

October 29, 2023

Overcoming Temptation Like Jesus

by Ken Weliever

John Piper once wrote that sin (lust for example) “gets its power by persuading me to believe that I will be more happy if I follow it. The power of all temptation is the prospect that it will make me happier.”

Piper’s observation reminds me of a true story that occurred several years ago. To protect the innocent, as well as the guilty, I will refer to the two married couples as Jason and Judy and Matt and Jen.

These four begin spending a lot of time together. They had a good bit in common. Including fellowship in the church where I preached. Some of their entertainment choices and activities began to bring them in closer contact with each other’s spouses than was prudent.

We don’t know when, but a flirtation developed between Jason and Jen that finally consummated into a full blown sexual affair. This continued in secret until Jason and Jen left their spouses and moved in together.

The church was shocked. Matt and Judy were devastated. Their children were heartbroken.

When the elders went to talk to Jason and Jen there would be no remorse. No repentance. Jason justified their actions by saying, “Judy didn’t make me happy.

Jen does. I think God wants me to be happy.”

God promises us that with every temptation there is always a way of escape. But Jason and Jen didn’t look for it. Instead, they fanned the flames of their lust. And believed that succumbing to their temptation would make them happier.

Yesterday, I was reading Matthew 4 about Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness. I was reminded (again) that no one is exempt from Satan’s attempts to lure us into sinful behavior. Not even the Son of God. It’s worth noting that Jesus’ temptation followed the account of His baptism. Sound familiar? Our obedience to the gospel does not eliminate temptation. In fact, Satan may increase his assaults in an attempt to win us back.

The text tells us that Jesus was alone in the wilderness. There were no adoring crowds. No disciples eager to hear his message. No friends. Just Jesus. And the devil. I’ve noticed a similar pattern. I don’t have too many temptations at church. Or enjoying fellowship with other Christians. But when alone, just with your private thoughts, Satan will look for a way to tempt you.

Jesus’ was tempted in three different ways. (1) To turn the stones into bread to satisfy His hunger. (2) To worship

Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.

Important Dates

Ladies’ Class - Tuesday, November 14 at 10 a.m.

If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.

Satan to receive the kingdoms of the world; (3) To prove He was the Son of God by jumping from the pinnacle of the temple. These allurements appealed to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

Satan employed the same tactics when he tempted Eve in the garden of Eden. The fruit appealed to her. It was pleasant to the eyes. And it promised to make her wise like God.

The devil's devices haven't changed. So, the beloved John warns us with these ever appropriate words.

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 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. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." (I Jn. 2:15-17)

Times have changed. Technology has advanced. Modern means of displaying and conveying sin have become more sophisticated, but Satan still appeals to our basic lusts and pride to lead us astray.

Temptation presents itself in different forms, shapes, and sizes. It may indeed appear through a person, or something we see, read, or hear. It may be an advertisement. An internet pop up. A facebook ad. A cell phone text. It may involve a fleeting feeling or a random thought that seemingly comes "out of the blue."

Jesus was victorious over temptation as He relied on the Word and replied to each enticement with the words: "It is written." The practice of the Psalmist comes to mind, "Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You" (Ps 119:11). Store scripture up in your heart to fight against Satan's

schemes.

Finally, remember as William Barclay opined, "Temptation is not meant to make us fail. It is meant to confront us with a situation out of which we emerge stronger than we were."

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Prayer Requests

Jack Wilson is still struggling with pain and limited mobility.

Jerry Richardson's lymphoma has returned and is undergoing chemo.

Dinah Williams continues to have mobility issues.

Don Simmons is still struggling with his breathing; he is on oxygen at all times. **Alene** is having hip issues.

Lisa Mullen (Darrell's sister) is undergoing chemotherapy.

Vicki Stevens has cancer and is undergoing treatment.

Debbie McMurray is undergoing immunotherapy.

Mike McMurray had triple bypass surgery and is recovering at home.

Terry Behrns has been moved to rehab in Harker Heights until Nov 3.

Harold Hammons has been moved to Granite Mesa, room 308

Anna Urqhart had surgery this past week.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

"praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.

**To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making s
upplication for all the saints,"
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)**

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord's body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord's will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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