

# You Can and Must Resist Temptation

*1 Corinthians*

By Jess Arnds

sermonaudio.com

**Bible Text:** 1 Corinthians 10:12-13  
**Preached on:** Sunday, December 29, 2019

**Providence Church**  
2146 Buford Hwy  
Buford Hwy, Duluth, GA 30097

**Website:** [www.providenceduluth.org](http://www.providenceduluth.org)  
**Online Sermons:** [www.sermonaudio.com/providencechurch](http://www.sermonaudio.com/providencechurch)

I trust you all had a good Christmas. I hope you did. We definitely did. We kind of laid low as a family. It was kind of nice to do that. It's amazing to stop and think about, you know, enjoying some of the fruit of all the labor for a full year and to enjoy that time, you know, to be able to give gifts to one another and then to receive those gifts from others, and to experience the love and thoughtfulness of others, and we don't deserve that. You know, we don't deserve that, and of course, reflecting on the greatest gift of salvation through Christ. The forgiveness which is not just the removal of sin but the ability for us to have a right relationship with God through that. You know, that's what we celebrate and what an awesome thing.

Then it was my birthday yesterday so thank you for all the wishes and cards. Thank you. Thank you. And thank you for all the cards and the wishes, and for those of you that did that and those of you that didn't, you know who you are. I'm just kidding. But we had a great time. I spent all day yesterday building Ikea furniture. I put together a table and some chairs and some cabinets. But before I even opened the first box, I accidentally stabbed myself with a pocket knife, you know, in my thigh. So if I get lockjaw in the middle, you know, it's probably just tetanus, it's not, you know, hopefully it's not the Lord judging me in the middle of the sermon. But so anyway, just come and carry me off and get me to First Care, whatever it's called, Urgent Care.

So anyways, so you know, it's obviously there's a lot to be light-hearted about because there's so much heaviness in the world and I keep doing this, I keep picking passages that have a certain intensity to them and today is no different. Today's passage has both a warning and an encouragement in it, and I choose it because it's really burdened my heart and I believe it's what we need to hear, and I know that it's the Lord's will because here I am, I've survived the study of the week and I'm here to give it to you. So I know that the Lord wants you to hear this and to examine this passage and it's his word.

So as we approach the word of God, I want you to consider a couple of things. There are two categories of people that attend a church. There's at least two categories. The first category are those who look for ways to indulge temptation. That's the first category. They look for ways to indulge temptation. And the second category are those who look for ways to resist temptation. Going in different directions. Put it this way: there are those

trying to get away with sin and there are those trying to get away from sin. It's not always obvious in the church who that is but in a body of believers, and it's always been this way, there is a mix of people, a mix, and they're here for various reasons. Maybe they like the community. Their family goes here. Maybe they like being identified with the people of God and that's why they're here, for friendship, for community. That's the main purpose. But they want to skirt as close to sin as they can while still participating in the community. Then there are those who know their great need of a Savior and their desperate need to turn from sin, and they fear God and they come because they want the word of God, they want to be fed, they want to resist temptation and sin in their life because we all are tempted, but what is your relationship with temptation and what's your approach to it?

In category 1, those who are trying to get close to sin and temptation, these people are part of the church, they claim to be spiritual, they claim to be strong, they even have a certain confidence and arrogance about them perhaps, or even feigned humility, they're proud of their humility. They sit under solid preaching and they affirm sound doctrine and they've witnessed the Lord transform people around them, they've witnessed God's work, and yet they're not driven by love for God or love for neighbor, nor are they concerned about God's will but rather how they can fulfill their own selfish desires. God is a means to their ends. They want to use God to get what they want. As long as God's will makes sense to them, they will follow him, but as soon as God's will conflicts with their desires, they will grumble, they will complain, and they will try to get people rallied to their side to support them in their cause. They gossip and they conspire, self-righteously thinking that they are somehow looking out for the common good but they really demonstrate a divisive spirit and they do damage to the body.

It is those who are driven by their own passions and lusts and they seek to justify them. When life gets hard, they will excuse their own sin, believing that they deserve this small indulgence. They believe they can't help it, that sin was forced upon them. When being a Christian gets hard, they will long for the apparent freedom that the world offers. Their hearts are in the world while their feet are in the church and they will put the Lord to the test. They will get as close as they can to see if they don't get burned. They will stick their toe in the water. They will wade out into the surf to see how far they can go before they fall off the ledge. They want to hold on to their Christian identity but they want to modify the lifestyle to accommodate their preferences. When the pull of idolatry gets too strong they say, "God will forgive me. He will understand. He would never want me to suffer. He would never want me to be unhappy," because their concern is not God's will, God's pleasure, but their own and they want God and you to support them in that cause so they proceed thinking that they are safe from the judgment of God and the negative consequence of sin. The truth is, it's questionable whether or not these people genuinely know the Lord.

Does this describe you and your relationship with temptation and sin? Are you looking for a way to indulge your preferences and your desires? Do you want to modify what Scripture says to justify your idolatry? Is that you?

The second category are those who want to flee from sin. They want to resist temptation. They are genuine believers and they might see other believers indulging in worldliness and they are tempted to follow. They're influenced by ungodliness but their ultimate desire is to love the Lord, to serve him, to follow him. If something is sinful, they're grieved when they participate, not because of self-righteousness but because they love God. They want the Lord to be pleased. They're willing to suffer for him and would rather suffer than do something that displeases or brings dishonor to him. They would rather suffer. They would rather put up with injustice. They would rather put up with being wronged than to dishonor God. That's in 1 Corinthians, by the way. They are tempted to join the grumbling and the gossip and the conspiring, but they fear the Lord and the consequences of sin. They want to enjoy the world, they have a temptation there, the temptation is strong, it would be easier to give in, to listen to the world, to have fun, to enjoy acceptance in our society and to have the culture think well of them, but they want to avoid temptation but it's so strong they're not sure if they can hold out. They're not sure if they can hold on. They fear that and they fear the consequences of sin. "How will I handle these temptations? Can I resist? Can I endure? How can I resist the onslaught of the world, the flesh and the devil?" These are the questions this person is asking, not how close can I get and how much can I do, how far can I go?

Which category are you in? Humble love and submission to the Lord while still being tempted by worldliness, or are you proud and complacent in your idolatrous cravings and ungrateful grumbings against the will of God, feeling safe in your worldliness and seeking ways out of godliness? Which one are you? Today's passage has something for both categories.

Please open your Bibles to 1 Corinthians 10 and we'll start reading in verse 1. 1 Corinthians 10 starting in verse 1. I'll wait for you all to get there because I want your eyes to see this. 1 Corinthians 10:1, the Apostle Paul writing to the church at Corinth says, "For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea." Who is he talking about? He's talking about the children of Israel in the wilderness when they left Egypt during the exodus and wandered in the wilderness. They both went under the cloud. They followed the cloud that represented God leading the children of Israel and that cloud is what protected them from the Egyptians. They all were under that and all passed through the sea. When the Lord parted the Red Sea, they all passed through it.

Verse 2, "and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea." The word "baptized" just means "immersed." They were in and among the people of Israel and followed Moses.

Verse 3, "and all ate the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink." What's he talking about there? The spiritual food, the manna from heaven and, of course, the word of God that was delivered to them. It was literally spiritual food from God, and they drank the same spiritual drink. That was where on a couple of occasions God supplied water for them in the wilderness by just this rock out there in the desert

producing water miraculously through the work of Moses. So they drank that same spiritual drink. They all saw it. They all participated.

Again verse 4, "for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ." We'll get into that in future weeks, what that means.

Verse 5, "Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness. Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.' Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall. 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."

Let's pray.

*Lord, we come to You. You know our hearts. You see our thoughts. You know every decision and You know exactly the work that needs to be done there. I pray today, Lord, that Your word like a sword would cut straight to the heart of every individual here; that those who should be crushed will be crushed, and those who should be encouraged will be encouraged. I pray, Father, that You would give each person discernment into their own heart, open their eyes to their standing before You. Show us, Lord, where You want us to change, where our faith needs to be strengthened, where our resolve needs to be renewed, where we need to be broken, where we need to repent. And I pray, Father, that none of us would leave here without Your word leaving its imprint on our lives, and that we as a body would be more and more unified as we are conformed to the mold of Your word. So help us today. Help me to convey the message that You want preached. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

I've entitled today's message "You Must and Can Resist Temptation." You must and can resist temptation. Over the next three weeks, we're gonna examine this passage from verse 1 all the way down to verse 13, but today we'll focus in on verses 12 and 13, and of course, the verse that you are probably more familiar with is verse 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." How many of you have the NASB version? Okay. Most of you? Okay. I want you to read this aloud with me. I want this to stick in our heads. We're gonna read this aloud together each of the next three weeks. 1 Corinthians 10:13 with me, "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."

And this verse is usually lifted up as a verse to give hope to struggling people, right? People usually say, "God won't give you more than you can handle, won't give you more than you can bear. You can overcome anything." And that's true, this verse is a great hope and a great encouragement to those who are looking for the way to resist temptation, to those that want to honor and please God, to those that are willing to follow him. This is a great encouragement but as we see from this context, this verse is also a warning. It is a warning. This shows us plainly that when you give into sin as a believer, there is no excuse. Every time you sin, you sin as one who has a choice. You sin by choice, not because the temptation was too great, not because the circumstances were too hard, not because your wife was overbearing, and not because your husband is mean, and not because your children are crazy. You sin by choice and you have no excuse and so you will be held accountable for your decisions. It's true, this is a great encouragement but it is also a dire warning.

Now just a little bit of background information for the book of 1 Corinthians. It was written by the Apostle Paul somewhere in Asia Minor. He was probably in the city of Ephesus, which is in modern-day Turkey. It was written around AD 55. Paul had ministered in Corinth on multiple occasions and corresponded by letter with them multiple times as well. He knew this church very very well. In this letter, someone had come to Paul with a series of reports and questions from the church at Corinth and this letter was Paul's answer to them.

The Corinthian church struggled with many problems. They had been greatly blessed by God to have received the direct ministry of Paul, of Apollos, perhaps Peter and other gifted teachers. They were a church of some means. They were wealthy. There were poor people there as well but they were wealthy. The church at Corinth was on the center of a trade route, a very very prosperous up-and-coming city. They were talented. There was a mix of Jews and Gentiles. They had many different gifts of the Holy Spirit: the gift of tongues, of teaching, prophecy, eloquent oratory. You name it, they had it.

There was no church in the New Testament that was more gifted, that was more talented, that had more in its favor, and yet there was no church that had more problems than the church at Corinth. Arrogance was a chief issue in this church as exemplified in many different ways, but the arrogance runs as a theme throughout the whole book. They had divisions of all sorts which every time there is a division, there's arrogance involved somewhere. You know, a guy saying, "I'm of Paul. I'm of Apollos. I'm of Cephas. I'm of Christ." People finding ways to elevate themselves over and against their brothers and sisters, finding ways to say that, "I'm better than you."

I have this mug that has a Master's Seminary logo on it and I'll often joke and I'll take a sip of it and say, "You know what this means?" "Oh, you went to Master's Seminary?" I said, "No, it means I'm better than you." But I'm just kidding.

This spirit of arrogance existed in the Corinthian church where they found ways to exalt themselves over and against one another. Sexual immorality was an issue. There was even a man who was sleeping with his stepmother on a regular basis, and the church hadn't dealt with him. They should have mourned but instead they were arrogant. And on the other hand you had, in chapter 7 you had husbands and wives depriving one another of intimacy, another issue going on there. You had the mix. This church is just chaos. There were believing men and believing women divorcing their unbelieving spouses for no good reason.

They were suing one another in chapter 6. That's where Paul says, "Why not rather be wronged than dishonor Christ in the pagan courts? Why not rather just absorb that wrong against yourself? You're more concerned about your material goods than the glory of God?" They were more concerned about their own rights and liberties than they were about how their decisions would affect others, this is chapter 8 through 10. Paul gives almost three chapters to discuss this issue, that people were fighting for their rights rather than for the edification of their brothers and sisters. Fighting for their convenience. Fighting for their right to eat a nice steak in a pagan temple rather than consider how that might impact those around them.

There were contentious women who were trying to come out from under the authority of their husbands in chapter 11. Paul says, "Those that want to be contentious, we have no such tradition in our churches."

The rich were dishonoring the poor in how they took the Lord's Supper. They were jealous of one another's gifts and they looked down on the gifts of others, right? So the ones with lowly gifts were jealous of those who had higher gifts, and those who had more elevated gifts, you know, the preachers, they looked down on those who served and cleaned bathrooms and did things that were not as glorious. They looked down on each other and they were more concerned about showing off than on edifying the body, chapter 14. They were disorderly in their services because they were selfish. All of them had to have a prophecy, all of them had to have something to say, and it was crazy. And some were even doubting the resurrection of the body because that was foolishness in Greek culture, the idea that the body would be resurrected. They were doubting the resurrection.

This church was a mess and so you have to understand, and when Paul is writing to this church that no temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man, this is not a nice, little, peaceful church that he's talking to. He's talking to a church that is giving in to temptation left and right and this is a church that exists in one of the worst cities of the ancient world. The city of Corinth was basically the Las Vegas of the Roman Empire. In fact, there was a word, to Corinthinize. To Corinthinize, it was a term for excessive debauchery, okay? Someone who acted particularly out of control and sensual and lustful in the ancient world, they were said to be Corinthinizing. So you have to understand this culture that they're in, this is not Mayberry, okay?

When Paul says no temptation has overtaken you, there is no temptation in Corinth that these people did not have access to. There were along the Acropolis there, the high point of the city, there was pagan temple after pagan temple like the Las Vegas strip of just pagan temples. And they would have these feasts there where they would offer this food sacrificed to idols and they would get drunk and it was full of temple prostitutes. In fact, in that culture, ancient Greece, ancient Rome, it was considered normal for a man to visit prostitutes. Now it was looked down upon if he visited the type of prostitutes that were in brothels, okay? That wasn't okay, but he could have anybody on the side that he wanted and be married at the same time and it was totally considered normal and fine. Homosexuality was rampant, okay?

This was not an easy situation to be a Christian in, so when Paul says no temptation has overtaken you and he says that to the people in Corinth, do you think that would apply to you as well? Do you think there is a temptation in the city of Corinth that was harder than what you've gone through? And here's the other thing, most of these people, actually all of these people were first generation Christians. Every single one of them. Saved. In fact, look back at chapter 6 of 1 Corinthians. Let me see here. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. It says, "do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God." Okay, fair enough. Verse 11, "Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God." And jump ahead a few chapters, there is no temptation that has overtaken you except which is common to man and God will provide the way for you to escape it. I don't care what you were addicted to in your past life. I don't care what all your friends are doing. I don't care what your family is doing. There is no temptation that has overtaken you that God has not designed to be within your ability to handle and along with that temptation he will provide the way for you to escape it so that you will be able to bear up under it, so that you'll be able to endure it. No temptation. You can't blame it on the internet. You can't blame it on your background. You can't blame it on whatever you got involved in in your past life.

So he writes to them, back to chapter 10, he writes to these people because many of them were getting caught up in seeking their own pleasure and getting close to sin and temptation and going back into the pagan temples, to know that the idol is nothing, it's really just a stone statue, but they really wanted a good steak and they really wanted to enjoy the culture. So they were going back and in the process putting themselves in the midst of temptation and tempting other brothers and sisters to follow suit with them, and they were not, they weren't really concerned about bringing honor and glory to Christ, they were concerned with exercising their liberties, their freedoms, and in the process many of them were getting caught up in temptation.

And so Paul warns them here, he says, he says that just because you are a part of the people of God, just because you experienced God's power, just because you hear good preaching and even if you are one of those people that came along with Moses, just because you're there and hearing it all and experiencing it all does not mean that you are

safe in your sin because it says in verse, earlier on in this chapter, that with most of them God was not well-pleased, and that's an understatement. With most of the children of Israel that came out of Egypt, God was not well-pleased. Out of two million people, how many of them do you think entered the Promised Land? It was Caleb and Joshua out of two million people. Most of them were not well-pleasing to the Lord.

So in verse 12 he says this, "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall." Who is this speaking to? This is speaking to the man who's trying to get as close as he can to temptation. Where it says "him who thinks," that word for "thinks" means "to consider as probable; to suppose; to believe." It's a subjective opinion. It's different than to know, it's to think. Most often when you see this in the Scripture, the person is thinking wrongly. They're usually mistaken in their thinking. For instance in Luke 24:37, the disciples thought that they saw a ghost when it was Jesus walking on the water. They thought wrong. John 16:2, "There is a time coming when those who kill you will think they are offering service to God." Okay, this is Jesus talking to his disciples, "There's a time coming, guys, when those who kill you will think that they're doing so in service to God." They think wrongly. Luke 8:18 says this, "Take care then how you hear for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away." He thinks he has something. He thinks he has something, a share in God's inheritance but he thinks wrongly. And in James 1:26, "If anyone thinks himself to be religious and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless."

So to think that you stand firm is to be mistaken if you are indulging in sin, if you are pursuing temptation. To stand signifies strength and safety. This person who is harboring sin is always seeking to justify and to enjoy sin safely and they do so without the fear of God, and so they think that they stand and they keep putting the Lord to test. They take a little step closer and they take a little step closer. "Oh, yeah, I can handle this. I'll take another step. Oh, I'm neck deep in this. Oh, I think I got it." Take another step. "Oh, here we go. Yup, I think I'm okay." Right? I stand. I think I'm gonna be alright. God's gonna be fine with me. God will forgive me. In fact, this is the warning, right? The one who thinks that he stands tall, stands safely, stands securely, needs to take heed lest he fall. Again "take heed" is "pay attention lest he fall." The opposite of standing, of course, is to fall.

Look at verse 5, "Nevertheless, with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness." They didn't stand, they were laid low. What does he mean by that? They were killed. They died in the wilderness. Verse 8, "Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day." Each of these cases that Paul brings up here, each of these examples involves sin being judged by death. God killed those who were participating in it. These people were mostly killed immediately but God does not always act immediately. As Psalm 1 says, "The wicked will not stand in the judgment but they will be like chaff that is driven by the wind." They stand for a time but in the end they are judged by God.



These things were written for our instruction. Those that think that they stand safely while indulging in sin think wrongly and they are in danger and they need to take heed. They need to pay attention. They need to listen up and follow the advice that Paul is giving.

Later on in 1 Corinthians 15:34 he says this, "Wake up from your drunken stupor as is right." He's saying this to the Corinthian church. "Wake up from your drunken stupor as is right and do not go on sinning, for some have no knowledge of God. I say this to your shame." That's Paul to the Corinthian church. "I say these things to your shame." And then 1 Corinthians 16:22, "If anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed." I mean, let that sink in. If anyone among you does not love the Lord, let him be accursed. You see, our loyalty is to God. Sin is genuine wickedness and that's what we've been called out of to follow him.

Okay, so that is the warning, you must resist temptation, from verse 12. Not only must you, you can resist temptation. Here's point number 1 under that, you can resist temptation, point 1 is: you are not special. You're not special. It's so easy to think that you are a special case, that you have been afflicted beyond what is normal for human existence and human experience, it's so easy to believe that the temptations pointed at you are stronger than what anyone else has to face; that somehow the devil's got you marked out and he's coming after you and that you have to give in. But here 1 Corinthians 10:13 makes it very clear you are not special. It says, verse 13, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man." Temptation means testing to prove the true character of something. Temptations and trials, it's translated in that way as well. So no temptation, no trial, no hardship, no pressure has come upon you or overtaken you, that means to seize, that word for "overtaken." To take hold over and to overtake. You're not always in control of whether or not you face temptation. The temptations are brought upon you and you are seized by the temptation. Sometimes they've got you cornered.

The temptations are there whether you want it to be there or not and this says that no temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man. Literally it means, literally it says no temptation has overtaken you except such as is human, human as an adjective. What you're going through is what humans go through. It's common. It's common. It's common, so calm down. I'm not, listen, I'm not diminishing the hardship, okay? What I'm saying is that the power of God and God's care for you is so strong and so faithful and so true that you will have the resources you need to bear with it when it comes but don't dramatize it and don't think you're a special case.

You remember Elijah when he ran from Jezebel? Okay. Jezebel wanted to kill him. He ran, I don't even know how far that is. It's a couple hundred miles, 150 miles I think it is. He ran and then at the end of that he's like, "Lord, just kill me. I'm the only one left. What's the point of my life? Oh, woe is me!" You know what I mean? I mean, and you know what? We all probably feel that way. He was exhausted. He was scared. He felt hopeless because he was the only one that he knew that stood up for the Lord. And the Lord's like, "Alright, get some sleep. Here's some food. Alright, go back to sleep. Alright,

now get up. Let's talk about this. Listen, buddy, you ain't the only one. I've got 700 other prophets in the land of Israel. You're not by yourself, okay?"

What you're going through is hard but it is not uncommon. It might be uncommon in your friend group, it might be uncommon in your neighborhood, it might be uncommon in your suburb, but it is not uncommon for man. We've already mentioned the greed, the idolatry, the immorality that were all especially rampant in Corinth that they experienced, so you're not, you are not special. What you're going through is common and has been experienced millions of times and number 2: God is faithful. This is the sticking point here. God is faithful. Faithful means worthy of trust. What you're going through is common and God is worthy of trust in the midst of this and he demonstrates it in two ways. 1. He limits the temptation to your ability. He says he will not allow you or permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able. He will not allow it. Think about that. So if you, when you give into temptation, when you give into the pressure, you are denying the faithfulness of God to you. You're saying that this temptation was outside of his control and that God did not tailor this to be something that you could withstand.

God limits the temptation to your ability and here's the thing too, I love this: this is put in the future, right? God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. So in the coming months and years, in 2020, there will not be a single time that you will be tempted beyond what you're able and the reason is because God will not allow it. Though the world, the flesh and the devil all work against you, God is only allowing enough of that temptation to get through to be to the level that you can endure it. He's active in that process.

Then 2, so he limits the temptation to your ability and number 2: he provides along with the temptation the way of escape. Look at that, "with the temptation will provide the way of escape also." So with each and every temptation that he is purposely tailoring to be within your ability, he also will provide the safe haven so that you can endure it. The word is used of escape, it's used in some ancient Greek literature of like a cove, a safe place on a rocky shore that a ship could find refuge in during a storm. God will not allow the storm to be stronger than you can bear and he will give you the place of refuge so that you can hold out.

And look at what it says there, "so that you will be able to endure it." Not so that you can never be tempted. Not so that the temptation will go away. But so that you will endure it. So that way of escape also means the way to the end. God will provide the way to finish the temptation without giving in. You will be able to outlast the temptation all the way. Your temptation will not overpower you and it will not outlast you, it will not wear you down. God is faithful. When his timing is right, he will take you out.

Look at 2 Corinthians 1. Listen to what Paul says here. 2 Corinthians 1:8, "For we do not want you to be unaware, brethren, of the affliction which we experienced in Asia, for we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself, indeed we felt that we had received the sentence of death, but that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. He delivered us from such a deadly peril and

He will deliver us, and on Him we have set our hope that He will deliver us again." You see, it's not by your strength that you endure the temptation. God is tailoring the trial and he is the one upon whom we rely for the escape and the endurance, and he will be there even when it feels stronger than we can bear, because there will be times where from our perspective it feels that way but the truth of the matter is that the faithfulness of God will not allow that to be the case for those who belong to him.

And I just lost my place in my notes.

Last thing I wanted to note here. Okay, so God, what was the first part? I just blanked on what I was going to say. You are not special. God is faithful, okay, to give, to limit the scope of the trial and to provide the way of escape, and lastly: you can resist. The word "to be able" means "to have power; to have the ability," so that you will be able to endure it. You're not special. God is faithful. You can resist.

So if you're in the category of one who wants to follow Christ, if you're in the category of one who wants to resist temptation, this is a great hope and encouragement for you and we can encourage one another with these words, "Listen, I know that it's hard. I know, I know that temptation is strong. I know that the trials are real. I know that you feel burdened often beyond your strength but I also know that if your chief desire is to bring glory and honor to God, He will give you the ability to do that through every single thing that you face and He will be with you there until the end. But if you are the sort that is seeking not the way of escape, not to escape temptation but to escape godliness, take heed lest you fall." We will fill out our understanding of this passage more in the next two weeks.

Let's pray.

*Lord, we draw near to You because You are the One who has designed every single trial. Every single temptation, You are, though You are not the One who is tempting us to sin, You do, You will not permit that temptation to be more than we can handle by Your grace and by Your power. So Father, I pray that You would help us to trust in You, that You would help us to truly believe that. Help us, Father, to desire Your will above our own pleasure and above our own preferences and help us to follow Your will in every single situation that we face. Lord, we resolve to do this for Your glory. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*