

# The Limitations of the Tempter

by Watchman Nee

---

*God allows Satan to tempt us to humble us and prevent pride, and to cause us to draw near to the heavenly Father.*

**Scripture:** Job 1:12, Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 22:31, John 17:15, Romans 6:11, 1 Corinthians 10:13, 2 Corinthians 12:7, 2 Thessalonians 3:3, 1 John 5:18, Revelation 12:7-9

**Topics:** "God's Protection", "Temptation"

---

## Description

Watchman Nee emphasizes that temptations are permitted by God and serve a purpose in the believer's life, helping to cultivate humility and reliance on God's strength. He explains that while temptations are common to all, God ensures they do not exceed our ability to endure, providing a way out for every challenge. Nee encourages believers to trust in God's protection and the intercession of Christ, reminding them that temptation itself is not sin, but yielding to it is. He concludes with the assurance of Satan's ultimate defeat, urging believers to stand firm in their faith and fight against spiritual adversities.

---

## Transcript

A. If a Temptation Falls outside of God's Promise,

It Cannot Do Anything to the Believers

"And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only..." (Job 1:12). "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has asked to have..." (Luke 22:31). Every time temptations come upon us, we should be reminded that all temptations are allowed by the Father. Behind every temptation, there is the hand of God. We should have an attitude of faith and should trust that nothing can come upon us directly from Satan unless the Father permits it. Satan cannot put anything upon us by himself.

B. The Reason God Allows Satan to Tempt Us

Without temptations, we would be proud. Before the devil sifted Peter as wheat, his pride was strong. After he was sifted, he realized the inadequacy of his own strength and was able to receive power from on high to fulfill a great work. Consider the example of a small child going out with his father. He does not want to follow his father and walks away from him on his own. But when he meets a snake and comes close to being hurt, he hurries back to his father to come under his protection. If saints have no temptations, they will not be willing to draw near to the heavenly Father in this way. This is the case with believers who are

immature in life. If we realize that the evil spirits in the spiritual realm are everywhere trying to tempt us and hurt us, we will surely trust in God and not be proud in ourselves. Paul said, "There was given to me...a messenger of Satan, that he might buffet me, in order that I might not be exceedingly lifted up" (2 Cor. 12:7). There is no goodness in our flesh, yet how many people are there who will consciously acknowledge this fact? For this reason, God allows the enemy to tempt us. Sometimes He may even allow us to fail so that we will know ourselves and not be proud. This was the experience of Job. Moreover, unless we are tempted in this way, we will not be willing to apply the victory of Golgotha in our experience. It is because of these temptations that there is the opportunity for victory and, consequently, the need for and possibility of the application of Golgotha. Since we realize the true meaning of these temptations and see that they are unavoidable, we should ask God to cause us to overcome in Christ. God allows us to meet with temptations. If we read 1 Corinthians 5:5 and Job 2:3, we can see the reason for these temptations. Temptations are not sins in themselves. It is only when we succumb to temptations that there is sin (Heb. 4:15).

### C. The Limit of Temptations

"No temptation has taken you except that which is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow that you be tempted beyond what you are able, but will, with the temptation, also make the way out, that you may be able to endure it" (1 Cor. 10:13). There are seven points that we should learn from this verse:

(1) Temptations are common to man. Some people think that their environment and position are unique and that their temptations are special. Little do they know that temptations are common to man. "Except that which is common to man."

(2) We should remember that "God is faithful." If God can fail, then we can fail. But if He is faithful, we should trust Him and should not fail.

(3) All temptations are within what we are able to bear. "Not...tempted beyond what you are able." The temptations that God permits cannot be too great. Hence, when temptations come, we should not take a passive stand, allowing the devil to do whatever he wants.

(4) With every temptation, there is "the way out." Hence, we can overcome every time.

(5) Even if there is no way out, God will "also make the way out."

(6) Sometimes, to endure is the very way out. "That you may be able to endure it."

(7) Temptation is not sin, but to succumb to temptation is sin. "That you may be able to..."

### D. God's Almighty Protection

"Everyone who is begotten of God does not sin, but he who has been begotten of God keeps himself, and the evil one does not touch him" (1 John 5:18). "But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one" (2 Thes. 3:3). We should be strong in the Lord and believe that the Lord can protect us. We should commit our whole spirit, our whole soul, and our whole body to the Lord and should trust in the Lord. The Lord will accomplish everything. We should believe in Him and should act as if we are already protected by Him. Our act of faith will secure the protection of God.

### E. Prayer

"Our Father,...deliver us from the evil one" (Matt. 6:9, 13). When we pray, we must not only think of ourselves and of God; we must always remember Satan, the evil one. We should pray for God to deliver us from the deceptions, trickeries, control, influence, attacks, and evil plots of the evil one. If we pray in this way, our prayer will be answered. "Deliver us from the evil one." Why? "For Yours is [1] the kingdom and [2] the power and [3] the glory [they are His, not Satan's] forever." This prayer for deliverance is based upon God's kingdom, power, and glory. As such, there must be an answer. If God does not deliver us from the evil one, His kingdom, power, and glory will suffer loss. As the kingdom, the power, and the glory are not the enemy's, why should we still be under his attacks, suppressions, and afflictions?

#### F. The Intercession of the High Priest in Heaven

"I do not ask that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them out of the hands of the evil one" (John 17:15). If our High Priest is right now interceding for us, what do we have to fear? We should believe that the intercession of our Lord Jesus is always effective. We should believe that the Father is keeping us from the evil one through the secret prayer of Christ. We should not take the evil one's suggestion that we are facing immediate peril. We should trust in the intercession of our High Priest and realize that the Father will surely keep us from suffering the afflictions of the evil one.

#### G. The End of the Enemy

The enemy, Satan, will be cast down out of heaven to the earth (Rev. 12:7-9). He will be bound by an angel with a chain and cast into the abyss (20:1-3). After Christ reigns for a thousand years, Satan will be temporarily released and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth and instigate a war against God. Finally, he will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone (vv. 7-10). Since the enemy will eventually be defeated anyway, why do we not rise up and march on? Since it is his final destiny to fail, should we not feel more courageous?

For now, we should stand on the ground of Romans 6:11, reckoning ourselves dead sin, but living to God. We should put on the whole armor of God to overcome the world, the lusts, and the devil. We should be God's soldiers, fighting the good fight, overthrowing the devil's strongholds and taking captive man's thought unto the obedience of Christ. We should not only be able to preserve ourselves whole, but should challenge the devil. We must be strong warriors in prayer, so that the myriads of evil spirits will not be able to have their way and we will be able to walk and work with Christ, overcoming in this age and reigning in the coming age. Amen.

---

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/watchman-nee/the-limitations-of-the-tempter/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**