

Upcoming Events

Ladies Bible Class: May 17 (Rescheduled)
Mid-course Review: Saturday Meeting 2021
Memorial Day: May 25
Panera Bread Open Bible Study: TBD

Temptation

“A silly idea is current that good people do not know what temptation means. This is an obvious lie. Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is... A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness. They have lived a sheltered life by always giving in.” C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

May Birthdays

2 Peggy Woodruff 15 Kena Brown

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
(Vacant)

Church of Christ
81-377 Ave 46
Indio, CA 92201
(760) 342-1859

(Address Service Requested)

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Recognizing and Overcoming Temptation

By Brian Mitchell

Is it possible to recognize temptation and overcome it before it overcomes us? The answer is yes, but there are some important principles we must understand. A man was on a diet and he was struggling. He had to go downtown and as he started out, he remembered that his route would take him by his favorite doughnut shop. As he got closer, he thought that a cup of coffee would hit the spot; what could that hurt right? Then he remembered his diet and that's when he prayed; "Lord, if You want me to stop for a doughnut and coffee, let there be a parking place right in front of the shop."

"Sure enough, I found a parking place right in front—on my seventh time around the block!" He didn't really want the Lord's help in overcoming temptation, he wanted permission. As Robert Orben once said, "Most people want to be delivered from temptation, but many would still like it to keep in touch" (Reader's Digest [8/86], p. 35). If one really wants to overcome the temptation to sin the first place to start is to make sure that we are not part of the problem. We must make sure that we are not the one that is placing the enticement in our path.

As we consider the subject of temptation, especially as it relates to sin, we must second come to understand that temptation is inevitable. James says, "*blessed is the man who endures temptation*" and "*let no one say when he is tempted*" (James 1:12-13). James leaves no question that temptation's assault will come for us all. Just as he does in dealing with trials in general, James here says, "*When tempted...*" not "If tempted." Just like death and taxes, trials and temptations are inevitable in this life. We will never be without temptation in life even though the more we mature in our faith the less common they may be.

And thus, the second key to overcoming temptation is the acknowledgment that we are all susceptible to it. Remember Peter saying, “*Lord, even if I must die, I will never deny you.*” What did he do? He denied Jesus three times. The Apostle Paul warns the Corinthians to “*let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall*” (1 Corinthians 10:12). Peter thought he could stand up under any temptation to deny Jesus and thus because he did not think he could fall, but he did. No one is above the powers of temptation and it is our acknowledgment of that fact that actually makes them easier to overcome.

The third key to overcoming temptation is to realize and acknowledge their true source. According to James, “*each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed*” (James 1:14). James teaches us that it is our own sinful desires that lay the groundwork for temptation. James does not here mention the role of the devil in man’s temptations. That is not to say that the enemy does not play a role in temptation, but that James wants us to realize and acknowledge our role in them.

Temptation requires two essential parts—desire plus temptation. While someone or something may place an enticement to sin in our path, if there is no desire there is no temptation. If you take someone who has never done drugs in their life and has no desire to do so and place a pound of cocaine in front of them there would be no temptation because there is no desire. And so, the point is simple, the third key to overcoming temptation is to rid ourselves of our sinful desires by bringing all of our desires into line with God’s will for our lives.

Temptations to sin affect us all but that does not excuse our sins. Why? Because the Bible says that with God’s help, we can both recognize and overcome any temptation that comes our way (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Stay Strong in the Lord

By Travis Robertson

“If all your friends jumped off a cliff ... would you jump too?”

How many times did your mom ask you this question growing up? I know my mom asked me a LOT. I soon learned to come up with better reasons for what I wanted to do than, “All my friends are doing it!” But you have to admit, Mom’s logic is sound. Just because a lot of other people do something, it doesn’t make it a good idea. When we see others make mistakes, we should learn from them rather than saying, “I want to go, too!”

In 1 Corinthians 10, Paul points out to the Corinthian church that the evil which befell Israel was given as an example so Christians could learn from Israel’s mistakes. Verse 6 of that chapter says, “*Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.*” In this chapter we also read about how God delivered Israel from Egypt and how most of the Israelites rebelled and displeased God. We read about the sins they committed and the destruction they suffered as a result. After all of that, Paul says in verse 12, “*Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.*”

Through the sacrifice of Christ, we have been delivered from sin, and now we are to live righteously (Romans 6:17-18). We must be careful not to get arrogant in our salvation and fall into sin like Israel did. The good news is that God won’t let us be tempted more than we can handle. God doesn’t make rules that are impossible to keep. He always provides a way for us to escape sin and do the right thing (1 Corinthians 10:13). One of the best ways I have found to escape sin is to do a good work for Christ in lieu of the evil with which I am tempted. You remember the saying, “Idle hands are the devil’s workshop.” We should take a few minutes each day to ask God to help us recognize temptation and find those avenues to escape sin. We won’t be able to overcome temptation if we don’t see it coming, and we won’t be able to take the escape route if we don’t know what it looks like or where to look for it. Jesus when teaching the disciples to pray and giving us an example prayed, “*lead us not into temptation, and deliver us from evil*” (Matthew 6:13).

The ancient nation of Israel has provided us with an example of how even God’s people can slip into sin and fall away. The question is, will we learn from that example and avoid their mistakes, or will we blindly follow them and jump off a cliff to our destruction?