

Think of what weaknesses you may have that will require special attention.

Pick out one of the Bible verses you like best in this lesson that may help you in a time of temptation and memorize it.

Check here when done. Write the reference here: _____

Write a short prayer that can help you when you are tempted. _____

Decide when is the best time for you to pray and read your Bible daily in order to keep spiritually strong.

Write it here: _____

In your own words, write a short prayer that would be appropriate if you should momentarily fall into sin.

Be specific about some of the ways you can avoid certain temptations.

The Best News of All

It is possible by the grace of God for every believer to live a victorious life? God's word says it is.

"In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Ro. 8:37-39)

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4:7-9)

Lesson Five Dealing with Temptation

Basic Questions

Read each question and answer below and meditate on it until you understand it. Be sure to look up the supporting biblical references.

What is sin?

Sin is a deliberate breaking of a law of God. It means you know you are doing something wrong, but you do it anyway. See 1 John 3:4.

What is temptation?

It is the act of being enticed to do something wrong (to sin). See James 1:14.

Where does temptation come from?

Temptation originates with Satan. God does not tempt His children. While Satan is the agent of temptation, part of the problem resides in the sinful nature of man which is inclined toward evil. Satan has an ally in a person's "own evil desires" until the heart is cleansed from them. Read James 1:13-14.

Why does Satan tempt people?

Because he is the enemy of God, he wants to hurt those that God loves. Read 1 Peter 5:8. He knows that when people sin they break fellowship with God, and the ultimate result of sin is eternal separation from God.

Is temptation sin?

No. There is an important difference between temptation and sin. Temptation offers the possibility to sin, but it does not become sin until it has the consent of a person's will. Once it has the consent of the will, it becomes sin in the heart even **before** the act is carried out. For example: You may be in a situation where you have the possibility to steal something. For awhile you resist and say, "No, I will not do that." You have not sinned. But then you say, "When the owner turns his back I will take it." Now you have sinned because you have **chosen** to do it. Sin is committed in the heart when the *choice* is made. Jesus said that even adultery can be committed in the heart alone.

Who is tempted?

Everyone. No one is exempt from temptation. Temptation is a reality as long as we are in this world.

What are the sources of temptation?

Anything that is desirable can become a source of temptation. Satan really has nothing good to offer. He can only take good things like normal human appetites and appeal to satisfy them in wrong ways. See Genesis 3:6. Is it wrong to have money? No, but it is wrong to get it in a dishonest way. Is sex wrong? No, but it should be enjoyed in the right context (marriage). Is it wrong to eat food? Of course not, until it becomes the sin of gluttony. Is it wrong to engage in sports activities? No, unless we put them in the wrong order of our priorities (they come before God).

What should a person do when tempted?

In one word, RESIST! (Prov. 1:10; Jas. 4:7; Eph. 6:13-15; 1 Pet. 5:8-9)

What can we do to help avoid yielding to temptations?

Guard the door where it comes in. It usually makes its appeal through the senses or the mind. It must get your attention before it can make an appeal. Be careful what you allow your mind to dwell on. If you think about something sinful or wrong long enough it can be dangerous. When the thought of doing evil first comes to your mind, focus your mind immediately on something else.

If there are certain places or atmospheres where temptation is more likely to occur, avoid going there. When a bad situation begins to develop, leave before it gets out of control. If alcoholism is your weakness, stay away from bars. If smoking is your problem, do not keep cigarettes handy. Use good sense. Do not play with fire!

If certain people have a bad influence on you, stay away from them. See 1 Corinthians 5:11.

Prayer is an important weapon of defense when in temptation. Read Matthew. 26:41 and Mark 14:38. A regular time of prayer every day will do a lot to strengthen you against temptation.

What should I do if, in a moment of weakness, I yield to temptation?

Recognize that you have sinned and confess it immediately. Do not ignore the voice of the Holy Spirit. Stop as soon as you realize what you have done, and say something like, "Oh Lord, I am sorry I did that. Please strengthen me so I will not do it again. I really do want to serve you and do what is right."

The important thing is to not put it off. Do it immediately. God has also promised an immediate response. Read 1 John 1:9 and 2:1. When a person gets sick, it is better to take the remedy as soon as possible so the disease will not advance and become much more complicated and dangerous. The same is true spiritually. We need to stay spiritually healthy by getting rid of the germs before they gain a foothold.

What are some of the schemes (tricks) of Satan?

He will lie to you. "When he (the devil) lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies" (Jn. 8:44).

He will not deliver what he promises (usually satisfaction or happiness).

He will tell you there is nothing wrong with sinning. Everybody does it.

He will tell you that you cannot be happy or have fun as a Christian.

He will say you can sin now and fix it up (repent) later.

What encouragement does the Bible offer to those who are being tempted?

God will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. (1 Cor. 10:13)

Since Christ also experienced temptation, He is able to help those who are tempted. (Heb. 2:18)

Christ sympathizes with our weaknesses. (Heb. 4:15)

An armor of defense has been provided against the attacks of the enemy. (Eph. 6:13)

Get Ready to Face Temptation

In the light of what you have learned in this lesson, you can prepare for temptation by doing the following:

Write down the steps you plan to take when confronted with a temptation.
