

When your life has been turned upside down, how do you keep from falling into sin?

James 1:12-14 KJV "1:12 Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

1:13 ¶ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

Imagine a young couple named Joshua and his wife, Martha, who loved their home in Jerusalem. They loved living in Jerusalem because their friends and family were close by. It was the place where they grew up and knew the neighborhood. But because of Saul, the Pharisee, they had to leave everything behind. Someone warned them they were on Saul's list to be thrown into prison because they became Christians. Saul was going through their area in Jerusalem and many of their friends at church were thrown into prison.

Instead of risking being separated, they left Jerusalem and went to find another place to live. Such a hard decision to make, but one they felt there was no other option open for them. They had to leave.

Going to another place brought both excitement and hesitation into their life. They knew it would bring difficulties, but did not realize it would also bring new temptations. Temptations they would have to face and gain the victory over. Each day brought not only temptations to quit, but greater temptations to yield to wrong behavior and relationships.

Just because they left the persecution behind in Jerusalem, they face greater dangers from the temptations aimed at derailing their walk with Christ. Every day, they had to make choices on whether to follow Christ or yield the allurements of the new world they moved to.

Today does not differ from then. Daily, Christians are being tempted with the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. We are living in a sin cursed world, the relentless temptations never takes a day off. If one temptation does not work, then the devil and world will tempt in another manner.

So, how can you gain the victory over the temptations you face in life? How can you survive in a world where it is constantly tempting you to follow its pathway

and abandon your walk with Christ?

1 John 2:15-17 KJV "2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

2:16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

2:17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Adam and Eve lived in a perfect world. Just imagine a world with no government, police, military, conflicts, insurance, hospitals, doctors, funeral homes, currency, taxes, and so much more. Every day they walked through the Garden of Eden with all the healthy food they need at their disposal. There was perfect peace with all of nature. No death or destruction existed. The only regulation or requirement they had to live by was to not eat of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Every fruit on the other trees were available to them; only one tree was restricted.

Everything was perfect until the devil entered the Garden as a serpent. His lies and deceit tricked Eve into eating the forbidden fruit. Notice how he approaches Eve by bringing deception and doubt in her thought life.

Genesis 3:1-13 KJV "3:1 ¶ Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

3:2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3:3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

3:6 ¶ And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

3:7 And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

3:8 And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.

3:9 ¶ And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

3:10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

3:11 ¶ And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?

3:12 And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

3:13 And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

Here is the great danger with the temptations you face, the consequences of the choice you made. Adam and Eve were in the perfect environment and circumstances. No worries, stress, issues, or conflicts because the world was at peace. But Satan deceived Eve by presenting another side of the argument. He told her that the fruit was good for her and would bring greater things in her life. She looked at the fruit and thought, "It is probably the best tasting fruit in the Garden." She began reasoning within herself that she need to eat the fruit so she could be wise like God. Finally she convinced herself it was the right thing to do so she ate and gave some to her husband.

The great dangers are the consequences of her decision. She disobeyed God and the perfect world she lived in ended. Sin had come in which destroys everything. She died spiritually and began dying physically. Fear came into her life. The curse of Adam's and her sin not only affected them but all creation. Now, the world is cursed because they introduced sin.

Romans 5:12-14 KJV "5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

5:13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.

5:14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

Each day, we are faced with temptations. The choice is ours and so are the consequences of those choices.

When I choose to follow the Lord, I will overcome temptation.

James 1:12 KJV "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."

James 1:12 ESV "¶ Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him."

One of the hardest theological lessons to accept is the temptation to sin will follow you all the days of your life. You will not escape temptation. You will be tempted to sin regardless of your age. When you are a teenager, the temptations are there. When you are in your fifties, you will face a distinct set of temptations. You will not escape temptations, so you must learn how to gain the victory over them.

Jacob's son, Joseph, was tempted to sin when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him. He was a teenager when he was tempted by her. He gained the victory when he fled the house.

1 Corinthians 6:18 KJV "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."

2 Timothy 2:22 KJV "¶ Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

King David, in his late forties or early fifties, was tempted to sin when he lusted after Bathsheba. Instead of fleeing the temptation like Joseph, he yielded to the temptation and committed the sin of adultery. The consequences of his sin followed him throughout his life. Adultery, murder, and the death of his child resulted from his failing to resist the temptation.

2 Samuel 12:7-12 KJV "12:7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and

I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;

12:8 And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things.

12:9 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.

12:10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

12:11 Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun.

12:12 For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."

However, the person who endures or overcomes the temptation will be blessed. The word 'blessed' is the same word the Lord used when He taught who is blessed. It means to be joyous. Why? Because he or she has gain the victory over the temptation and did not yield to sin. Because of their endurance, they will receive a reward from the Lord, the Crown of Life.

The crown is not the crown of a king but the crown of the victor. One who has striven and has won the race.

"The Greek word is **στέφανος** stephanos, from an apparently primary ste+fw stepho (to twine or wreathe); a chaplet (as a badge of royalty, a prize in the public games or a symbol of honor generally; but more conspicuous and elaborate than the simple fillet, 1238), literally or figuratively: – crown."¹

Unfortunately, not all Christians are happy and blessed. Some are miserable. Why?

They are miserable because they are outside the will of God. They are miserable because they are not enjoying the blessings of salvation in Christ. They are miserable because they are living in sin.

Christian cannot live in sin and be joyous. Sin brings a conflict in his heart and life. He has his old nature, a natural man. There is a new nature in Christ, a spiritual nature. He has been born again. Sin vexes the spiritual side of his life and makes him miserable.

¹ Strong's Greek Dictionary of the New Testament/, s.v. "paragraph 1.

Just consider David when he sinned against the Lord.

Psalm 51:1-12 KJV "51:1 ¶ Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

51:2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

51:4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

51:6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

51:7 ¶ Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

51:9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

51:12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."

David's sin vexed his soul. His joy was not restored until his heart was right with God. His heart was not right until he confessed and repented of his sins. Then God restored the joy and fellowship.

James writes the man which endures the testing is blessed.

As we have discussed in earlier lessons, the word translated patience or steadfast is 'hupomone' in the Greek. It means to be patient. If you break the word apart, the first part is 'hupo' which means under and the word 'meno' means to stay or abide. Patience means to abide under the trials or troubles. It means to stay through to the end, not run away.

Too often, ones try to escape their troubles by going somewhere else, but they do not realize they take their troubles and trials with them.

Blessed is the man who endures the troubles and trials of life. Life is full of adversity, trials, and troubles. The circumstances of life bring difficulties.

Spiros Zodhiates writes, "If we were to translate the first part of verse 12 we should say, "Happy is the man who stands his ground in the face of temptations."²

Why is there so much trouble in life? What brings the difficulties, trials, tribulations, and adversity in life?

First, it is because we live in a world cursed by sin. We live in a world that loves sin and darkness.

John 3:16-20 KJV "3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

3:19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."

One can overcome by the power of the Lord through faith in Jesus Christ. Christians are more than conquerors because of Jesus Christ.

1 John 4:4 KJV "¶ Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Second, because the Christian has two natures: sin nature and a new nature in Christ. Christian has a sin nature because of the natural man; he was born in to this world. He was born a sinner. He has a tendency toward sin. The Bible calls this nature the flesh.

² Zodhiates, Spiros, /Exegetical Commentary on the Book of James,/electronics edition, James 1:15

When he was born again, he has a new nature in Christ. He has been made alive through faith in Jesus Christ. He is a child of God. His new nature, spirit, wants to please the Lord.

The old nature, flesh, wars against the new nature, spirit. Flesh wants to fulfill the lust of the body, eyes, and pride of life. Spirit wants to please the Lord. There is a war between the flesh and the spirit.

In part of our sinful nature, we have the tendency to classify other's sins worse than our own. We in our sinful self justify ourselves instead of confess our sins and repenting of them.

C.S. Lewis said, "If anyone thinks that Christians regard unchastity as the supreme vice, he is quite wrong. The sins of the flesh are bad, but they are the least bad of all sins. All the worst pleasures are purely spiritual: the pleasure of putting other people in the wrong, of bossing and patronising and spoiling sport, and back-biting, the pleasures of power, of hatred. For there are two things inside me, competing with the human self which I must try to become. They are the Animal self, and the Diabolical self. The Diabolical self is the worse of the two. That is why a cold, self-righteous prig who goes regularly to church may be far nearer to hell than a prostitute. But, of course, it is better to be neither."³

Matthew 26:41 KJV "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Romans 8:1 KJV "¶ There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Galatians 5:17; 6:8 KJV "5:17 For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

6:8 For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."

If you yield to the lust of the flesh, you will not please God. If you yield to the flesh, you will not be blessed because you will not endure the trials of life, but fall into their traps and temptations.

If you yield to the Spirit, you will please the Lord. You will endure the

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temptations and trials of life. You will see beyond the present troubles to the blessings which God has for those who endure.

Romans 6:6-16 KJV "6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

6:7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

6:8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:

6:9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

6:10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

6:13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.

6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

6:15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

6:16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"

God brings blessings to those who endure the trials and tribulations of life. He has not called us to give in to the flesh, but follow the Spirit's leading in our lives.

James describes the final reward in heaven when God will present the crown of life to those who endure the trials of life. One cannot imagine the joy and blessings God has for those who love and follow Him.

1 Corinthians 2:9 KJV "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God

hath prepared for them that love him."

Romans 8:18 KJV "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

When I dwell on the temptation, I will choose sin.

James 1:13-15 KJV "1:13 ¶ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

1:15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

James is talking to Christians, those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ. When a person becomes a Christian does not mean he will never be tempted again. In most cases, the temptations increase because the devil is actively seeking to destroy the life and testimony of the Christian.

Do not blame God for the temptations you face

James 1:13 KJV "¶ Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:"

God gets blamed for a lot of things He is not responsible for. People blame God when something goes wrong. God gets blamed when someone loses their job. When someone dies, God gets blamed. When someone goes through a difficult time financially, God gets blamed.

God gets blamed for a lot of things which are our fault, not His.

God tempts no one to sin. God isn't to blame when a person spends more than he makes. It is not God's fault when a person does not do his job and gets fired. It is not God's fault when a person does not take care of his health and dies. When someone looks at pornography and it ruins their marriage, it is not God's fault. It is not God's fault when someone takes drugs and it destroys his health and

life. It is not God's fault when someone sins and has to endure the consequences.

God does not tempt anyone with evil, nor can He be tempted with evil. He allows temptations to come in our lives. He allows a person to make terrible decisions. Even if it is contrary to the will of God, he allows a person to go his own way. God gives man the freedom to make a choice, but He never tempts man to sin. God in His sovereignty gave man freewill.

God permits a person to choose, but the person chooses and is responsible for his choice.

Blame rests on you

James 1:14 KJV "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

How many times we blame others for our problems! Adam blamed Eve. Remember when Adam said it was the woman You gave me.

Genesis 3:12 KJV "And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."

Our problems are ours. We can try to blame others, but the root of the problem is our sin nature. We try to blame others, but we cannot. We cannot even blame the devil because he tempts us to sin but he cannot make us sin.

Flip Wilson had a saying, "The devil made me do it." The devil cannot make you do it, he can only tempt you.

The real problem is your sin nature. Eve looked, decided, and ate. Satan tempted; Eve acted.

Tempted means to solicit a person to sin. Lust is the Greek word, *epithumia* which is usually associate with desires of the body toward wicked and sinful activities. It means to desire, covet, or set one's heart on having or doing.

Eve looked at the fruit; her mind desired to taste the fruit. She desired to have the knowledge the fruit would bring, so she made a choice and acted on it.

Each person is tempted when he is drawn away of his own desires and enticed (baited).

Matthew 5:27-28 KJV "5:27 ¶ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

5:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

Temptation to sin comes when the person begins on the inside thinking and dwelling on fulfilling a desire of the body. The desire becomes a driving force to fulfill the desire. It looks pleasant and enjoyable. It looks great on the outside, but one does not see the hooks on the inside.

Consider the following passage.

Proverbs 7:4-26 KJV "7:4 Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman:

7:5 That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words.

7:6 ¶ For at the window of my house I looked through my casement,

7:7 And beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding,

7:8 Passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house,

7:9 In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night:

7:10 And, behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot, and subtil of heart.

7:11 (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house:

7:12 Now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.)

7:13 So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him,

7:14 I have peace offerings with me; this day have I payed my vows.

7:15 Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee.

7:16 I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt.

7:17 I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

7:18 Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves.

7:19 For the goodman is not at home, he is gone a long journey:

7:20 He hath taken a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed.

7:21 With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him.

7:22 He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks;

7:23 Till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.

7:24 ¶ Hearken unto me now therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth.

7:25 Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths.

7:26 For she hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her."

Sin looks pleasant to the heart but the bite is bitter.

Man's worse enemy is his flesh, his sin nature.

Consequences of sin are deadly

James 1:15 KJV "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

When lust is acted upon, it brings sin. When sin is finished, it brings death. Temptation is not sin; yielding to temptation is sin. In other words, just being tempted does not mean you sin, but when you act on the temptation then sin has been committed.

"He that falls into sin is a man; he that grieves at sin is a saint; he that boasts of sin is a devil."¹

Death means separation. Death of a physical body means the separation of the spirit from the body. Spiritual death is the separation of the creature from the Creator. When sin reaches its maturity, the spirit is separated from God; it is called everlasting death, because it is an everlasting separation.

Sin brings death - physical and spiritual.

When Adam and Eve sinned, they died. They died spiritually and began dying physically. Sin destroys.

Only in Christ can one be made alive again.

Ephesians 2:1-10 KJV "2:1 ¶ And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now

worketh in the children of disobedience:

2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

2:4 ¶ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

How can you gain the victory over temptation?

Facing temptations are a daily challenge we have to face. With every challenge, there has to be a response. So, how do we respond to these temptations and gain the victory? Are we left to fight these battles in our own strength? Even Jesus was tempted by the devil when He was in the wilderness. Just as He gained the victory, He is there to help us gain the victory over the temptations in our lives so we can live a holy life before Him.

Hebrews 2:17-18 KJV "2:17 Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

2:18 For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

Hebrews 12:1-2 KJV "12:1 ¶ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with

patience the race that is set before us,

12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 KJV "9:24 ¶ Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain.

9:25 And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.

9:26 I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air:

9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

1 Corinthians 10:13 KJV "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Trust in the faithfulness of God that He will not allow you to face more than you are able to bear

Here is a calm assurance that the Lord will not allow any temptation to fall upon a person who he cannot resist. The Lord knows the strength of the person and will not allow any temptation to come on him he has no way of overcoming.

The significant aspect of this verse is that the person does not have to depend upon his own strength to overcome the temptation but to rely upon the Lord that He will not allow him to be overcome by a temptation too strong for him to resist.

The faithfulness is upon the Lord, not the person. God is faithful who will not place more on the person that he is able to bear.

Also, the Lord is faithful that He will provide a means of escape so that the person can move away from the temptation so he does not have to fall into temptation.

The first way to overcome temptation is to trust the Lord to not place more on one that he can handle and to provide the means of escape.

Look for the way of escape from the temptation.

1 Corinthians 10:13 KJV "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

There will always be a way of escape from the temptation. It might be that the person has to run from it, resist it, change something in his life, or something else. But, in any case, there is always a way to overcome and escape from the temptation. Joseph escaped the temptation by running out of Potiphar's house. There are times you must run away from temptation.

Know where and who to avoid.

One of the methods of escaping from the temptation is to not place one's self in the path of temptation. If a person knows that he will be tempted to sin in a certain place or around certain individuals, then he needs to avoid them.

Proverbs 4:14-15 KJV "4:14 ¶ Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

4:15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

Use Scripture to avoid sin

Psalms 119:11 KJV "¶ Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Matthew 4:1-11 KJV "4:1 ¶ Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

4:2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.

4:3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

4:5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

4:6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

4:7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

4:8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

4:9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

4:10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

4:11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."

When Christ was tempted by Satan, Christ quoted the Scriptures back to Satan. When a person is tempted to sin, he must look to the Word of God that will keep him from that sin.

The Word of God is powerful in that it reminds and strengthens the Christian to live a holy life before the Lord. The Word of God will keep a young man from sin.

Hebrews 5:14 KJV "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Those who grow in the Word of God are able to recognize and discern between right and wrong. They are able to understand what is a temptation to sin and avoid it.

Pray for wisdom to avoid and strength to resist temptation

Matthew 26:41 KJV "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Prayer is a powerful weapon against temptation and sin. Prayer should be made before a person is ever tempted. He needs to be praying for the wisdom, strength, and grace of the Lord in his life to keep him from sin.

Pray for the areas that you are weak in so you might become strong in your walk with the Lord.

Realize your weaknesses

Hebrews 12:1-2 KJV "12:1 ¶ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Each one of us has a weakness in our lives. We might not have the same weakness, but we have a weakness. If you honestly look at your life, you will recognize the areas that you struggle with each day.

Keeping your focus on Christ

Hebrews 12:1-2 KJV "12:1 ¶ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

The problem with temptation comes when one's focus is on the flesh and its desires. The cure is to keep the focus on Christ and the life that He wants the person to live. When eyes are on Jesus, the desire is to please the Lord. When the eyes are on the flesh, the desire is to please the body.

The focus of one's life must be on Christ and His will, not one's selfish

desires.

Galatians 2:20 KJV "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Running away from the temptation

1 Corinthians 6:18 KJV "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body."

1 Corinthians 10:14 KJV "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry."

Genesis 39:11-12 KJV "39:11 And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within.

39:12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out."

Literally, sometimes the only way to escape certain temptations is to run away from them because if one stays around they will choose to go into the sin. The way of escape is to flee, to make a conscience decision to leave in order to stop the temptation.

Joseph, as a young man, was tempted to sin by Potiphar's wife. She wanted to have sexual relations with the young man. His only way of escape was not to reason with her, but to run out of the house.

Sometimes the person must run from the temptation. Avoid places and people of temptation is key to overcoming temptation.

Proverbs 4:14-15 KJV "4:14 ¶ Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

4:15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

1 Corinthians 15:33 KJV "Be not deceived: evil communications

corrupt good manners.”

One of the best methods to have the victory over temptation is to avoid places of temptation. If a person knows that he has difficulties with a certain temptation, then he should avoid those situations. If a person is attracted to a certain thing that is sinful, then he or she needs to stay away from that situation or person.

1 Thessalonians 5:22 KJV “Abstain from all appearance of evil.”

Even in situations that are questionable, avoid them. If it seems the wrong place or situation, then avoid it.

Draw close to the Lord and resist the devil’s temptations

James 4:7-8 KJV “4:7 Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

4:8 Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded.”

The word resist means to oppose, not to yield. The verse instructs the Christian to submit their lives to Jesus and to oppose anything that the devil is trying to bring into their lives. The Christian needs to be wise and discerning to understand the attacks of the devil on his life.

2 Corinthians 2:11 KJV “Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.”

Put on the armor the Lord provides to the Christian

Ephesians 6:10-18 KJV “6:10 ¶ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against

principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

God has provide the spiritual armor needed to resist the devil and his attacks against the Christian. However, the armor of God must be applied to the life of the Christian.

Count the high cost of yielding to the temptation

Psalm 66:18 KJV "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:"

Hebrews 11:24-26 KJV "11:24 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter;

11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;

11:26 Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward."

1 John 2:1 KJV "¶ My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"

"One of the reasons why sin is so deceptive is because the consequences often do not show up immediately but become visible after months or even years. In this regard, sin is like the chemical PBB (polybrominated biphenyl). A large number of Michigan farm animals had eaten a contaminated food supplement. A fire-retardant chemical known as PBB was accidentally mixed with feed and widely distributed. Months went by before the deadly results of the mistake were discovered. By that time thousand of cattle, hogs, and chickens lay cripple and dying. But even more serious was the fear that traces of PBB might turn up in the retail food markets. According to the FDA, the problem is compounded because PBB was originally thought to be practically non-poisonous. But recent studies have shown that the chemical is dangerous and that its toxic effect doesn't show up for months or even years."⁴

There are consequences to sin, even though the consequences might not show up for decades to follow. However, one way to avoid sin is to ask the question, if I yield to this temptation what will it cost me?

What is the price for the sin? What is the cost?

The cost is always more than the pleasure the sin will bring!!!!

"Randy Alcorn, pastor, author, and founder of Eternal Perspective Ministries came up with a list of the possible consequences of immorality.

"About twenty-five years ago, while pastors at Good Shepherd Community Church, my friend Alan Hlavka and I both developed lists of all the specific consequences we could think of that would result from our immorality as pastors. The lists were devastating, and to us they spoke more powerfully than any sermon or article on the subject.

Personalized List of Anticipated Consequences of Immorality

* Grieving my Lord; displeasing the One whose opinion most matters.

* Dragging into the mud Christ's sacred reputation.

* Loss of reward and commendation from God.

* Having to one day look Jesus in the face at the judgment seat and give an account of why I did it. Forcing God to discipline me in various ways.

* Following in the footsteps of men I know of whose immorality forfeited their ministry and caused me to shudder. List of these names:

* Suffering of innocent people around me who would get hit by my

⁴ [Health Effects from PBB Exposure](<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/safety-injury-prev/environmental-health/Topics/DEHBio/pbbs/health-effects>)

shrapnel (a la Achan).

- * Untold hurt to Nanci, my best friend and loyal wife.
 - * Loss of Nanci's respect and trust.
 - * Hurt to and loss of credibility with my beloved daughters, Karina and Angela. ("Why listen to a man who betrayed Mom and us?")
 - * If my blindness should continue or my family be unable to forgive, I could lose my wife and my children forever.
 - * Shame to my family. (The cruel comments of others who would invariably find out.)
 - * Shame to my church family.
 - * Shame and hurt to my fellow pastors and elders. List of names:
 - * Shame and hurt to my friends, and especially those I've led to Christ and discipled. List of names:
 - * Guilt awfully hard to shake—even though God would forgive me, would I forgive myself?
 - * Plaguing memories and flashbacks that could taint future intimacy with my wife.
 - * Disqualifying myself after having preached to others.
 - * Surrender of the things I am called to and love to do—teach and preach and write and minister to others. Forfeiting forever certain opportunities to serve God. Years of training and experience in ministry wasted for a long period of time, maybe permanently.
 - * Being haunted by my sin as I look in the eyes of others, and having it all dredged up again wherever I go and whatever I do.
 - * Undermining the hard work and prayers of others by saying to our community "this is a hypocrite—who can take seriously anything he and his church have said and done?"
 - * Laughter, rejoicing and blasphemous smugness by those who disrespect God and the church ([2 Samuel 12:14](<http://biblia.com/bible/esv/2%2520samuel%252012.14>)).
 - * Bringing great pleasure to Satan, the Enemy of God.
 - * Heaping judgment and endless problems on the person I would have committed adultery with.
 - * Possible diseases (pain, constant reminder to me and my wife, possible infection of Nanci, or in the case of AIDS, even causing her death, as well as mine.)
 - * Possible pregnancy, with its personal and financial implications.
 - * Loss of self-respect, discrediting my own name, and invoking shame and lifelong embarrassment upon myself.
- I'm older now, turned 55 a few days ago. My daughters are grown, with children of their own. But the list of consequences of immorality is larger than ever. I have two sons-in-law and four grandsons."⁵

⁵ [RandyAlcornOnImmorality](<http://www.wacmm.org/RandyAlcornOnImmorality.html>)

There is victory over temptation and it comes when one finds victory in Jesus Christ. The focus must be on Christ. The focus of one's life must be on Christ.

If Christ comes first, then the flesh and selfish desires will be place last.

Victory over sin will never happen in one's own strength, but from walking close to Christ.

How can I recover when I failed?

James 4:8 KJV "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded."

Psalm 32:1-5 KJV "32:1 ¶ Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

32:2 Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

32:3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

32:4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

32:5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah."

1 John 1:9 KJV "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Pat and I have been married for over 42 years. Throughout the years, we have faced many difficulties. In those times of difficulties, some of the difficulties were related to our relationship. When we have a disagreement, it rests heavily on our hearts. I will never forget one argument we had where it was difficult to talk to each other. She went to bed, and I stayed up and stewed over the problem. I was miserable. I was wrong and miserable. Miserable because it damaged our relationship. Miserable because I knew what I needed to do but my arrogant pride kept me from apologizing. After being miserable for a while I decide the only way I was going to get my peace back was to get right with her.

It was about 3:30am in the morning. She was asleep, and I was miserable.

So, I went in to our bedroom and woke her up and told her we had to talk. I apologized. It restored our relationship. The peace returned, and I could lie down and sleep.

Our relationship with the Lord is very similar. When we sin against the Lord, it grieves His Holy Spirit that indwells our heart. We know we are wrong, but pride keeps us from going to the Lord and asking for forgiveness. We will stay miserable until we get right with the Lord.

When King David sinned against the Lord, he tried to cover it up but he could not. Even though others did not know what he did, God did and so did he. His sin rested heavy on his heart and life. It was heavy on his heart because his relationship with the Lord had been damaged. It wasn't until he went before the Lord and confessed his sins that he found peace again.

Proverbs 24:16 KJV "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."

The issue is when you yield to the temptation and sin, what do you do? Do you stay in your sin or do you repent? Proverb writes that the righteous man falls, but he gets back up. He does not throw up his hands and quits. He does not resign himself to believe this is his life, one of defeat. He gets back up and gets right with the Lord.

God has promised His children that if we go to Him and confess our sins He will forgive us and restore us.

Maybe today you are miserable because you know there is sin in your life. You know there is an area of your life that is not right with the Lord. You know that your relationship with the Lord is not right.

You have a choice - you can continue down the same pathway you are walking. God's hand will rest heavy on your heart and you will not experience the peace and joy of your salvation in Christ.

Or, you can choose to go to the Lord and ask forgiveness of your sin! You can pour out your heart to the Lord and let Him bring a peace and joy back into your life.

The choice is yours - restoration or resentment?

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