

Temptation

by Stuart Briscoe

Temptation is not just an opportunity to go wrong, but also a chance to do the right thing and be strengthened through God's power.

Duration: 42:57

Scripture: Revelation 6:1

Topics: "Temptation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the game of baseball and how the coach gives signals to the outfielders based on the weaknesses of the batter. He then relates this to the story of Job in the Bible, where Satan is given permission by God to test Job. The preacher emphasizes the importance of calling on Jesus for help when faced with temptation, as it leads to victory. He also highlights the biblical instruction to count it as joy when facing trials and reminds the audience that temptation itself is not sin. Overall, the sermon encourages believers to rely on God's strength in times of weakness and to see their weaknesses as opportunities for growth.

Transcript

Good morning to you, ladies and gentlemen. I have another book which will be coming out before the year is through. No, next year, I mean.

And it will be called, *Where Was the Church When the Youth Exploded?* And it asks a number of questions about the church in relation to the modern youth situation, so you might like to look out for that. And if two or three of you could buy a copy of it, it might double the sales, which would be a great encouragement to me. *Where was the church when the youth exploded?* I want to talk to you this morning about something very simple, very basic again.

Some of you have said that it has been helpful to do this, and I'm glad to know that. And I want to talk to you about another of those questions that people always raise when I'm talking with them about their spiritual life, and that is the question of temptation. So just a simple bible study, a quiet talk this morning, on the subject of temptation.

An old preacher once distinguished himself by getting up and saying, before I speak to you I'd like to say a few words, and as far as the subject of temptation is concerned, before I speak on it, I would like to say a few words about it. The important thing about temptation, I believe, is that we get it into perspective. And

I've just jotted down a few things here that help me to get the whole subject of temptation into perspective.

Temptation, firstly, is not only an opportunity to go wrong. It's a lovely chance to do the right thing. Now I'm afraid we've got such a negative view of temptation, that about the only thing we ever think about it is, it's an opportunity to go wrong.

We'll think positively about temptation, and see it not only as an opportunity to go wrong, but as a lovely chance to do the right thing. Second thing I'd like to suggest to you in getting temptation into perspective is this, that temptation is not only the work of Satan, but it is also the will of God. Now as soon as temptation comes along, we automatically think in terms of Satan.

That nasty old Satan is getting at me again. This of course is perfectly true. But always remember that Satan is only allowed to work in the limits of God's will for your life.

And therefore when temptation comes, see it not only as the work of Satan, but also see it as the will of God. And try and find out why God is willing that this should come into your life. Think positively about it.

Thirdly, temptation is not only a potential seduction, which is I suppose what we usually think of when temptation comes our way, a potential seduction. But temptation is also giving the opportunity of, a possibility of strengthening. In other words when temptation comes, I can either be seduced by it, or be strengthened through overcoming it.

Now think of it in this light sometimes. Not only oh dear here is another opportunity to be seduced, but praise God here is another opportunity to be strengthened. Here's another thought that I'd like to share with you, and getting it in perspective.

Temptation is not only a means of exposing our weakness, which it most certainly does. It isn't only a means of exposing our weakness, it is also a means of experiencing God's power. For every time you overcome temptation, you do it through a very personal, very lovely experience of God's power.

So next time temptation comes along, don't just see it as another chance to show how weak you are. See it as another chance to see how strong God can really be. Here's another thought.

Temptation is not only the devil's way of destroying us, which it certainly is. It isn't only the devil's way of destroying us, it is also God's way of developing us. That's a rather nice way to look at things.

It isn't just the devil's nasty way of destroying, is grinding, grinding us down into the dirt. It's also God's way of enabling us to put on some spiritual muscle, and developing us into strong mature saints of God. Here's another thing.

Temptation is not only the doorway to disaster, which it certainly is. And scripture is replete with temptations that were the doorway to disaster for many, many people. It isn't only the doorway to disaster, it's also the gateway to discovery.

Think of all the lovely things you can discover of God through an appropriation of his power in the moment of temptation. So there are just one or two things that are all saying basically the same thing. Don't just regard temptation as a potential tragedy.

But regard temptation as something allowed by God, in order that it can be the means of tremendous victory. All right now then, having said a few words I'd like to speak about it. The first thing that we'll ask

ourselves is, what exactly is temptation? What is it? If we study the word in scripture, I think it will give us a wider view of temptation, the meaning in scripture of temptation, than is normally the case.

I think if we were to ask each other what is temptation, almost invariably we would reply it is a solicitation to evil. This of course is included in the idea of temptation, but this is not an exhaustive definition of the word temptation. So I want you to try and get a broader view of it than just that temptation is a solicitation to evil.

One or two references that might help here. 1 Kings chapter 10 verse 1, don't bother turning to it, it's the account of the Queen of Sheba going to see Solomon. And she had decided that she was going to test him with some very difficult questions.

The word used to test him there is the word used for temptation. She was going to tempt him, she was going to test him, she was going to try him. 1 Samuel 17 verse 39, you've got the same use of the word here, but this is where, this is where David is trying on Saul's armor, about to go and fight Goliath.

And he throws it off in disgust in the end, he says I haven't had time to prove this, I haven't had time to test it, I haven't had time to try this armor out, this sword out. The same word there. Testing, trying out, proving, finding out what it's made of.

This is all involved in the idea of temptation. Luke chapter 10 verse 25, the lawyer comes to the Lord Jesus, as sharp as a needle. And he's going to test the Lord Jesus, he's going to tempt the Lord Jesus, he's going to prove the Lord Jesus.

He's going to ask him a lot of awkward questions and find out what he's made of. And this is basically the idea in temptation. It isn't just a solicitation to evil.

It is the allowing of certain things to come into people's lives, to find out what they're made of. It is the encountering of certain situations in life that prove to you what it is that's in you. A testing, a trying, a proving of various things.

As we go on trying to answer the question what is temptation, we've also got to notice that the Bible tells us to tempt, or to test, or to try, or to prove ourselves. Just one or two references you can look up later. First Corinthians 11 28.

Speaking of the communion service, it says let a man examine himself. A man's got to prove himself, try himself, test himself. Second Corinthians 13 5. Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith.

Galatians chapter 6 verse 4. Let every man examine, or test, or try his own work. And the Bible also teaches that it is possible for us to tempt God, or to test God. And you can check on this in Exodus 17 verse 2. First Corinthians 10 9. Acts chapter 5 verse 9. So in answer to the question what is temptation, I would suggest to you a very simple definition.

Temptation is something that puts you to the test. That puts you under pressure. The second question then, where does it come from? Where does temptation come from? First of all, this may come as a surprise to some of you.

Temptation comes from God. Now some of you who are really sharp are going to quote James chapter 1 verses 13 and 14 at me. And it would appear that what I've just said is in total contravention of what is

stated in James chapter 1 verse 13 and 14.

Where it says that God doesn't tempt people and cannot be tempted of evil. I would suggest to you that in the all-round light of scripture, and what it teaches all along. That it is perfectly true, obviously, that God does not tempt people or solicit them to evil in the specialized sense of temptation.

But there is equally no question about it that there are many instances of scripture where God did put people to the test. And so there's no contradiction here. According to James, God does not put evil in people's pathway.

God does not solicit people to evil. But God most certainly does give them every opportunity of being put to the test. Let's have a look at a few of these things, because I think it will be helpful for us.

For instance, in Genesis chapter 22 and verse 1. God is dealing with his servant Abraham. And this is what it says, Genesis 22 verse 1. It came to pass after these things that God did tempt Abraham. And he said unto him, Abraham.

And he said, behold here I am. And he said, take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. God did tempt Abraham.

What was God doing? Well God, of course, had told Abraham that in him should all the nations of the earth be blessed. He had told him that his seed was going to be multiplied like the sand of the seashore, and like the stars of the heavens. And in his old age God had given him a son, Isaac.

And now God is saying, I want you to offer Isaac on the altar to me as a burnt offering. And the test, of course, is very clearly on Abraham now. And I suppose it's a test of his faith.

Because the faith of Abraham believed God when he said that he would make his seed as the sand of the seashore. And now the great test is on. Is God going to do what he said, even though he's now asking me to offer my son? And of course we know from reading in Romans and Hebrews, that as far as Abraham was concerned, he was going to go through with this test.

He was prepared to offer his son as a burnt offering, accounting that God was able to raise him up again from the dead. And so here is a test, a tremendous test of faith, through which Abraham came with flying colours. I think sometimes we've got to realize this, that very trying circumstances will come into our lives.

Very trying circumstances will come, that will be an opportunity for us to go so sour. And to become so negative. And become so hardened towards God.

And yet these things have come because God has allowed them to come into our lives. Not to make us go sour, not to make us go hard. But in actual fact, he has allowed these things to come into our lives, in order that we might learn from them.

And come out from them much stronger than we would ever have been without them. I'm quite certain of this. Abraham came down from Mount Moriah even stronger than he went up.

Having been tested of God, and having come to the test. Look in Exodus chapter 16 verse 4. Exodus 16 verse 4. Here we have the children of Israel, having come out of Egypt, on their way to the promised land. We'll read this.

Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain weight every day, that I may prove them. Here's the same word again.

They shall gather a certain weight every day, that I may prove them. Whether they will walk in my law or not. Now remember what God had said.

God had said that they were to collect just enough mammon for each day. Except on the sixth day they were to collect twice as much. Because they weren't to collect any on the seventh day.

Now God didn't need to do this. But he did it. And he did it in this particular way for a very special reason.

In order that he might prove them. In order that he might put them to the test. And God isn't being arbitrary here.

And God isn't being awkward here. God isn't saying haha, I just make things tough for them. What God is saying is this.

Now let's see what they're made of. We'll just put this little stipulation here. And we will soon find out what they're made of.

And he did. Very very soon. Because some of them just wouldn't do it that way.

Some of them had to go out and get more than they should have done. And some of them had to go out when they shouldn't have done. And by the very act of disobedience they failed the test.

And they showed themselves openly to be people who were not living in the line of the divine will. So always be sure of this. God will always bring plenty of opportunities for us to discover of what caliber we are.

Temptation, testing, opportunities to prove yourself will come constantly from God. Turn on to Deuteronomy chapter 8. Deuteronomy chapter 8 verse 2. Or let's read verse 1. All the commandments which I command thee this day shall you observe to do that you may live and multiply and go in and possess the land which the Lord swear unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these 40 years in the wilderness to humble thee and to prove thee.

Now here's the word again. The Lord certainly didn't intend them to spend 40 years in the wilderness. But as that was the way they wanted it.

That was the way they could have it. And so for 40 long years in the wilderness they went around getting nowhere. And God led them, God didn't forsake them.

And for 40 long years he gave them every opportunity to prove themselves. What they really were. And so we can go on and on and on.

And find out in Scripture that God is never short of giving his children opportunities of tests to find out what they're made of. Now this may change some of your views. And some of the situations into which you yourself are being called to pass.

Has it ever dawned upon you that some of these situations have come from God. And whilst God is not soliciting you to evil. He is certainly giving you plenty of opportunities for a real test.

To see what you're made of. So in answer to the question where does temptation come from. First of all it comes from God.

Secondly, and this of course is very obvious, it comes from Satan. Now let's have a look and see how temptation comes from Satan. We'll turn up a few references here.

Incidentally there are many more instances of the tests that come from God that I didn't bother to go into there. First Chronicles for instance. Let's look at that one.

First Chronicles chapter 21. Satan stood up against Israel and provoked David to number Israel. And David said to Joab and to the rulers of the people go number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan.

And bring the number of them to me that I may know it. And Joab of course protested against this. Now here we've got a very straightforward example of Satan tempting David.

God didn't want the people numbered. And he had his own reasons for not wanting them to be numbered. He didn't want David I suppose to get so excited about the numbers that he had at his disposal.

And yet I suppose there was something in David, a natural pride that wanted to know how many people he had command of. And this natural pride that was in David was something where Satan could find a toehold. And Satan did find a toehold as far as his pride of David was concerned.

And he was in there like a flash. And he tested, he tempted a direct satanic attack that was contrary to what God had shown David he wanted to do. And David succumbed.

Now here is a very very simple example of how Satan will tempt you. How he will get at you. He will find a natural weakness in you.

Like pride. And he will give you some very very rational reasons why you have every right to go ahead with what you in that area of weakness feel is perfectly legitimate. And when he's got a toehold there he'll be after you and bang he'll hit you so hard that you wonder what hit you.

And you'll even find that he can be so strong in that area of natural weakness that he can even rationalize you into such a situation where you can decide that the command of God is something that you do not need to obey at that particular time. David knew better. But because of his area of natural weakness and because of the direct influence of Satan at that time, the temptation was more than he was able to cope with.

And he succumbed. Look in Job. And I suppose you can't possibly talk about Job without, you can't possibly talk about temptation without talking about Job.

Verses 14 through 16. Remember that Satan has got permission from God. And we underline the word permission.

Satan has got permission from God to put the screw on Job. And he does it in an awful way. And in verse 14.

There came a messenger unto Job and said the oxen were ploughing and the asses feeding beside them. And the Sabaeans fell upon them and took them away. So in other words all his oxen and all his asses have gone.

Then he says yes they have slain your servants with the edge of the sword. And I only am escaped alone to tell thee. And so there all his servants have gone.

This is Satan at work. While he was yet speaking there came another and said the fire of God is fallen from heaven and has burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them. And I only am escaped alone to thee.

So all your oxen have gone and all your asses have gone and the people who look after them have gone and now all your sheep have gone and the shepherds have gone. While he was yet speaking there came another and said the Chaldeans made out three bands and fell upon the camels and have carried them away. Yes and they've slain the servants and I only am escaped.

So there's his camels gone and all the people who look after them. Satan is gunning for Job. And notice how he does it.

He will do it through material losses. He will work in your life so that when something goes out of your life that was very dear and precious to you, purely material things. This will be a great opportunity for him to put satanic pressure on you.

And if you're not very careful you will find that you will succumb to all kinds of bitterness and hardness and resentment. Maybe even some of you have been having a struggle with this. God is calling you to the mission field.

And you know that if you do go to the mission field then certain material benefits are never going to be yours. Let's face it you're just not going to get in the line of some of the things you could get in the line of if you didn't go to the mission field. And there's a natural desire for material things.

And the thought of missing out on material things is something that is a bit hard on you. And you can be absolutely certain of this. Satan won't miss the chance here.

And he'll tempt you in this area. Because he knows the natural desires that you've got. And he knows how easy it is to conform to the general cultural patterns around you.

And to get so confused that you don't even know the difference between needs and wants like the people around you. And so he'll tempt you in this area as he did with Job. And so he will tempt you in the area of natural desires as was David's.

And he will tempt you in the area of material losses as was Job's. But then read on in Job chapter 1 verse 18 and 19. While he was yet speaking there came another and said their sons and their daughters were eating and drinking wine in their elder brother's house.

And behold there came a great wind from the wilderness and slowed the four corners of the house. And it fell upon the young men and their dead. And I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

And here we find that Satan has attacked again. And he's attacked in the area of family relationships. And make no mistake about it he will.

Some of you have been having a tough time because since you became Christians you have discovered that the Lord has not come to bring peace in that area. He came and brought a sword. And there has been a great setting apart.

And some of you have found that before you became Christians you had a very close family relationship. But now since you become a Christian there's become a great division there. And Satan has got in there.

And he is really testing you. And he's really tempting you. And he's really putting you under pressure.

Because in the area of very dear and very lovely family relationships there is now an estrangement. And Satan will do all that he can to exacerbate this estrangement. And to make it even worse as the days go by.

We'll recognize what he's doing. Then turn on to Matthew 16. Just one or two more instances in this respect.

Matthew chapter 16 and verse 23. We'll read from verse 21. From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples how that he must go into Jerusalem and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised again the third day.

Then Peter took him and began to rebuke him saying be it far from thee Lord this shall not be unto thee. Now I've got a profound respect for Peter. Because I think that old Peter meant well here.

Everybody else was just standing around saying nothing. And there's always plenty of people who stand around and say nothing. I rather like somebody who even if he's going to put his foot in his mouth at least will open his mouth and say something.

And Peter said something. And here out of great big good intentions. And here out of misguided devotion.

And here out of misdirected zeal. At least he comes forward and says something. But the tragedy of the whole thing is this.

Jesus turned to him and says get thee behind me Satan. Because you see the awful thing about it is this. Satan is never short and never slow to jump in where there's misdirected zeal.

And Satan is never never short to come in when there is misguided devotion. And Satan will always come and get hold of the enthusiast and channel his enthusiasm in the wrong way. He's a slippery customer.

And what we've got to realize is this. That even in the area of zeal and devotion and enthusiasm he can pervert it. And he does this so often in the life of the church.

And he does it so often in the life of the mission, of the missionaries on the foreign field. And we've got to be aware of his devices. And we've got to be fully acquainted with his principles of action.

And so he will get at you through natural pride, through material loss, through family situations, through misguided devotion. Turn on to Acts chapter 5. Acts chapter 5. And the familiar story of Barnabas that wonderful saint of God who sold his land in Cyprus and got the proceeds and laid it at the feet of the disciples. And that was too much for Ananias and Sapphira.

And so they sold what they got and kept back part of the price and laid part of it at the feet of the apostles. And Peter said in verse 3 of chapter 5 of the Acts of the Apostles. Ananias why has Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost and to keep back part of the price of the land? Now what's happening here? Satan is tempting again.

They have succumbed to satanic temptation. And this time he is tempting them through a real desire to be noticed. A real desire to be somebody.

Wow they thought. Just look at the attention that Barnabas is getting. They used to call him Jose.

But now because he's so fantastic they've given him a new name. Barnabas the son of consolation, the son of encouragement. Wouldn't it be great if they would notice us like that? Wouldn't it be fantastic if they would honor us like that? Oh we'd do anything, absolutely anything if only we could be put on the same level as uncle Barnabas.

Therefore let's do this thing. And old Satan says I got you two for suckers. As soon as you start feeling like that I'll shoot you so full of holes you won't know what's hit you.

Because remember if you have an insatiable desire to be noticed, that is just the kind of seed area, the seed pot in which he can come and sow his seeds. And he'll have you for a sucker. And he'll tempt you.

And he'll get you going every single opportunity. Like he got Ananias going. It gets you through natural pride, material loss, through family situations, through misguided devotion, through desire to achieve and to be noticed.

Turn on to 1st Corinthians chapter 7 and verse 5. And here he's talking about the marriage relationship with particular reference to sex. And in 1st Corinthians chapter 7 verse 5 he says to married partners defraud ye not one another except it be with consent for a time that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer and come together again that Satan tempt you not for your own incontinence. In other words, whilst there's a specific application here, in general terms we can say this.

That Satan is never averse to tempting people through legitimate sexual appetites. Now I suppose that this is one of the commonest areas of temptation among young people. When their sexual urges are increasing, quite legitimately, because this is all God's idea.

This is all God's lovely way of propagating the human race. This is all God's lovely way of giving people that most sublime ability to sublimate their love and demonstrate it one to another. Sex was God's idea.

There's nothing dirty about it. It's fabulous and it's just lovely. Man has perverted it.

But Satan knows that these sexual urges and these sexual desires and these sexual drives become so strong that unless they are handled very very carefully there is a toehold for Satan here. And over and over and over and over again Satan has abused the lovely thing, that lovely divinely invented thing called sex and has made it a degraded dirty thing and has brought many Christian young people crashing down on the end of their noses because they were not able to see that he was tempting them in this area and they fell. He is not averse even to abusing the most beautiful thing and dragging it down into the dirt and dragging you down with it.

So you've got to be alert to the fact that he does tempt even in areas like this. And finally 2nd Corinthians chapter 12. Another area in which Satan will attack.

2nd Corinthians chapter 12 verse 7. Lest I should be exalted says Paul above measure through the abundance of the revelation there was given to me a thorn in the flesh the messenger of Satan to buffet me. Lest I should be exalted above measure for this thing I besought the Lord three times that it might

depart from me and he said unto me my grace is sufficient for thee for my strength is made perfect in weakness most gladly therefore will I rather glory my affirmatives that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Now there's a great deal of debate as to what the thorn in the flesh was as far as Paul was concerned and I don't suppose anybody can be very dogmatic but there's a large school of opinion that thinks it was some physical illness and let's without having time to go into it any further let's just suppose that it was a physical ailment here that Paul had.

I'm sure all of us are aware of the fact that a physical ailment can be the area in which Satan will buffet you. It can be a continual thorn in the flesh. It can be something that is has a debilitating effect upon you and it will drag you down and if you're not very careful you'll find that old Satan will have his way in this area.

These are some of the areas in which Satan will attack. Natural pride, material loss, family situations, misguided devotion, a desire to be somebody, natural appetites or even illness. Where then does temptation come from? In the sense of testing it will come from God.

In the sense of solicitation to evil it will come from Satan. And thirdly it will come from your inner lusts. James chapter 1 verse 14.

Now I spent rather longer on that than I intended so let's go on to the third question. What is its purpose? What is the purpose of temptation? If God allows temptation to come into my life, and if it comes from Satan, because God will allow Satan to tempt me, God must have a reason for it. What is the reason? Well we were just in 2nd Corinthians chapter 12.

Let's just stay there for a moment and we'll find a very good reason why God allows temptation to come into people's lives. Because you see God says that my strength is made perfect in weakness. And therefore God rather delights to see a person confronted with his own weakness.

When is a person most confronted with his own weakness? When Satan is getting after him in the area of that weakness. And did you know that there are built-in areas of weakness in your personality, in your frame, in your physical makeup, and Satan knows them very very well indeed, and he will always go for them. It's rather like the coach at a ball game.

I remember watching a coach at a baseball game not long ago. Not that I understood the game very much, but it was interesting to go and watch what was going on. And I noticed that the coach was giving signals when a certain man came up to bat.

And as he gave the signal, so the outfield would move two or three paces to the right when the man came up to bat. Now when the next man came up to bat, he moved them two or three paces to the left. And he got a little book there.

And the little book of course was the result of considerable spying. They'd been spying on these batsmen and they had noticed certain weaknesses. And having given the certain weaknesses due consideration, the pitcher of course was alerted to them, was pitching straight at the weakness, and the fielders were waiting for the weakness to demonstrate itself.

This is exactly how Satan works. But God says, now look, I'm going to give you every opportunity of seeing Satan pitch at your weakness, because the more Satan pitches at your weakness, the more you're going to have to draw upon my strength. And the more you draw upon my strength in the area of

weakness, you're going to discover that a former area of weakness can become nothing less than an area of strength.

And I suppose coaches have to keep changing. Because if a batsman's got a weakness and everybody pitches of that area of weakness, he's going to get so much practice it's going to become an area of strength. And this is one reason why God will allow these things to come into your life.

In order that your area of inbuilt weakness, so drawing upon the resources constantly of God, because Satan is continually pitching there, the result is going to be an increasing strength in the area of weakness. And God will be glorified. Romans chapter 5 is another lovely picture, lovely statement of what can happen here.

And what it really tells us is this. That the lovely opportunities that come our way because of testings and trials and tribulations and temptations, is the opportunity to learn to abide in Christ under pressure. And as we abide in Christ under pressure, so we discover newer and fuller and deeper experiences of himself.

So why then does God allow temptation to come into our lives? First of all, in order that strength might become evident in the area of weakness. And secondly, because it is only when we are under pressure that we will learn to abide in Christ in a very new and very special and very lovely way. Secondly, what are Satan's purposes as far as temptation is concerned? Well let me just give you the references, and then you can look them up yourself.

Luke 22 31, Satan wants to sift you like wheat. That's what he wanted to do with the disciples, particularly Peter. And the Lord said I've been praying for you.

He wants to get you in that old winnowing frame, and he wants to toss you up and down and bounce you and give you such a bouncing and such a tossing. So much time up in the air, and so much time coming down hard and then tossed up in the air, you won't have time to do anything else except concentrate on being tossed around by Satan. That's what he's doing.

That's what he's trying to do. And if he's giving some of your fair old tossing up and down, then understand what he's doing. He wants to make you as ineffective as possible.

But praise God, his principles always bounce back on his head. Because whilst he is tossing you up and down, God is strengthening you. Another reference, Matthew 16 verse 23, 2nd Corinthians 2 11, Revelation chapter 12, verses 9 and 10.

What is temptation? Where does it come from? What is its purpose? Finally, what must I do about it? What must I do about it? Number one, understand what God is doing. Now we spent most of our time talking about that this morning. Understand what God is doing.

Secondly, learn to recognize Satan's activities. As scripture says, we are not ignorant of his devices. Understand what God is doing in terms of testing, then learn to recognize Satan's activity.

Thirdly, be alert to the situation. You can get very careless about temptation. Just succumb without even realizing that it was a temptation.

Be alert to the situation. Then fourthly, oh some references there for you, Galatians 6 1 and 2, Mark 14 verse 38. Fourthly, learn to trust God in the situation.

Here's the verse that everybody's been waiting for. Because you can't talk on temptation without quoting 1st Corinthians 10:13. There has no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man.

But God is faithful, who will not suffer you or allow you to be tempted above that you're able. But will with the way with the temptation also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it. Notice very carefully what that verse does not say.

It does not say that God will make a way of escape, so you can get away from it. It says he will make a way of escape, so that you will be able to bear it. God hasn't any intention of getting you out of temptation.

He's every intention of leaving you in it, so that you might triumph over it. And he will always make a way of escape, a safety release, so that the pressure will never be too much for you. When you succumb to temptation, you've no excuse.

You can't say God it was too much for me. He said oh no it wasn't. No it wasn't.

Because I will never allow you to be tempted above that you're able, because there is always that safety release. And I never give you more temptation than you are able to stand. And I will never allow more temptation to come into your life, than is necessary to produce the desired effect.

So don't say it was too much. It wasn't. And therefore I've got to understand God's ways.

I've got to learn certain activities. I've got to be alert to the temptation. And I've got to trust God in the situation.

Trust God that he knows what he's doing. And is always making needed grace available to me. Number five, be in prayer about it.

Matthew chapter 6 verse 13. And then finally number six, resist the temptation. 1st Peter chapter 5 verse 8 and 9. And remember that the power to resist comes through the enabling of the living Lord Jesus.

Perhaps one of the most helpful things I'll mention will be one of the simplest things. A little girl was trying to explain to her sister that she was a Christian now. And her little sister said, well what difference does it make? And she said, well before when Satan used to knock on my heart's door, I used to go and open the door and that big old Satan would come barging in and overwhelm me.

And her little sister said, oh what do you do now? And she said, well it's very different now. When Satan knocks on my heart's door, I say Lord Jesus, there he is again. You get it.

And when the Lord Jesus is the one who, because I've called him into action, answers the door. When Satan knocks at the door, I begin to discover that I can have victory in these things. And two final thoughts.

The Bible says, count it all joy when you fall into divers testings. How about that? Count it all joy when you fall into divers testings. And the final thing is this.

Temptation is not sin.

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