

Resist Temptation Before It Comes  
11-13-2016

**James 1:13-15**

**Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God," for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. 14 But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. 15 Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.**

Temptation is not the cartoonish devil/angel on shoulders but a vicious Satanic attack on faith.

- It entices us to choose sin over Christ to satisfy our God-given natural desires.

At the heart of all temptation is selfishness & deception. Gen 2:16-17, 3:1-7

- Satan manipulated Eve's God-given desire to be happy & used it against her.
  - He presented evil as good & more enjoyable/satisfying than obeying God.
    - Temptations power lies solely in the false hope it produces in us.

Temptation: an enticement or invitation to sin, with the implied promise of greater good to be derived from following the way of disobedience.

- Kinds: Material (things), personal (status), sensual (physical pleasure)
  - Temptation is not just meeting God-given natural desires sinfully but sometimes it is wanting "good things" NOW in your own way/strength/timing.

It ALWAYS starts with a thought that falsely promises satisfaction outside of God's ways

- There is a pattern of temptation described by using fishing metaphor. James 1:14-15
  - A lure entices the "fish" out of security, it WILLINGLY takes the bait, eventually it realizes it's a counterfeit but it's too late...it is pulled where not want to go.... death (still born @ birth).
- The earlier you interrupt the process the more successful you become at resisting temptation.
  - KEY: We need to resist temptation BEFORE it comes. Mt 26:41, Ps. 139:23-24

Know yourself: Good know your strengths, it is critical to know your weaknesses, or they will destroy you!

- We are all tempted but your temptation is uniquely crafted to you. Just like coaches study the game film to know what they have done wrong you need to be an expert on yourself.
  - Examine areas of past temptations and falls to gain future victory.
    - Know when you are vulnerable: tired, stressed, alone, maybe a certain time of the year; also if you are trying to help your friends out of sin be careful not to get pulled in. Gal 6:1
- We are blind to ourselves and our weaknesses...ask Jesus to open eyes.

Guard yourself in advance: 1 Tim 6:9, Pr. 22:3, 1 Pet 5:8-9

- Resist the love of money, materialism and/or power...envy, discontentment

- Look ahead & avoid tempting situations & stay busy.
  - Determine lines that you will not cross before temptation comes.
- When necessary, “run away” but remember the real source of temptation is still inside your sinful heart!
  - Satan is ultimately behind it, but our fallen/corrupted human nature allows it.

The greatest way to resist temptation BEFORE it comes is to know, love, delight in & rely upon your God. *Mt 6:24, Gal 5:16, Ps 119:11, Mt 4:1-4, Mk 14:38*

- Read & know the Word of God.....it is ammo for the fight & hope for the future. 1 Cor 10:13
  - Remember the promises of strength & your future reward 1 Cor 2:9, Rom 8:18
- Pray: even Jesus turned to prayer to resist temptation.
- Believe the victory is available: at the Holy Spirit indwells all Christians. *Eph 6:10-18*.
  - Christ is able to help when you are tempted (Ps 118:15, Heb 2:18), restore you if you fall (Ps 23:3, Jn 21:15), and keep you from falling in future (1 Cor 10:13).

The main reason to resist temptation BEFORE it comes: Jesus Christ is better and more satisfying than any sin can ever be. *Heb 11:24-26*,

- Don't believe the lie & take the bait as Eve did: Holiness will not keep you from happiness...it's the path to it.

