

TEMPTATIONS - AND THE WAY OF ESCAPE

James 1:12-15: "Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been proved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, 'I am tempted by God': for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death."

INTRODUCTION:

1. Definition: Πειρασμός "A Trial, Experiment, Of a Thing or Person."
2. This Word Temptation Is Used in Three Different Senses in the Bible.
 - A. In reference to God, it means that God tries, or tests man's faith.
 - (1) Gen. 22:1: "Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, 'Abraham!' And he said, 'Here I am.' And He said, 'Take now your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah; and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.'"
 - B. When Man tempts God.
 - (1) Isa. 7:12: "But Ahaz said, 'I will not ask, nor will I test the Lord.'"
 - (2) Matt. 4:7: "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"
 - (3) Deut. 6:16: "You shall not tempt the Lord your God ..."
 - C. Satan's Endeavor to Cause Man to Sin.
 - (1) It is used in this sense in most places in the Bible.

I. SATAN IS REAL AND HE IS OUR CONSTANT ADVERSARY.

1. He is just as real as Christ, God, and the Holy Spirit.
2. He is not just a personification of Evil.
 - A. We all need to convince ourselves of his constant presence.
3. The Bible is full of references showing the reality of Satan.
 - A. Job 1:6-7: "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan also came among them. And the Lord said to Satan, 'From where did you come?' So Satan answered the Lord and said, 'From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.'"
 - B. John 8:44: "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."
 - C. Rev. 12:9: "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."
 - D. Rev. 20:1-2: "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years."
 - E. Matt. 12:26: "And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand?"
 - F. Zechariah 3:1: "And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him."
 - G. 2 Cor. 11:14: "And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light."
 - H. 2 Tim. 2:26: "And that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will."

- I. Matt. 25:41: "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

II. SATAN IS THE GREAT TEMPTER - HE IS CONSTANTLY ON THE JOB.

1. 1 Peter 5:8-9: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world."
2. Acts 5:3: "But Peter said, 'Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?'"
3. 1 Tim. 3:6-7: Concerning the elders, "Not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the Devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

III. TEMPTATIONS ARE REAL AND THEY BESET US EVERY DAY ON EVERY SIDE.

1. 1 Thess. 3:5: "For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain."
2. 1 Timothy 6:9: "But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition."
3. Matt. 26:41: "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."
4. Luke 8:13: "But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away."
5. THE TEMPTATION OF OUR LORD SHOWS THAT NONE OF US ARE EXEMPTED FROM TEMPTATION:

- A. Matthew 4:1-11: "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, 'If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.' But He answered and said, 'It is written, Man shall

not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.' Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning You, and, in their hands they shall bear You up, lest You dash Your foot against a stone.' Jesus said to him, 'It is written again, You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! For it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you will serve.' Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him."

B. One of Three Factors Are Always Present in Every Temptation - Sometimes all Three:

- (1) Lust of the Flesh - Turn Stones to Bread
- (2) Lust of the Eye - Saw the Kingdoms of Earth
- (3) Pride of Life - Angels will come down to minister unto Thee

NOTE: Satan Tempted Eye in the Exact Manner.

C. Jesus Is a Perfect High Priest Because He Knows What It Is to Be Tempted.

- (1) Hebrews 2:18: "For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted."
- (2) Hebrews 4:15: "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin."

6. Being Tempted Is Not a Sin - Yielding to Temptation Is the Sin.

- A. Giving one's mind to dwelling on dirty, evil thoughts.
- B. Lust after woman and unable to complete the sin because of lack of opportunity.

- C. Culminating the evil act which Satan plants in our brain or heart is the sin.

IV. GOD WILL PROVIDE A WAY OF ESCAPE FROM EVERY TEMPTATION IF WE WILL ONLY TAKE IT.

- 1. We Must Learn to Use the Word "NO" Every Day.
 - A. The courage to say "NO" is seen in Old Testament examples.
 - (1) Joseph - "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God."
 - (2) Daniel - Thrown in Lion's Den when he continued to pray to Jerusalem.

"O king, live forever. My God hath sent His angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before Him innocence was found in me."
 - (3) Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego - Refused to worship image of gold.

"Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men loose, wailing in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."
 - (4) Vashti - Refused to striptease for the King Ahasuerus.
- 2. The Scriptures Admonish Us to Resist Satan and Evil With All Our Strength.
 - A. 1 Cor. 9:27: "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified."
 - B. Proverbs 1:10: "My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent."
 - C. Eph. 4:27: "Nor give place to the devil."
 - D. Eph. 6:11: "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

- E. James 4:7: "Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you."
- F. 1 Cor. 10:13: "No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it."
 - (1) Jesus quoted scripture to refuse Satan's request. "It is written"
 - (2) Satan is able to conquer us many times because:
 - (a) We are with the wrong person or persons.
 - (b) We are in the wrong place or environment.
 - (c) We are engaging in some activity susceptible to temptation.
- G. 1 Cor. 6:18: "Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body."
- H. 1 Cor. 10:14: "Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry."
- I. 2 Tim. 2:22: "Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart."
- J. 2 Pet. 1:4: "by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

V. **NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST UNLESS WE WANT IT TO.**

- 1. Romans 8:38-39: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Yield not to temptation, for Yielding is sin;
Each victory will help you some other to win;
Fight manfully onward - Dark passions subdue;
Look ever to Jesus, He will carry you through.

Ask the Saviour to help you,
Comfort, strengthen and keep you;
He is willing to aid you,
He will carry you through.

2. 2 Pet. 2:9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation."