

✓ Jesus told us to "Watch and that you may not fall into temptation" Matthew 26v41, Mark 14v38 cf. Matthew 6v13. Watch means to keep guard and to recognise temptation. Pray means to ask for Divine help

✓ The key word in Scripture is Resist. As we have seen we can overcome each temptation but we must make a deliberate decision. If we waver we are lost.

✓ Exercise Self Control with the help of the Holy Spirit (your own self control is not enough Colossians 2v23) "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." 2 Timothy 1:7

✓ Do not entertain sinful thoughts. All sin starts with thinking. Do not let them take hold. The things we think about are the things we eventually do. Replace bad thoughts with good thoughts. Philippians 4v8. God has promised that He will provide a way out of every temptation.

✓ A sustained prayer life will help you overcome temptation. Just spending time in prayer at the beginning of the day makes it easier to resist. One day won't do it! But after a couple of weeks this really helps.

✓ Search for the open door from temptation.

✓ Avoid (like the plague) situations that you know will lead you into temptation. Mark 9v47. Do not flirt with danger, this may mean changing your lifestyle.

✓ Approach each temptation by itself, forget about what may happen tomorrow. I will resist this temptation now and worry about tomorrow's temptations when they arrive.

✓ Dealing with temptation when it is small is easy. It is like a water slide at the top you have complete control by the time you are half way down it is impossible to stop. James 1v15

How does this work with Sin?

Read Romans 6v11-13. What do you think this means?

✓ Today I consider that I died to sin with Christ
I do not let sin have any part of me
I give myself to righteousness not sin.

There are two outcomes that are possible from every temptation;
We can yield and fail. If you do, then don't compound the error with a "sin binge" or a bout of guilt. Confess your sin and start over.

We can resist, and in doing so glorify God and grow as disciples. It is the opposition that temptation brings that helps us to become strong in our faith.

✓ **What are the biggest temptations you face?**
What are you going to do to avoid them?
What are you going to do when you fail?
What times are you in the biggest risk of giving in to temptation?

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Resisting Temptation

! **What do you think we mean when we talk about someone being tempted? Who do you think would try to tempt us?**

In modern English, to tempt means to try to get someone to fail or to do something they should not do. As a follower of Jesus that means to do something God does not want us to do, to sin or to disobey God.

In ancient English (prior to the 17 century) did not always mean something bad. It could also mean to test something to make sure it was OK. To proving or improving quality.

! For us, temptation has both these meanings. Where the enemy, and sometimes other people want us to fall and fail, God wants us to get stronger and grow. Temptation is an opportunity to fail, but it is also an opportunity to succeed.

If your goal is to live a life that pleases God, you are going to have to avoid doing things that displeases Him. This means you are going to have to learn to recognise and overcome temptation.

▶ **Jesus was tempted Read Luke 4v1-13**

Everyone is tempted. Even Jesus during was tempted. The Gospels record that after His baptism Jesus was led into the wilderness to be tempted.

♥ *Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. Hebrews 2v18*

♥ **What does this verse mean?**
What good news does it have for us?

♥ *For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. Hebrews 4v15*
If even Jesus was tempted will you be?

It was not only these forty days that Jesus was tempted it throughout His earthly life. There may be special times of intense temptation in our lives but it is basically an ongoing experience.

Jesus has faced every kind of temptation that you have - He found a way through - and with His help, so can you. He knows from first hand experience what you are going through.

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Types of Temptation **Read 1 John 2v16**

Only three of the many temptations Jesus faced over those forty days are recorded for us. These are considered to be the three basic temptations.

 Appetite, the desire to enjoy things, "the lust of the flesh" Indulgence
Ambition, the desire to achieve, "the pride of Life" Pride.
Avarice, the desire to obtain things "the lust of the eyes" Greed.

 le. temptation comes because we want things or power or pleasure.

Is it wrong to enjoy, achieve and obtain?
So what is it about these things that is wrong?

 **Does this mean that to avoid sin we have to deal with our desires?**

Create in me a pure heart, O God, Psalm 51:10

What do you think this means?

 *Every good and perfect gift is from above James 1v17.*

It is God who gave us every good thing. Temptation is often about misusing God's good gifts.

Another source of temptation is the pressure to do what everyone else is doing.

 **How do you think this works?**
Why do you think this kind of temptation is so powerful?
Why do you think it is so dangerous?

 We all want to be accepted and included, people don't want to stand out
Do you really want to be like everyone else?

What do these verses say about where temptation comes from?

James 1v13

James 1v14

Matthew 4v1

Proverbs 1v10

Temptation comes in many forms and there is often an element of deception or trickery. Temptation is rarely obvious.

 *And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 2 Cor 11v14.*
What do you think this means?

Don't be surprised if the temptations you get sound credible, or even religious. Recognising temptation as temptation is the first step to overcoming it.

Temptation comes in many forms. Sometimes it is a physical opportunity that presents itself. Other times our senses and feelings led us astray. Mostly temptation originates in our thought life. A quiet voice in the back of our minds, "Why don't you...?"

How are you going to recognise temptation?

Temptation is not sin. It is only when you give into it that it becomes sin.

"I keep getting these really terrible thoughts in my head. Does that mean I am a very bad Christian?"

 **Does it mean this? What does it mean?**
What should you do with those thoughts?

Even Jesus was tempted. You can't stop the enemy slinging mud – but you don't have to catch it.

 *"No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it." 1 Cor 10v13*

What does this verse tell us?

 This verse tells us three things about temptation. We all get the same basic set of temptations, they are common to everyone. Most Christians seem to think that their temptations and problems are special, even unique. No one ever got tempted like me so its obvious that, no one else can help me, I am all alone, I have no option but to submit. This is a very clever lie. Job 1v10 & Luke 22v21.

God knows our personal limits and will God controls the extent to which the Devil is allowed to tempt us. He will not let us be tempted beyond our ability to resist.

God will always ensure that there is a way for us to escape or survive the temptation.

What might a way out of temptation look like?

If this is true then we should ask God to show us the way out.

 *And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. Mat5v30*
What do you think this verse means?

Most of us consider it inevitable that we will yield to temptation. "I'm going to give in sooner or later so—it may as well be now."

 **Is this a good attitude to have?**
What will this attitude lead to?

 **An opportune time.**

After tempting Jesus in the wilderness, the Bible says that the Devil left Jesus until "an opportune time." The Devil is always looking for the right moment. So be on your guard when you are; tired, sick, depressed, pressured, rushed or stressed. Get to know your vulnerable times. Ironically another danger time is after a great success, ask Elijah. 1 Kings 18-19.

 **What might be your vulnerable time?**

Satan also has a pretty good idea of your weaknesses. Obviously he is going to tempt you with something that has a good chance of succeeding. You must learn to recognise the vulnerable areas in your life and guard them.

At the same time do not be overconfident that you are above temptation in certain areas of your life. "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!". 1 Corinthians 10v12

 *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. 1 Peter 5v8-9*

Why does God allow Satan to tempt us?

 **How to deal with temptation**

When Satan tempted Jesus, Jesus answered by quoting Scripture. He did not weigh up the pros & cons, or enter into a debate. He refuted the ideas the enemy' through at Him with Scripture. To do this we must learn Scripture.