
THE TEMPTING TEMPTATIONS

In the 1960's an all-male singing group came out of Motown called the "Temptations". The five man group was often announced at live shows as the "Tempting Temptations". A play on words to be sure, but their songs and persona attracted a lot of teenage females and their cool stage steps and melodies were admired by a lot of teenage males. Though the name of the group, the songs, and stage moves were innocent enough, real temptation is not.

You may be asking, "What do you mean when you say real temptation?" Temptation is real only when there is a real chance someone will give in to its attraction and commit sin by it. One must remember that to be tempted is not sin. Submitting to the temptation is sin.

Name a temptation that you have and it will fall under one or more of three areas.

1 John 2:16-17 (NKJV)

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

¹⁷ And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

This scripture tells us where temptation comes from and where it resides. This is a fallen world ruled by Satan due to Adam relinquishing man's reign by disobeying God's command not to eat of the tree of good and evil. Though the devil is a liar and the author of it, he is not directly responsible for any failure by us to resist temptation. You can't say the devil "made" you do it! This scripture also tells us what lasts. This world and every person in it who does not submit to the will of God will pass away and that includes temptation and the end results of temptation. The only ones who will abide forever (live forever) will be those who do the will of God.

1 Corinthians 10:13 (NKJV)

¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

The Holy Spirit tells us in this scripture, three main things. First, the devil can't tempt you with anything that is not known and understood by man. Second, God is faithful and third, He will always give us a way to escape, by which He will get us through the duration of the temptation without us committing sin.

James 1:12-15 (NKJV)

¹² Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.

¹³ Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone.

¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed.

¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

These last verses penned by the brother of Jesus, as inspired by the Holy Spirit, lets the believer know that God will reward those who are faithful after being tempted. The crown of life mentioned in these verses is NOT eternal life! Eternal life is a gift of God. No one can earn it. However, rewards will be given to the faithful by Jesus Christ Himself. He said that when He returns, He will have His rewards with Him.

Matthew 16:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

These verses also assure us that God will never tempt us to do evil. God knows our thoughts. He already knows what and where the kinks are in our armour are. God will do nothing else but protect us from submitting to temptation, and the Lord taught us to pray for that protection.

Matthew 6:13 (NKJV)

¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

The last verses reinforce the previous statements made about the individual's responsibility for sin committed following the sequential steps after temptation.

We've learned from where temptation rears its ugly head and from where it does not. We've learned that to succumb to temptation is sin, and there will be physical consequences (temporary) and there will be spiritual consequences (eternal) but there are rewards for those who remain steadfast in tempting situations.

If we didn't know before, we've since learned that God is faithful, even when we are unfaithful.