** "You can trust God to keep the temptation from becoming so strong that you can't stand up against it, for he has promised this and will do what he says. He will show you how to escape temptation's power so that you can bear up patiently against it" (1 Corinthians 10:13, TLB).
6. **Whatever we experience, Jesus has been there before us.** He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb 4:15).

How to Overcome Temptation

1. **We must resist the tempter:** "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).
2. **We must submit to God:** "Submit yourselves...to God" (James 4:7). This we do by:
 - (1) Committing ourselves daily to God according to Romans 12:1, and by daily confession of sin so that there is no buildup (Psalm 51:10).
 - (2) Subjecting our minds to His control. "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom 12:2). "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth" (Col 3:2).
 - (3) The discipline of prayer. "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (Heb 4:16)."
 - (4) Reading, studying and memorizing the Word of God. D. L. Moody used to say, "Sin will keep you from this Book (the Bible), or this Book will keep you from sin." "The word of God is living and active...It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Heb 4:12).
 - (5) Associating with the right kinds of friends: God's people. "Do not be misled; bad company corrupts good character" (1Cor 15:33). "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching" (Heb 10:24, 25).
 - (6) Putting on the whole armor of God (see Eph 6:13-18).
 - (7) Dependence upon the Holy Spirit. How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Luke 11:13). "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter (one to stand alongside), that he may abide with you forever" (John 14:16)."

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH: LESSON #6 - Trials, Temptations and Triumph

The Christian life is not a playground. It is a battlefield! It is not a life of ease, but a life of conflict, warfare and opposition. However, the good news is that we are in the right army! Before we knew Christ, we were opposing God on the wrong side of the battle. Now, as Christians, we are on the winning side!

In John 16:33, Jesus said, *"In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."*

Why would Jesus allow us to have tribulations in our life? It will help us to define terms at this point of our study. The word "Tribulation" is a word that describes the two words, "Trials" & "Temptations."

Trial: A state of pain or anguish that tests patience, endurance, or belief.

Temptation: The act or condition of being enticed or lured. Trying to get someone to do wrong, especially by a promise of and inviting an attract reward.

TRIALS

God allows Trials in our life for our own good.

Read James 1:2-4. For what purpose do we go through trials? _____

What does the "testing of our faith" accomplish? _____

Read 1 Peter 4:12-16. Is it a "strange thing" when a believer goes through a trial? YES _____ NO _____

Why? _____

According to verse 16, what are we to do when we are going through a trial? _____

Read Romans 8:28. How many things work together for good? _____

Who is this verse speaking to? _____

The Bible is filled with stories of people who had to endure tremendous trials during their walk with God, and yet their eyes remained focused upon Him even while they were going through their various trials. Listed are a few examples:

Genesis 37-47: Joseph sold into slavery by his brothers and imprisoned unjustly.

Daniel 6: Daniel thrown into the lion's den for praying openly

Acts 27-28: Paul shipwrecked, imprisoned, beaten, and persecuted. (2 Corinthians 11:23-33)

SOME THINGS TO REMEMBER WHILE GOING THROUGH TRIALS:

"For He Himself (God) has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you" - Hebrews 13:5.

"...He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." Philippians 1:6

Read Matthew 14:22-33. In the midst of this trial, why did Peter begin to sink? (Hint: verse 30) _____

What lesson can we learn from this trial of Peter? _____

What three words saved Peter? _____

TEMPTATION

We are Tempted in three areas by three sources. **Read 1 John 2:15-17.** List three areas in which we are tempted:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Read 1 John 5:4-5, 1 Thessalonians 3:5 & James 1:13-14. List the three sources by whom we are tempted:

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

According to the James 1:13-14 passage, does God or will God ever tempt us? YES _____ NO _____

Read Genesis 3:1,6. We see in this passage that Satan (serpent) has not changed his tactics towards temptation, for as he tempted Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, so also he continues to tempt man in the same ways today, for we read (vs 6) that the serpent convinced Eve:

1. That the forbidden tree was good for good (Lust of the flesh)
2. That it was pleasant to the eyes. (Lust of the eyes)
3. That it would make her as wise as God (Pride of life)

Read Matthew 4:1-11. We see that even Jesus was tempted by this same three-fold attack seen earlier in the Garden of Eden.

Can you list the three temptations Jesus endured from the enemy?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How did Jesus resist and combat temptation? _____

There is nothing that the enemy can do to us that God doesn't both know about and allow. Therefore, He is able to help us Triumph over the Temptations that the enemy puts in our path.

Read 1 Corinthians 10:13. List three things about temptation and the believer.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What does it mean when it says that with the temptation God will also make a way of escape? _____

Read James 1:12. What are we called to do concerning "Temptation"? _____

"Therefore, submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you"- Jam 4:7-8

TRIUMPH

Our Triumph lies in the Lord and His Word. **Read Ephesians 6:10-18.** How do we stand against the attacks, schemes, and lies of the devil?

1. **Put on your waist the Belt of** _____. Truth overcomes deceit and lies and is key to every area of the Christian life.
2. **Put on the Breastplate of** _____. This speaks of right acts as practiced by the believer. The breastplate was to protect the heart of the soldier.
3. **Put on your feet the Shoes of the** _____. The shoes speak of mobility and preparedness. We are ready to use God's Word in spiritual battle. (1 Peter 3:15)
4. **Take up the Shield of** _____. This shield protects us from the attacks (fiery darts) of Satan. Example: Temptations, impure thoughts, etc.

5. Put on the Helmet of _____. This Helmet assures us of our position in Jesus Christ. We can win spiritual battles because we have an advantage in position.

6. Grip tightly the Sword of the _____ which is the _____ _____. This is one of two offensive weapons in our arsenal (2nd is prayer). When attacked, we respond with the Word of God and with Prayer. This refers to the intake of the Word which will help protect our thoughts from doubt and the world, the devil, and the flesh. This will assure us and secure us in our relationship with the Lord. We cannot use the Sword of the Spirit if you have not practiced - practice is the intake of the Word of God.

7. Surround yourself with unending _____. This is the connecting “hotline” to your General. No soldier ever goes forth without first receiving marching orders from the Commander. As we seek God in prayer, He gives us His battle plan.

“For we do not wrestle against the flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” - Ephesians 6:12.

Read 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. What can we do with our weapons of warfare? _____

Through all of our Trials and Temptations, we must always understand that the enemy is looking to destroy us.

1 Peter 5:8 says, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

We must always be careful to put on the full armor of God, not part of it, not most of it, but all of it - everyday. If we fail to do this the enemy will find the weak spot or neglected portion of our armor and he will attack that neglected area with full force.

Above all things, write this verse upon your heart: *“You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He (Jesus) who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”* 1 John 4:4 ■
