

CHRISTIAN FOUNDATIONS

LESSON 4

OVERCOMING TEMPTATION AND TESTS

First of all let us find out what the Bible means by the word "temptation". There are two meanings for the word "temptation" in the Bible. We have to be careful to see which meaning is used in the verses we read.

"Temptation" usually means to make sin look good so that we want to do it. The fellows coax us to have a drink with them. The children coax or tell a boy to steal something from the store.

"Temptation" can also mean to test our faith. This can come through sickness or the death of a loved one or through a disappointment. When this happens we may ask, "Does God really care for me? Can He really help me?"

TEMPTATION

1. WHO MAY BE TEMPTED

Sometimes when we trust Christ as our Saviour we think that our troubles are over. We do not know that we still have to choose between right and wrong. Because of this we soon find ourselves sinning and do not know what to do about it. Even if we have lived a Christian life for many years we are still in danger of sinning. Every Christian is tempted.

What does 1 Corinthians 10:12 tell us?

No child of God can say that he has come to a place where he will not sin, 1 John 1:8. In Corinthians it says that the one who thinks he stands should realize that he can fall. A man in the United States said one time, "I have not sinned for about twenty years." One day, when someone asked him about it, he became angry.

What does Colossians 3:8 tell us about anger?

This verse tells us that the person who is angry sins.

Who can be tempted?

2. WHERE TEMPTATION COMES FROM

A. Temptation comes from ourselves.

When are we tempted? James 1:14

Mark 7:21 also tells us where temptation comes from. Where does it come from?

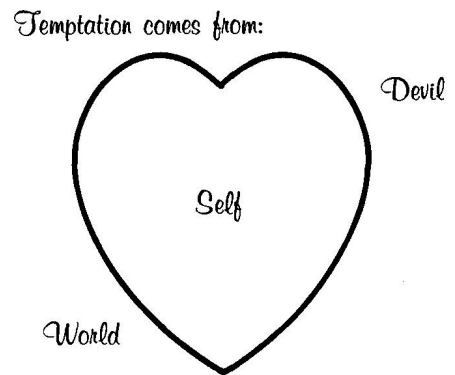
Temptation comes from wrong desires and from the heart. We are tempted because of ourselves.

We may say, "We are new people in Christ and the old things are gone. Why then do these evil thoughts keep coming within us?" Read Romans 8:4-8. When we trusted Christ as our Saviour, the Holy Spirit came into our life. He gave us new life. This new life wants to know God and to please Him. However, we still have our old self. Our old self still has the desires and feelings for the things of this world.

Because we live in this world, we see and hear the sinful activities of the world. Our old self within us still wants to do these things. We must always keep our minds thinking about the things of God, Philippians 4:8. If we don't keep our minds on the things of God we will start to think about the sinful things.

Where does our temptation come from?

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- The world.
- The devil.



B. Temptation comes from the world

Temptation comes from ourselves, the world and the devil. We are still living in the world. We still can see and hear the things of the world.

Because of this, what are we told not to love? 1 John 2:15,16

We are not to love the things of this world. When the Bible talks about the world being bad, it is not speaking about the things that God made. It is not speaking about the trees, grass, lakes, rivers, animals or people. The Bible tells us that the thoughts of the world make us forget about God. The world makes us want to get a lot of money, or have a lot of friends. The world wants us to think that we do not need God to take care of us. We think we can take care of ourselves. As Christians we should always be careful of what we read and what we look at. If we look at bad shows and read bad books and magazines, the stories will stay in our minds and keep us from God.

We can get so busy doing the things of this world that we forget about God. This is what the Bible means when it says the world is bad for us.

Where does our temptation come from?

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- The devil.

C. Temptation comes from the devil

Temptation comes from ourselves, the world and the devil. The devil has lost his right to rule over the children of God. But he is still allowed to tempt us to sin.

Against what are we to fight? Ephesians 6:12

We are to fight against principalities, powers, and rulers of this dark world. Evil spirits can put bad thoughts and lies into the minds of Christians. Satan can make us think: "Everybody is against me. That person is saying bad things about me. I am no good. I will not be able to do it. I will do what God wants me to do later." Satan and evil spirits are the spiritual powers which are in high places, Ephesians 6:12. This is why we must keep thinking about that which is good, Philippians 4:8.

When Satan comes to tempt us, he can come in many different ways.

How is he described

in 1 Peter 5:8?

in Revelation 12:9?

in 2 Corinthians 11:14?

What three things does Satan use to tempt us? 1 John 2:16

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Satan uses the evil desires of the flesh, or of the eyes and the pride of life to tempt us. Sometimes he uses parts of the Bible to trick us. See how he tried it with Jesus in Matthew 4:6. We will find that most false religions have some Bible truths in them. This is why we need to know our Bible well.

Write three things which tempt us.

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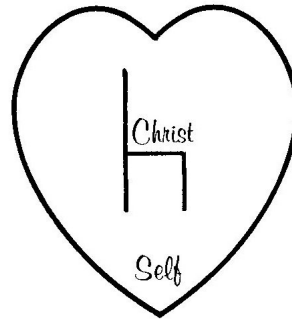
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3. HOW TO OVERCOME TEMPTATION

A. How Jesus overcame temptation

It is wonderful to know that Jesus Christ has been tempted in everything that we are tempted in. He was able to overcome each temptation. Because of this He is able to help us overcome temptation.

*Use Word
of God*



*Know what
temptation
to watch for*

Resist self

*Have a
reason
to live*

Resist world

Who can help us when we are tempted?
Hebrews 2:18

Why can He help us? Hebrews 4:15,16

Read Matthew chapter 4:1-11. What did Jesus use to overcome Satan's temptation?

Jesus can help us because He was tempted. He used the word of God when Satan tempted him.

In John chapter 6 we are told how the people wanted to make Jesus their King. This was after He fed them. He did two things to overcome the temptation to let the people make Him King. One thing He did is found in verse 15.

What did Jesus do?

The same story is also told in Matthew chapter 14. Verses 22 and 23 tell us the other thing He did.

What was it?

Jesus sent the people away and went up into the mountain. There He prayed alone.

What did Jesus use to overcome Satan's temptation?

B. How we can overcome temptation

First we must remember what 1 Corinthians 10:13 says.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (N.L.T.)

“You have never been tempted to sin in any different way than other people. God is faithful. He will not allow you to be tempted more than you can take. But when you are tempted, He will make a way for you to keep from falling into sin.”

What does this verse say about temptation?

Learn this verse - you will need it.

What encouragement do we get from 2 Peter 2:9?

God can help you when you are tempted.

- **Use the Word of God.**

What is the Word of God called? Ephesians 6:17

Jesus used this to fight the devil in the wilderness. We should use it too. In order to fight with the Word of God we need to know how to use it. We always have to have it with us. A fighter always has his sword by his side or in his hand. He does not let it lie around. We also are to have the Word of God with us. We cannot have a Bible with us all the time. But we can have a part of it with us.

What does Psalm 119:11 tell us?

There may soon come a time, even in our own country when we will not be able to have Bibles.

Write one thing we should do when we are tempted.

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- **Resist ourselves.**

When we are tempted we should think of ourselves as dead to sin and alive to God.

What should we think about ourselves when we are tempted? Romans 6:10,11

Write the two things we should do when we are tempted.

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- **Flee temptation and follow righteousness.**

When we are tempted we should use the Word of God and we should think of ourselves as dead to sin and alive to God.

What should we do when we see something and are tempted to sin? 1 Timothy 6:11,12

What does 2 Timothy 2:22 tell us about sinful things?

We have another command in 1 Thessalonians 5:22. What is it?

The writer's mother used to tell him, "If you doubt that something is right, don't do it."

Write three things we should do when we are tempted.

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- **Know the temptations to watch for.**

Everyone of us is easily tempted to sin by certain things. We call these our weaknesses. These we must know and guard against.

We may find some of these weaknesses in the following verses. Look them up and write down the weaknesses.

Proverbs 16:18

Proverbs 27:4

Luke 12:15

James 4:11

Some of the things we should watch for are pride, anger, evil speaking and other things.

Write four things we should do when we are tempted.

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- **Have a reason to live.**

In 1 Timothy 6:12 we are told to take hold of life. We must know what we want to do with our life. We are told to think and do that which is pleasing to God. When we are busy thinking about pleasing God, we will not have much time to think about sinful things, Colossians 3:2,3. When we live for God, we will not live for sinful pleasures.

Write five things we should do when we are tempted.

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TESTS

1. WHERE TESTS COME FROM

Even though God does not tempt us, He does test us, James 1:2,3,4. Job is a good picture of this, Job 1:12.

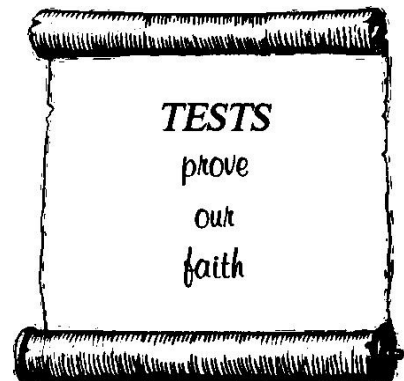
A. Why God tests us.

- **To prove our faith.**

We talked about this in Lesson 3, when we studied about the young Christian needing exercise to grow.

What does James 1:2-4 tell us about tests?

What makes our faith sure? 1 Peter 1:6,7



What will we get from our tests? Romans 5:3-5

When we are tested we are to be happy because temptation works patience. Temptations and tests make our faith sure. Troubles work patience, power and hope.

- **To teach us to trust in God.**

If we want to find a very strong tree, we will not go into the bush to get it. The trees in the bush are not strong because they are protected from the wind and storms. The trees that have to stand alone are strong. The wind makes the roots go deep into the ground. The tree becomes very strong. In the same way the Christian who has to stand alone is strong. When tests come, the Christian goes to God. God helps him and he learns to trust Him more. He learns to put his trust completely in God. The more he trusts God, the stronger he becomes, Hebrews 11:8,9.



Why does God test us?

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B. What we are to do when we are tested.

What has God promised in 1 Corinthians 10:13?

How do tests help us? Romans 8:28

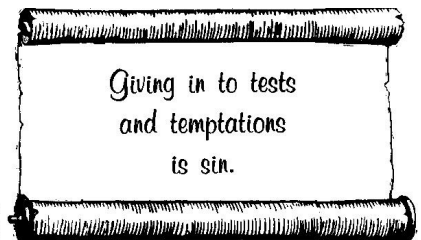
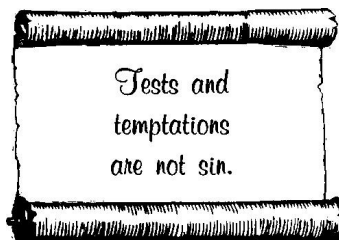
God helps us so temptations will not overcome us. Temptations help us because all things can be used for our good.

When we are tried, we should ask, "What are You trying to teach me, Lord?" When we do this, we will learn from the test and grow in our Christian life.

What are we to do when we are tested?

2. TEMPTATIONS AND TESTS ARE NOT SIN

Temptations and tests are not sin. Giving in to them is sin.



The Bible tells us,

Christ was tempted in every way we are tempted, but He did not sin. Hebrews 4:15 (N.L.T.)

Because Jesus was tempted, how can He help us? Hebrews 2:18

Jesus understands us when we are tempted, and He overcame temptation Himself. He can help us when we are tempted.

Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph to sleep with her, but he did not. Joseph was tempted, but he did not sin, Genesis 39:7-9.

David looked at Bathsheba and wanted to have her for his wife. Bathsheba was another man's wife. David took Bathsheba anyway. He sinned, 2 Samuel 11:2-5; 12:9-13. Can you see the difference between Joseph and David? Job was tested by losing his children, all his cattle, and all he had. His wife said, "Curse God and die," Job 2:9,10.

What did Job answer her?

Job did not turn from God. He said that if we receive good things from God, why should we not receive the bad things. He did not curse God. Job did not sin.

The children of Israel were tested when they were without water and food. They should have prayed for water and food but they complained. The children of Israel sinned, Psalm 78:17-19; Numbers 14:27.

Are temptations and tests sin?

When does a person sin?

3. THE RESULTS OF OVERCOMING TESTS

Remember, the Lord is preparing us for heaven while we are living, Philippians 1:6.

What is Jesus doing for us till He comes again? 1 Corinthians 1:8,9

What did Job say in Job 23:10?

James 1:12 (N.L.T.)

The man who does not give up when tests come is happy. After the test is over, he will receive the prize of life. God has promised this to those who love Him.

What promise has God given us if we overcome tests? James 1:12

What does God give to the one who overcomes test?

MEMORY VERSES

Memorize: James 1:12; 1 Corinthians 10:13.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

Do you remember what you have learned? See if you can answer all the questions. If not, read the lesson again.

1. Who can be tempted?

2. Write three things which tempt us.

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3. What did Jesus use to overcome Satan's temptation?

4. Write five things we should do when we are tempted.

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5. Why does God test us?

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6. What are we to do when we are tested?
 7. Are temptations and tests sin?
 8. When does a person sin?
 9. What does God give to the one who overcomes tests?

WORDS TO LEARN

1. coax - to move a person by soft words.
2. disappointment - when something nice we thought would happen, does not happen.
3. encouragement - that which puts heart into someone; that which helps someone along.
4. guard - to watch closely; to look after; to take care of so nothing will happen.
5. prove - to test; to show that something is true.
6. resist - to fight against.
7. tempt - to try to make a person do wrong.
8. temptation - that which makes us want to do something wrong.
9. yield - 1) to give in to sin. 2) to give in to God.

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