

TEMPTATION

Matthew 4:1-11 and Luke 4:1-13

“**Temptation**” – This word is used by religious and non-religious people alike, and it means different things to different people. The Greek word is ΠΕΙΡΑΣΜΟΣ, which means to lure, to entice, to make a person do something. It is not the same as *trial* or *test*.

As the compass needle is affected by magnetic attraction, so the Christian feels a pull by sin.

Apostle Paul describes the Christian as having two natures: the old and the new, which constantly compete for supremacy. The Christian must understand this and learn to resist this magnetic pull of his own sinful nature and Satan’s lures.

When we give in to temptation, it becomes a sin. None of us should deliberately place ourselves in a position to be tempted. Satan will always attack where we are the most vulnerable. James 1:14-15 says:

“But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.”

A thought enters; we pamper it; it germinates and grows into an evil act.

Some facts about temptation

1. Temptation is common to all Christians - 1 Corinthians 10:13
2. Temptation is of the devil - Matthew 4:1-11
3. Temptation itself is not sin, but giving in to it is.
4. God does not lead us into temptation in the sense that He purposely and personally tempts - James 1:13
5. God does permit us to be tempted - Job 1:6-12
6. He allows this so that we can face temptation, overcome it and become stronger - 1 John 2:14
7. No temptation is irresistible - 1 Corinthians 10:13
8. Whatever we experience, Jesus has been there before us - Hebrews 4:15
9. You must resist temptation with God’s help. When you resist temptation successfully, you will be blessed and develop a strong Christian character and witness - James 1:2-3

Jesus was tempted repeatedly in the desert, without ever giving in. Have you ever wondered why the temptation of Jesus happened immediately after His baptism? Right after the Holy Spirit came upon Him, He was tempted for 40 days (Luke 4:1-2).

How to confront and overcome temptation (James 4:7)

1. We must resist the tempter.
2. We must submit to God.

We do this by:

1. Committing ourselves daily to God (Romans 12:1) and daily confessing our sin so that there is no build-up (Psalms 51:10).
2. Subjecting our minds to His control.
“Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” (Romans 12:2)
“Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.” (Colossians 3:2)
3. Being disciplined in prayer.
“Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.” (Hebrews 4:16)
“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” (Ephesians 6:18)
4. Reading, studying and memorizing the Word of God. D.L. Moody used to say: “Sin will keep you from this Book, or this Book will keep you from sin.”
“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double – edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)
5. Associating with the right kinds of friends: God’s people.
“Do not be misled: “Bad company corrupts good character.” (1 Corinthians 15:33)
“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.” (Hebrews 10:24)
6. Putting on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:13-18).
7. Depending on the Holy Spirit.
“If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?” (Luke 11:13)
“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever.” (John 14:16)
But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own, he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. (John 16:13)

Additional Scriptures to study: James 12:10-12; Matthew 4:1-11; Revelation 8:26; Romans 8:5-17; 2 Peter 3:17; Galatians 5:16