

## Temptation

### **What is temptation? Where does it come from? Does God ever tempt us?**

- 1) A test or trial to be passed, to be endured, or to prove us. (Most common in the Bible.)
  - a. From God (Ex 20:20, Job 23:10, Ps 26:2, 139:23; Jer 17:10; Heb 11:17, Gen 22:1)
  - b. From self (2 Cor 13:5)
  - c. From Satan (Job 1-2)
- 2) A solicitation/invitation to evil. (Most common everyday use.)
  - a. Never from God (James 1:13)
  - b. From our own lust (James 1:14)
  - c. From Satan (Matt 4; James 4:7, 1 Thess 3:5)

James 1 describes both types (MKJV)

- 2 My brothers, count it all joy when you fall into different kinds of temptations, 3 knowing that **the trying of your faith** works patience. 12 Blessed is the man who **endures** temptation, because having been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.
- 13 Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be **tempted by evil**, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. 14 But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed **by his own lust**. 15 Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

### **In what way was Jesus tempted?**

Hebrews – A sympathetic high priest

- Heb 2:17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. 18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which **He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.**
- Heb 4:14 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been **tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin**. 16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- Heb 5:7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both **prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears** to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

Luke 22 – Jesus pled with God to avoid the cross, but was willing to endure it

- 40 When He arrived at the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." 41 And He withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and began to pray, 42 saying, "**Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; yet not My will, but Yours be done.**" 43 Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. 44 And **being in agony He was praying very fervently**; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground. 45 When He rose from prayer, He came to the disciples and found them sleeping from sorrow,

## Matthew 4 – Jesus’ temptation

- 1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. 2 And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became **hungry**. 3 And the tempter came and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, **command that these stones become bread**." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"
- 5 Then the devil \*took Him into the holy city and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, 6 and \*said to Him, "**If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down**; for it is written, 'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU'; and 'ON their HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP, SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A STONE.'" 7 Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"
- 8 Again, the devil \*took Him to a very high mountain and \***showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory**; 9 and he said to Him, "**All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me**." 10 Then Jesus \*said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'" 11 Then the devil \*left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

“As for Jesus in the wilderness and the garden, so too for us in this sin-tainted world – sin occurs

not when we desire to end suffering, but when we will or act to end suffering *in the wrong way* or *at the wrong time*.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, temptation occurs not only when we indulge sinful desires, but also when we are presented with opportunities to satisfy legitimate (nonsinful) human needs or desires through illegitimate (sinful) means. In this way Jesus could experience the internal pressure of temptation without ever fantasizing about sinfully obtaining the relief from injustice and physical torment He so desperately desired.”

“Finally, while giving in to temptation strengthens our bondage to sin, it also results in at least some temporary physical, psychological, or emotional relief. Only the one who resists temptation to the very end experiences the full weight of temptation. It is thus reasonable to conclude that the weight of Jesus’ temptation was not less but greater than that under which we so often buckle before it has reached its full measure. Underscoring the intensity of Jesus’ struggles, the writer to the Hebrews reminds us that “during the days of Jesus’ life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death” (5:7).

“Genuine Temptation and the Character of Christ”

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## How can we resist temptation?

Go to God for grace and strength to endure the trial.

- 1 Cor 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, **so that you will be able to endure it.**
- 2 Pet 2:9 then **the Lord knows how** to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment,
- Matt 26:41 "**Keep watching and praying** that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."
- Recognize the trial we are being asked to endure.
  - o The temptation to sin comes as a shortcut out of the trial.
  - o Do not focus on the evil shortcut. When one short cut is put aside a host of others will come to mind.

Know Christ. His love motivates.

- 2 Cor 4:10 **always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus**, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.
- 2 Cor 5:14 For **the love of Christ controls us**, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.
- Luke 22:28 "You are those who have **stood by Me in My trials**;

Remember Christ understands and we can pray like He did

- Heb 2:18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which **He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.**
- Luke 22:42 "Father, if You are willing, remove this cup from Me; **yet not My will, but Yours be done.**"

Remember others who have resisted

- Heb 12:4 You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin;
- Job 1:22, 2:10 Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God. ...But he said to her, "You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips.
- Dan 1:8 But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself.

Remember we might not get a reason for why we must obey and endure

- Job 1-2 Job did not know all heaven was watching for the outcome of his trial.
- Job 2:3 The LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? For there is no one like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man fearing God and turning away from evil. And he still holds fast his integrity, **although you incited Me against him to ruin him without cause.**"
- "I think He made one law of that kind in order that there might be obedience. In all these other matters what you call obeying Him is but doing what seems good in your eyes also. Is love content with that? You do them, indeed, because they are His will, but not only because they are his will. Where can you taste the joy of obeying unless he bids you do something for which His bidding is the only reason?" — C.S. Lewis, Perelandra