

Lesson Two:

How can I resist temptation and get the victory over habitual sin?

Last week we found that God can give us the victory over doubt. Doubting our salvation is a **crippler** when it comes to effective Christian living. We saw five positive marks of a true believer in the first letter of John.

Another crippling element to living an effective or exemplary Christian life is sin. Now we know that there are **no sinless** people. All are sinners even saved people. If a person says he doesn't sin then God says he **is self-deceived** or simply **lying**. *1 Jn 1:8-10*

We also learned that a lifestyle of habitual sin reveals that we are not truly God's children. The Holy Spirit (the seed of God) is in us and He can't sin. *1 Jn 3:9*
Whoever has been born of God does not (practice) sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

Sin is rampant today because we have to spell TEMPTATION with all capital letters.

- Ever since the Garden of Eden we all have had temptations presented to us and temptations have risen up in us. Yet today temptation is more **visible**, more **accessible** and more **technical** than ever before.
- There is another problem with sin today. **Taboos** are gone and sin, in general, is socially acceptable.

God's provision to battle temptation:

1 Co 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.

Temptation is **common**. The first thing to understand is that whatever the temptation we face, others have faced the same basic temptation. Temptation is inevitable; temptation is universal; temptations in **inescapable**. We will all be tempted **continuously** and at times **ferociously** as long as we live.

Temptation is not sin; **yielding** is sin. When you think of the following Bible personalities what failures do you associate with them?

Noah – **Drunkenness**

Abraham – **deception**

Moses – **temper**

David – **adultery and murder**

Jonah – **rebellion**

Peter – **denial**

John Mark – **dsefection, quitting**

Paul – **rejection, unforgiveness** of John Mark

Ananias - **Lying**

Temptations are **controlled**. They are limited.

The temptation to sin doesn't come from God. God never tempts people with evil. He can use temptation as a test but he never lays evil before us. Jas 1:13 *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.***

God controls the **Kinds** of temptations and the **intensity** of temptation. 2 Cor 1.8-10

We are also reassured that when we think the trials are too great and our faith is sure to fail - *2 Ti 2:13 If we are faithless, **He remains faithful**; He cannot deny Himself.* He is faithful even when we are faithless.

Temptations always come with a way to **escape** Every time, in every test or trial there is an escape nearby. There is always a pathway of escape out of every dark valley of temptation. John 14.6 says Jesus is the way... Heb 2.18

Now while it is true that there is a way of escape for every temptation there is no promise that the way will be there **perpetually**. When tempted to do evil, at the first thought of Jesus or the obvious escape hatch is visible we must take it because it may not always be there.

Bible principles to help us overcome temptation.

1. Recognize the **possibility** of temptation. The verse before 1 Cor 10.13 is *Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.* (v.12)
 - a. No one is immune to the attacks of Satan.
 - b. Pride is a factor in yielding to temptation. *Pr 16:18 Pride goes before destruction, And a haughty spirit before a fall.*
2. Request help **before** the temptation arrives. *Mt 6:13 And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. **Anticipate** your battles and pray for God's deliverance beforehand.*
3. **Resist** temptation. *Jas 4:7 Therefore submit to God. **Resist** the devil and he will flee from you. **8** Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.* The best way to resist temptation is to throw the scriptures at it. Rom 6 says we are not slaves to sin any longer and the sin is no longer our master. We should memorize passages like that and use them. Thy word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee Ps 119.11.
4. **Retreat** from temptation. Too many people are curious about temptation and they are not fearful of falling. The first line of defense is to flee. The second is to resist. Sometimes the lure of sin is too great and if we gaze at sinful indulgence we will simply give in after time.
 - a. Flee Idolatry 1 Cor 10.14.
 - b. Flee sexual immorality 1 Cor 6.18.
 - c. Flee youthful lusts 2tim 2.22 (they are youthful lusts that older people still fall for in great numbers).
 - d. Abstain from fleshly lusts that war against the soul 1 Pet 2.11.
Hands down the most effective and oft revealed sinful failure is in the area of sexual indulgence.
 - e. Flee sinful greed as well 1 Tim 6.10-11.

5. **Remove** the means of temptation far away. *Pr 4:14 Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not walk in the way of evil. Ro 13:14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.* Make no provision. If strong drink was your downfall don't hide a bottle just in case the urge is too great. If pornography is the regular pothole then cut the cable, the internet, buy a flip phone and stay out of the magazine aisle at the drug store.
6. **Refocus** your thoughts and affections. *Col 3:1 If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.* It is difficult to yield to temptation while looking to Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith. When tempted with sexual sin a man should see the face of his suffering savior on the cross and his loving wife and children at home and of himself in the mirror. Stop gazing at the temptation and look at Jesus! A young man

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